

**PROJECT N841**  
**MODIFICATION REQUEST**  
**EXTENSION OF STANDARD WORKING**  
**HOURS**  
**TINTENBAR TO EWINGSDALE**  
**TIE IN WORKS TO THE BALLINA BYPASS**  
**PACIFIC HIGHWAY UPGRADE**

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1.0	Draft	31/05/2010	LS
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# 01 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The Ballina Bypass Upgrade of the Pacific Highway was detailed in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prepared by Connell Wagner (1998) with approval of the project obtained in May 2003. The Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 (EP&A Act) was amended in 2005 to incorporate a new Part 3A, which relates to major projects. Under Item 88 (3) of Schedule 6 of the amended Act, the Minister for Planning's approval of the Ballina bypass is taken to be an approval under Part 3A (i.e. deemed), and as such modifications to that approval are subject to Part 3A of the EP&A Act.

The RTA has entered into an alliance agreement with a consortium of contractors and consultants, referred to as the Ballina Bypass Alliance (BBA), to undertake the construction of the Ballina Bypass Upgrade. This modification request is in relation to the extension of working hours applicable to the Tintenbar to Ewingsdale section (1.1km), which connects to the northern end Ballina Bypass Upgrade of the Pacific Highway.

## 1.2 Proposed Change to working Hours

The Conditions of Approval for the Tintenbar to Ewingsdale project (CoA 2.12) nominate standard working hours of 7.00 am to 6.00 pm on weekdays (Monday to Friday) and 8.00 am to 1.00 pm on Saturdays.

The RTA and its alliance partners formally requested a modification to the approved project under Section 75W of the EP&A Act to extend the standard working hours on Saturdays from 7.00 am to 4.00 pm.

