The $145 million NSW Government commitment to rebuild and seal the remaining sections of the Cobb and Silver City highways will be completed earlier than scheduled, improving freight access, flood immunity, regional development and road safety.

The NSW Government has prioritised this important work and will ensure it is completed in 2022, at least six months earlier than planned, weather permitting.

**Project objectives:**
- Connecting regional communities
- Smoother and safer road surfaces
- More reliable access to schools and medical services
- Improved connectivity for the freight and livestock industry

**Project benefits:**
- **Fewer highway closures** – A sealed highway will provide better flood immunity and maintain access during wet weather
- **Greater economic opportunities for local and interstate businesses** – The upgrade will provide a more secure transport route for local produce and industries
- **More efficient travel** – sealed roads will mean motorists have a smoother journey, better visibility of the road and a more direct route across western NSW
- **Safer travel conditions** – Sealing the highways leads to improvements in road safety.
What problems do unsealed highways cause for road users and local community members?

Unsealed highways can easily flood and remain closed for weeks after periods of considerable rain.

Highway closures currently impact the road up to 12 times per year, directly affecting local residents and businesses, essential services and interstate road users. Since July 2018, both highways have been closed for nine days due to rain.

The road can also be closed after small amounts of rain (5–10mm) due to the rain making the road slippery, unsafe and unusable for one to two days.

Once the remaining sections of the highway are sealed, families and businesses will have long-term access to safer and more reliable roads in western NSW.

How is water sourced for the work?

Water is needed to build roads and is a key part of the process when preparing the unsealed sections of the Silver City and Cobb Highways for the initial seal.

Water is sourced for the projects from various bore sites that have been established in the past along both highways.

These are mostly legacy sites that were established to service maintenance activities but there are also newly established sites, like the one at Euriowie.

Roads and Maritime is very conscious of water usage, particularly in times of drought and only use what is required.

The bore sites are replenished by groundwater flows and need to be strategically used to ensure that they are sustainable long-term sites. Many of the sites are accessed with agreement of property owners/lease holders.

What happened before this major program to seal and rebuild the Silver City and Cobb highways?

Before the upgrade program, most of the management of these roads was done as a balance between reactive and planned maintenance.

Unsealed sections would mostly be maintained by completing formation grading, which smooths the surface by removing corrugations or washed out sections.

However, with wind, rain and traffic – each pavement loses a nominal 10mm of material each year due to dust and erosion.

As such, sections of the unsealed network would periodically get “topped up” with some gravel resheeting to restore the pavement thickness.

What are the five most recently completed projects on the Silver City Highway?

• Milparinka – 4.9 kilometre section, 292 kilometres north of Broken Hill, completed June 2019
• Milpa Flat – 5 kilometre section, 301 kilometres north of Broken Hill, completed April 2019
• William’s Tank Stage One – 3.6 kilometre section, 200 kilometres north of Broken Hill, completed April 2019
• Warratta Creek – 8 kilometre section, 301 kilometres north of Broken Hill, completed April 2019
• Packsaddle Bridge and approaches – Construction of a bridge and 2.4 kilometres, completed April 2019

What are the five most recently completed projects on the Cobb Highway

• Slamannon – 5.4 kilometre section, 118 kilometres, 118 kilometres north of Ivanhoe, completed June 2019
• Menindee Road North – 2 kilometre section, 9 kilometres north of Ivanhoe, completed December 2018
• White Elephant Tank Extension – 2 kilometre section, 103 kilometres north of Ivanhoe, completed July 2018
• Teryawynia – 5.1 kilometre section, 130 kilometres north of Ivanhoe, completed June 2018
• Fairmount – 9.6 kilometres, 135 kilometres north of Ivanhoe, completed June 2018
Silver City Highway initial seal program at July 2019

