

PETER DRAPER

INDEPENDENT MEMBER FOR TAMWORTH

MEDIA RELEASE

Four accidents in three months on Topdale Rd proves it's a priority

4 May 2004

Member for Tamworth Peter Draper has stepped up his campaign to upgrade Topdale Rd near Niangala following statistics that reveal four serious accidents on the road in the past three months.

"According to Walcha police, there has been four accidents on Topdale Rd since February this year, which is not only of great concern to myself but is worrying local police as well," Mr Draper said.

"In all four crashes, three took place on the gravel section and all four vehicles rolled, it's a miracle no-one has been killed," he said.

Mr Draper said Topdale Rd was becoming an increasingly popular thoroughfare for traffic from Tamworth to Gloucester and Newcastle as motorists discovered the section from Nowendoc to Gloucester had been sealed.

"There's only a small section of gravel remaining, it really is a case of the Government not finishing the job," he said.

Mr Draper said he would step up his campaign to have the road sealed particularly after the announcement today of a \$1million safety upgrade of the Pacific Highway.

Minister for Roads Carl Scully announced a section of the Pacific Highway south of Buladelah would be upgraded "to maximise its safety" in response to a triple fatality which occurred there in March.

The work is scheduled to begin in July to be complete before the summer holiday period.

Mr Draper said he welcomed the move given the tragic circumstances surrounding the accident which claimed the lives of a woman and her two grandchildren.

But he will remind the Minister that country roads especially those such as Topdale Rd ought to be equally considered in the allocation of funding given they were proven blackspots.

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“It’s not drawing too long a bow to compare the fatalities near Buladelah with the most recent accident on the Topdale Rd where two of three young men were left with critical injuries when their vehicle left the roadway and smashed into a rock,” Mr Draper said.

“The youngest of the trio received serious head injuries and remains in a critical condition,” he said.

Mr Draper said the Minister openly stated the section of the Pacific Highway to be upgraded had “a relatively good crash history” prior to the triple fatality.

“Topdale Rd is a potential death trap as its recent history has shown and I will be taking its need for an upgrade to the Minister for urgent consideration,” Mr Draper said.

End Release

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