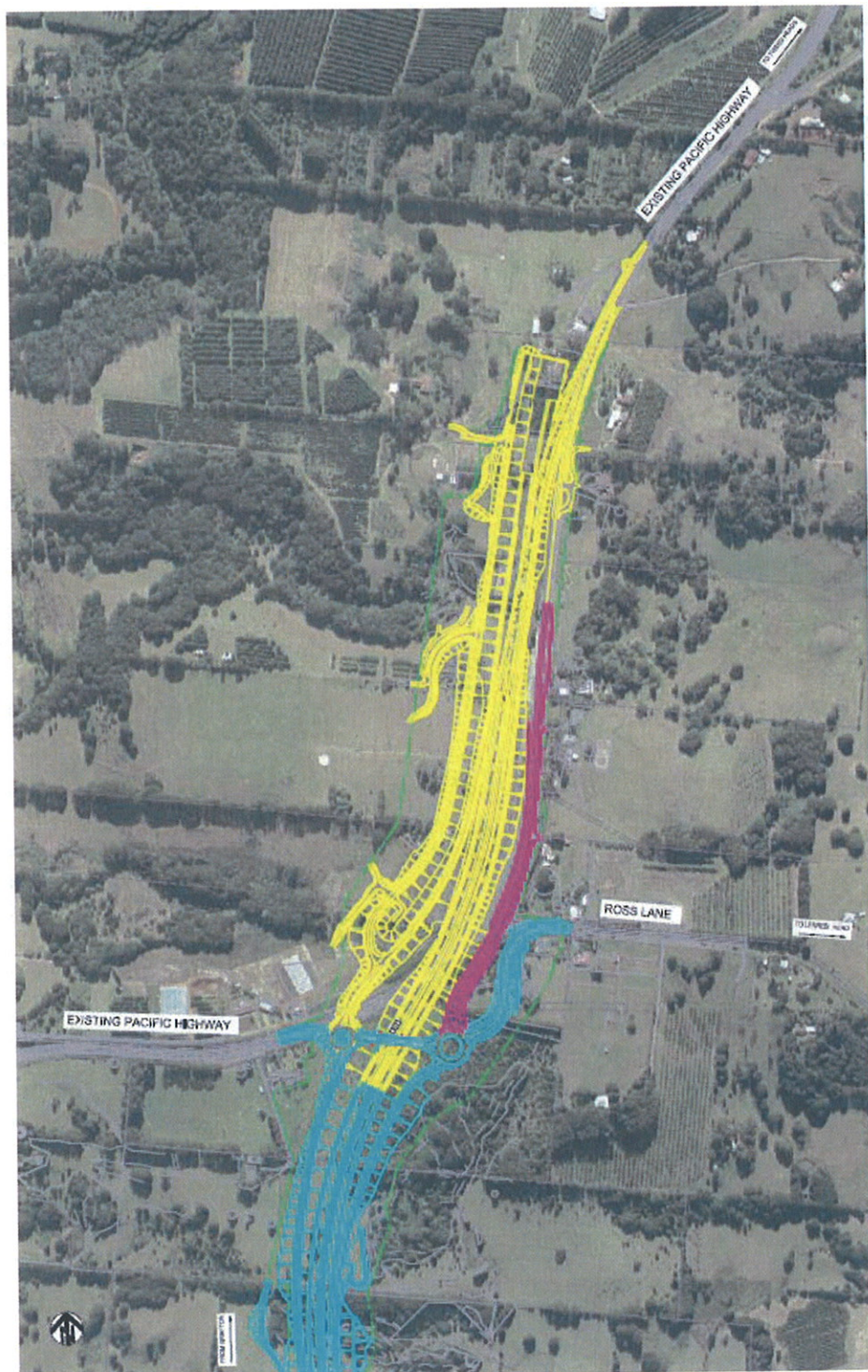
### 1.3 Location and Scope of Works

The extension of working hours on a Saturday would be used to undertake works along the Tintenbar to Ewingsdale section north of the Ballina Bypass (approximately 1140 metres) (refer Figure 1). The additional time would allow the continuation of the activities currently being undertaken to provide a productive day on Saturdays.

The majority of works during the extended hours would utilise the Ross Lane site compound. This site has been selected due to the distance to nearby sensitive receptors and the location of the site compound to the works.

Similarly, the activities to be undertaken during the extended hours on a Saturday would be a continuation of the general construction activities being undertaken by the Ballina Bypass Alliance. The types of construction activities that are likely to be undertaken within the extended hours include:

- Haul road construction and maintenance
- Service relocation
- Earthworks utilising site won materials and imported quarry products
- Drainage works
- Pavements
- Finishing works
- Crushing
- Installation and maintenance of sediment and erosion controls



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**NORTHERN TIE-IN  
 LOCALITY MAP**



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**Figure 1 - Tintenbar to Ewingsdale tie in to the Ballina Bypass Area Locality Plan**

## 02 Justification for Proposed Change to Working Hours

The Tintenbar to Ewingsdale section is a northern extension of the Ballina Bypass area of works. The BBA is seeking a modification to existing construction hours on Saturdays for the entire northern section of the project from Cumbalum diversion as a separate request. These requests are both required to ensure a seamless construction programme to enable the BBA to complete the northern section of the project prior to the wet season (December 2010 to May 2011), and allow the RTA to open this section of the Pacific Highway prior to the peak holiday season.

The type of construction activities that may be undertaken during the extended hours includes clearing and grubbing, service relocation, earthworks, crushing, haul roads, drainage, pavements and finishing works. No significant impact works such as blasting or pile driving will be undertaken during the extended hours. The potential construction noise impacts associated with the extension of working hours on a Saturday are discussed in Section 4.2.

There are multiple benefits associated with the extension of working hours. The key benefits include:

- **Improve public safety** – extended working hours will allow for the completion of the northern section of the Ballina Bypass prior to the peak holiday traffic period in December 2010
- **Reduce environmental impacts** – the completion of earthworks prior to the wet season will reduce the risks associated with erosion and sedimentation impacts to local waterways after significant rainfall events.
- **Minimal and manageable community impacts** – the benefits of the additional work hours can be achieved with minimal impact on the amenity of residents (refer to Section 2.4 of this report).
- **Increased productivity/cost effectiveness** – working a full day on Saturdays is considerably more efficient than a half day.

These benefits are discussed further below.

### 2.1 Improve Public Safety

There would be considerable benefits to the community (both local residents and other road users), the RTA, and other stakeholders from the early completion of this section. Completion of the northern tie in section (Tintenbar to Ewingsdale) with the Ballina Bypass by December 2010, would allow the peak holiday traffic to travel on the upgraded dual carriageway providing improved safety and conditions

compared to the existing single lane undivided road through this section. This would reduce traffic numbers on the local road network providing improved conditions for local residents and commuters. Completion of the northern section of works would remove a significant amount of construction traffic from the local road network and also remove the need for traffic control operations, further improving conditions and safety for local residents. This peak traffic time lies within the wet season months, which adds a further safety risk due to deterioration of driving conditions.

