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South Coast Highway funding welcomed

South Coast Highway will be upgraded after the State Government announced \$5 million this week to improve a 4km section of the highway between Pfeiffer Road to just west of Cheyne Beach Road.

Despite an advisory speed limit of 80km/h, the narrow road width, crumbling road edges, steep drainage batters and extremely rough surface have been particularly hazardous for road trains across large sections of the highway from Albany to Jerramungup and onto Ravensthorpe.

The City of Albany has been supporting the Shire of Jerramungup's efforts to lobby the State Government for upgrades to the highway and welcomed this week's announcement by Transport Minister Dean Nalder.

\$1 million will be made available immediately for pre-construction activity, and \$4 million in the 2016-17 State Budget to reconstruct the dangerous section of road.

Minister Nalder has also committed to exploring further funding in future budgets to realign the bend adjacent to the South Coast Highway-Cheyne Beach Road intersection.

Albany Mayor Dennis Wellington the highway was the region's major connection to Esperance and the Eastern States, but was not up to standard.

"It is a major transport link in the Great Southern region and I am pleased to see that this has been recognised by the Minister and the road will be improved," Mayor Wellington said.

Shire of Jerramungup CEO Brent Bailey said they had been lobbying the State Government to improve South Coast Highway since 2012.

"The Minister was able to meet with me and drive the section of the highway from Gairdner to Albany last Thursday and gain first-hand experience of the dangerous state the road is in," Mr Bailey said.

"Two truck rollovers had occurred in the 24 hours prior to the Minister's visit and the road is so rough in sections our ambulance has had to pullover to monitor patient vitals en-route to hospital costing valuable minutes and potentially compromising patient safety.



“I am thrilled the Minister visited to see the road and has announced these improvement works to make the highway safer.”

END

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