

INDIAN OCEAN DRIVE, COMPLETION

**958. Hon MURRAY CRIDDLE to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Planning and Infrastructure:**

The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure has previously acknowledged the importance of completing the last section of Indian Ocean Drive between Lancelin and Cervantes and has assured local residents and councils in the region that the project will be completed in 2005. Given that there is no allocation in the 2003-04 budget, will the minister advise when this important piece of infrastructure will be built?

**Hon GRAHAM GIFFARD replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

The importance of the proposed road link between Lancelin and Cervantes is recognised. However, the Government has an obligation to meet its key election commitments to increase funding for health, education and community safety. In order to achieve this, it has been necessary to make reductions in other areas, including parts of the road program. In preparing this year's budget, a decision had to be made between reducing funding to local governments and deferring road projects by the State for local roads. In order to maintain an adequate level of funding for local government through the regional road groups, it has been necessary to defer the Lancelin to Cervantes road project. This road is a designated local road. This decision was not taken lightly, but will mean that a number of local government road and safety improvement projects across the State can now proceed as a result of the regional road groups funding.

The Lancelin-Cervantes Road remains a high priority and work is continuing on project planning and obtaining the required clearances and approvals to enable the project to commence as soon as funding is identified. The Minister for Planning and Infrastructure will be working closely with those groups that have a direct interest in the development of the Lancelin-Cervantes Road to explore alternative funding options.