MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 2 November 2016

NEWELL HIGHWAY REOPENED BETWEEN WEST WYALONG AND FORBES

The Newell Highway between West Wyalong and Forbes will reopen to all traffic at 9am on Friday, six weeks after it was first closed due to extensive flooding.

Minister for Roads and Freight Duncan Gay said the closure of this key freight route has impacted the state’s Central West and it was important to open it to all traffic as soon as possible.

“At the peak of the floods, water across the Newell Highway was more than 80 centimeters deep – that’s too dangerous for any vehicle to try and cross and it had to be closed,” Mr Gay said.

“The Newell Highway is the backbone for communities in the Central West – Roads and Maritime has been assessing the highway each day to ensure it could be open as soon as was safe to do so.

“I have met with many community members and I know the impact the Newell Highway closure has had on a wide variety of businesses and I want to thank the community for its continued patience while the impacts of the natural disaster continue to be repaired.”

Deputy Premier and Member for Dubbo Troy Grant said it was good news for the local communities who use the Newell Highway each day.

“The Newell Highway is a lifeline for our communities and businesses and having it closed for six weeks has been tough,” Mr Grant said.

“Seeing the highway reopened means we can get back to business as usual.”

Parts of the Newell Highway and other critical routes through Western NSW were reopened as soon as water levels dropped to reduce detour times for all motorists, especially freight trucks.

Crews from Roads and Maritime worked around the clock with local government partners on emergency repair work to keep detour routes open as the additional traffic on flood affected roads took its toll.