- Tibbooburra to Warri Gate (includes 1.33 km sealed section) 54.4 km
  - Stage One Q2 - 2020
  - Stage Two Q3 - 2020
  - 43.1 km remaining
- Warratta Creek 8.0 km
- Milparinka 4.9 km
- Peak Hill Central 3.4 km
- Peak Hill Causeway 4.3 km
- One Tree 7.3 km
- Coally South 5.2 km
- Salt Lake 4.6 km
- Shannon's Creek North Stage One 3.2 km
- Shannon's Creek North Stage Two 3.5 km
- Cobham Lake 1.8 km
- Q1 – 2021
- Shannon's Creek 13.4 km
- William's Tank Stage Two 3.6 km
- William's Tank Stage One 3.6 km
- Milpa Flat 5 km
- Barons Creek 5.2 km
- Packsaddle Bridge 2.4 km
- Eight Mile 7.2 km
- Euriowie Creek 13.0 km

Project Status
- Existing sealed highway prior to 2011
- Completed since 2011
- In planning with scheduled start dates subject to change
- In construction

87.1 kilometres of unsealed road remaining

84.1 kilometres of unsealed road remaining

46.6 kilometres of road sealed since 2011

85.5 kilometres of road sealed since 2011

Cobb Highway initial seal program at July 2019

- Fairmount 4.4 km
- Fairmount 1 5.2 km
- Teryawynia 5.1 km
- Teryawynia South 6.1 km
- Slannon 5.4 km
- Slannon South Q3 – 2019
- Yelta 6.4 km
- Q4 – 2019
- White Elephant Tank Extension 2.0 km
- Rosewood 4.0 km
- Rosewood South 5.1 km
- Q4 – 2021
- Bushley Q2 – 2021
- Half Way Tree Q1 – 2021
- Dromore 6.1 km
- Eurella 10.3 km
- Menindee Road North 2.0 km

- Glen Albyn South 5.1 km
- Kerpa Station North 4.9 km
- Mount Manara North 3.9 km
- Mount Manara Q2 – 2022
- Mount Manara South 4.8 km
- Q1 – 2021
- Springdale 7.0 km
- Springdale South 2.9 km
- Gypsum Mine North 5.5 km
- Gypsum Mine South 5.5 km
- Baden Park Q2 – 2020
- Eurella South 6.4 km
- Monivae Q1 – 2020
- Tasman Road 6.0 km
- Q4 – 2019

- Shannon’s Creek 13.4 km
- William’s Tank 3.6 km
- William’s Tank 2.4 km
- Milpa Flat 5 km
- Barons Creek 5.2 km
- Packsaddle Bridge 2.4 km
- Eight Mile 7.2 km
- Euriowie Creek 13.0 km

Project Status
- Existing sealed highway prior to 2011
- Completed since 2011
- In planning with scheduled start dates subject to change
- In construction
Working in extreme heat and dust storms to deliver at Packsaddle Creek

In April, the Packsaddle Creek Bridge and sealed road approaches was opened to traffic.

The new bridge and 2.4 kilometres of improved roads were built in tough conditions, dealing with frequent dust storms and extreme heat during work.

Packsaddle Creek’s new bridge will not only improve freight efficiency in the Far West, but has also created an all-weather crossing that links the communities of Broken Hill, Packsaddle and Tibooburra.

During construction, the team was careful to mitigate the impacts on this isolated and fragile environment. Soil containing seeds of the endangered Creek Wattle were extracted and stored for later rehabilitation in the local area. Extensive development work was also undertaken to ensure that impacts to Aboriginal cultural heritage was avoided.

Prioritising sustainable water usage within the local area was a necessity during the project. Roads and Maritime staff proactively managed this by storing water in tanks and bladders to increase water efficiency and mitigate evaporation loss.

Creating jobs in the Far West

During the sealing of Cobb and Silver City Highway, approximately 150 road workers, trainees, apprentices and partners are being employed each year.

Teams have worked in adverse conditions and stayed in remote locations away from their families to get the project completed earlier than expected.

So far, this program has delivered a safer link for the communities of Broken Hill and Tibooburra to schools, hospitals and remote Royal Flying Doctor Service airstrips, improved freight efficiency and provided potential economic benefits by opening up more of Far West NSW to tourism.

The Shannon’s Creek Airstrip, created during this program of work, was used in April this year by the Royal Flying Doctor Service to transport a patient to Adelaide Hospital.