Bolivia Hill upgrade closer to reality with call for tenders

- Tenders called for qualified contractors to deliver the New England Highway – Bolivia Hill upgrade
- Upgrade from Glen Innes to Tenterfield will improve driver safety
- Project jointly funded by the Australian and New South Wales governments

Another step has been taken in upgrading the Bolivia Hill stretch of the New England Highway, with the Australian and New South Wales governments calling for tenders to deliver the project.

Federal Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Darren Chester said the upgrade, which is expected to cost around $80 million, would deliver significant road safety improvements between Glen Innes and Tenterfield.

“This section of the New England Highway has seen a number of crashes over the past decade, which is why the Australian and New South Wales governments are working together to make this stretch of road safer and more efficient,” Mr Chester said.

Deputy Prime Minister and Federal Member for New England Barnaby Joyce welcomed the next stage of the project and said any investment in the New England Highway was an investment in local businesses, farming operations and communities.

“The highway is an important freight and commuter corridor between Sydney and Brisbane, and a critical part of keeping our regional and national economies powering on,” Mr Joyce said.

“The Bolivia Hill upgrade builds on a number of ongoing investments in the highway, including the $120 million Scone Bypass, the $3 million Armidale Airport Roundabout, and the $10 million I recently confirmed for the future Tenterfield Heavy Vehicle Bypass.”

Minister for Roads Maritime and Freight Melinda Pavey said realigning the highway at this location would improve safety for all road users, particularly drivers of heavy vehicles, as uphill travel will be easier once the upgrade is completed.

“The New England Highway is not only an important freight route between Sydney and Brisbane but an alternative to the Pacific Highway,” Mrs Pavey said.

New South Wales Member for Lismore Thomas George said the upgrade would involve building a new 320-metre-long bridge, and widening lanes and road shoulders in both directions.

“It is exciting to see the Bolivia Hill upgrade moving closer to reality. When complete, I am sure the highway will fully match the community’s expectations,” Mr George said.

Work on the upgrade is expected to start in early 2018 and take about two years to complete. The Australian Government has committed $55 million and the New South Wales Government around $25 million to the project.