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NEW SEALED ROAD IN SHANNONS CREEK PROVIDES AIRSTRIP TO HELP SAVE LIVES

Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight Duncan Gay yesterday joined the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) to announce the completion of a $4.7 million upgrade to the Silver City Highway at Shannons Creek, which includes an airstrip to support the medics of the sky.

“Yesterday we had the pleasure of being involved in the inaugural landing on the new airstrip which will support the RFDS by providing a safe landing place in the far west of NSW for medical emergencies,” Mr Gay said.

“The airstrip will be operational and safe to use 24 hours a day in all-weather conditions and means residents living on properties in the area who had previously travelled up to two and a half hours to get to a hospital will now be able to get to help faster – possibly saving their life.

“Previously the RFDS had to land on unsealed airstrips on isolated properties in places such as Packsaddle and Milparinka with property owners bearing the cost of maintaining the landing area.

“This is a better solution that is safer and far more reliable.

“The airstrip and larger ongoing highway upgrade is an example of the NSW Government’s commitment to the NSW outback with an impressive 8.8 kilometre section recently sealed.”

Mark Prior, RFDS General Manager of Base Operations & Service Delivery said the Royal Flying Doctor Service welcomed the new airstrip.

“This will be the first all-weather airstrip in the area and the first built as part of a State road project. The next closest all-weather airstrip is Tibooburra which is more than 130 kilometres away,” Mr Prior said.

“It has been great to be able to work with the NSW Government to deliver such a vital piece of infrastructure to communities and properties needing improved access to medical services in emergencies.

“This new airstrip will support the local RFDS base in Broken Hill to keep providing services to rural and remote communities. Delivering healthcare services safely is key.”
Member for Barwon Kevin Humphries said this project was helping save lives – we now have a safe and serviceable airstrip and a new improved stretch of sealed road for motorists.

“Today’s completion milestone is great news because it means we are one step closer to completing sealing works along the whole highway.”

Since 2011, a number of other construction milestones along this highway have also been achieved, including:

- $2.6 million for Stage 1 of a project to widen and strengthen the highway at Ascot Vale, south of Broken Hill completed in 2013.
- $1.5 million for Stage 2 at Ascot Vale, south of Broken Hill completed in April 2015.
- $3.7 million project to seal 9.8 kilometres of the highway south of Packsaddle roadhouse completed in September 2013.
- $1.8 million to seal and upgrade a 4.4 kilometre section of the highway around the Milparinka intersection at the Peak Hill causeways completed at the end of June.

The completed upgrade is part of the NSW Government’s recent $30 million investment into continuing to fast track major sealing works on the Silver City Highway. This is the biggest single investment in the Silver City Highway in the history of the state.

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