

MEDIA STATEMENT

16 November 2021

Better Lockyer Creek bridge supports big freight...and bats

Work is now complete to rehabilitate and strengthen the Lockyer Creek bridge on Gatton-Helidon Road.

Transport and Main Roads Southern Queensland Regional Director Bill Lansbury said the bridge was an important piece of infrastructure for the region's freight and agriculture.

"The bridge was built in 1966 and after 55 years of service it was due for a refurbishment," Mr Lansbury said.

"We repainted it and repaired or replaced various parts.

"Strengthening the bridge involved installing an external tensioning system to the headstocks and girders.

"These works have increased its structural capacity to maintain safety for type 1 road trains and ensure freight efficiency for Gatton-Helidon Road into the future.

"This is good news for heavy vehicle operators who will experience less disruptions for maintenance."

Mr Lansbury said project completion was also good news for the micro-bat colonies found living under the bridge.

"Transport and Main Roads (TMR) coordinated a high-risk species management program after discovering four species of micro-bat using the bridge to roost, including the Eastern free-tailed bat (*Ozimops ridei*), Eastern broad nose bat (*Scotorepens orion*), large footed myotis (*Myotis macropus*) and the Eastern cave bat (*Vespadelus troughtoni*)," he said.

"The large footed myotis especially love living under bridges as it is close to where they like to eat.

"They are a unique bat in Australia because they use their big feet to trawl the surface of the water for aquatic insects and even small fish.

"Two of the species make their homes in the pier expansion joints, and the others use old mud bottle nests built on the underside by fairy martins (*Petrochelidon ariel*).

"Before construction, the nests and bats were carefully removed or relocated.

"Now the works are complete, we have installed 10 bat boxes to encourage them to roost under the bridge again."

The Queensland Government invested \$3.6 million through the Accelerated Works Program to deliver this priority bridge rehabilitation and strengthening project.

For more information, contact TMR on (07) 4639 0777.

For up-to-date information on roadworks and conditions across the state, visit www.qldtraffic.qld.gov.au, call 13 19 40 or download the QLD *Traffic* app.

ENDS

Media contact: TMR Media Unit, 3066 7060



Eastern freetail bat (*Ozimops ridei*) in the expansion joint at Lockyer Creek Bridge



Large footed myotis (*Myotis macropus*) in a fairy martin's mud bottle nest under Lockyer Creek Bridge



Two types of bat boxes on the underside of Lockyer Creek Bridge to encourage micro-bats to return after the completion of rehabilitation and strengthening works





Rehabilitation and strengthening works on the Lockyer Creek Bridge