



O'Dowd calls for safety

Flynn MP adds voice for works



TONI BENSON-ROGAN

THE call for upgrades to Bundaberg-Gin Gin Rd grows larger with Member for Flynn Ken O'Dowd adding his voice to see vital safety measures installed on the deadly road.

The road sits in Mr O'Dowd's federal electorate.

Two weeks ago a horrific crash took the lives of South Kolan mother and daughter, Leisa and Emerson Purkis.

"I attended the funeral for Leisa and Emerson Purkis in Bundaberg on Friday to pay my respects," Mr O'Dowd said.

"It was a very sad occasion when a mother and daughter had their lives cut short by this tragic accident."

Leisa and Emerson are the 16th and 17th people since 2001 to lose their lives on the 44km stretch of road adjoining Bundaberg and Gin Gin.

Four people have died from crashes on the road this year.

Concerns have been raised about the condition of the road, with the RACQ calling for upgrade work.

"I believe that the Bundaberg-Gin Gin road needs an upgrade to cope with the increas-

ing traffic along this route," Mr O'Dowd said.

The RACQ ranked Bundaberg-Gin Gin Rd as a medium-high risk, based on the number of crashes on the road causing serious injury or death, and called on the federal and state governments "to get in and deliver low-cost, high benefit treatments to make these roads safer".

Mr O'Dowd said even one death on our roads was one too many, and the government had recently announced an initiative designed to make road safety strategies more effective on regional roads.

Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional De-

velopment Michael McCormack announced the initiative last week, which will see educational messages sent through radio, online and video platforms targeting regional road users in the lead up to the summer harvest period.

Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) responded to Bundaberg-Gin Gin Rd concerns last week – they said investigations were being conducted for potential improvements to the road.

A spokesman for the department yesterday said its fatal crash investigation had been finalised and no contributing road factors were identified.

"A planned upgrade of Bundaberg-Gin Gin Road and Kurths Road intersection will start in coming weeks, follow-

ing earlier feedback from the community," the spokesman said.

"The intersection design is currently being finalised and construction is scheduled to finish by Christmas, weather permitting.

"The upgrade will focus on minor infrastructure improvements for better efficiency and safety. "There are no other plans to upgrade Bundaberg-Gin Gin Road at this time."



SADLY MISSED: Leisa Purkis and her daughter Emerson.



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FATAL CRASH: The two-vehicle traffic crash on Bundaberg-Gin Gin Rd that claimed two lives (below) in South Kolan.

Photo: Mike Knott