From January 2002 to the current day, there have been 123 crashes on the section of the Pacific Highway between Deadmans Creek Road and Ross Lane (Appendix B). This section of the existing Pacific Highway corresponds to the northern section of the Ballina Bypass. The 123 crashes that have occurred in this period include 7 fatalities and 45 crashes resulting in injury.

During the peak Christmas holiday period traffic volumes of the section of the Pacific Highway around Ballina increase by up to approximately 30%. The major delays over the Christmas period are on the approach to and through the Ballina Township. Traffic flows during this period will be improved by the completion of the Tintenbar to Ewingsdale tie in to the Ballina Bypass area (and the SP1), by providing increased lane capacity on the northbound exit for vehicles exiting from Ballina and travelling north.

### **2.3 Reduce Environmental Impacts**

Extremely heavy rainfall events generally occur within the Ballina region from December to May. These significant rainfall events increase the Project's erosion and sedimentation risk profile. During this time, the risk of erosion of soils and sedimentation impact on local waterways is increased and the detention basins have a higher risk of exceeding capacity during high rainfall. In addition, other environmental controls are put under increased pressure to accommodate the significantly higher rainfall events. The extended working hours would facilitate the progression of construction so that disturbed areas, will continually be effectively stabilised before the onset of the rainy season and thus greatly minimise (eliminate altogether) potential erosion and water quality issues.

## **2.4 Minimal and Manageable Additional Community Impacts**

In proposing the extension of working hours on a Saturday, BBA has considered the potential impacts on local residents. The residents within a 400 metres radius of the construction zone for the northern tie in works have been consulted by BBA Community Liaison Officers to discuss the proposal to extend working hours on Saturdays. Overall, the general consensus was that the extension of hours was supported as it would not impact them and that the sooner the works could be completed the better (refer Section 3 Consultation).

Extending the working hours would effectively reduce the timeframe that local residents would be exposed to construction activities and thus reducing the potential for disruption or disturbance to local residents.

## **2.5 Increased Productivity / Cost Effectiveness**

The increased working hours on a Saturday would allow for a more efficient construction process, due to the shorter time consumed with start up and shut down operations. This will result in increased productivity, which in turn will facilitate the benefits described below.

Working the extended construction hours also allows BBA to meet RTA's target of opening the northern section of the Pacific Highway by December 2010. It is envisaged that without the additional productivity, the impact of the wet season and Christmas holidays, the northern section of the Pacific Highway may not be completed until February/March 2011.

## 03 Consultation

### 3.1 Community Consultation

BBA Community Liaison Officers effectively engaged and consulted residents within a radius of 400 metres of the Tintenbar to Ewingsdale tie in to the Ballina Bypass construction zone regarding the extension of working hours on a Saturday. Figures S1 to S7 of the Noise and Vibration Management Plan (NVMP) were utilised to determine that four hundred metres was the maximum separation distance from the works area to sensitive receivers. The location of sensitive receivers in relation to the road corridor is shown in Appendix A. A copy of the consultation records is presented in Appendix C.

The aim of this consultation was to determine how residents felt about the possibility of extending construction working hours on a Saturday. The residents were asked to identify any concerns they may have in relation to the potential extension of hours. All four residents within this area were contacted. The residents within close proximity to the Ballina Bypass area have also been consulted and the consultation records are addressed in a separate document '*Modification Request Extension of Standard Working Hours Ballina Bypass*'.

All four of the four residents consulted, supported the proposed additional working hours. The general consensus was that residents wanted to see the upgrade finished as early as possible and they are supportive of the extended hours.

### 3.2 Stakeholder Consultation

The Department of Environment Climate Change and Water (DECCW) representatives have been extensively consulted in regards to the proposed extension of working hours at several Environment Reference Group (ERG) meetings which were held on 13 January, 17 February, 17 March and the latest being 14 April 2010. DECCW have raised no issues or objections in regards to the extended hours, however, they identified the need for community engagement and consultation. As a result, the BBA Community Liaison Officers have engaged in effective community consultation on this matter. DECCW have also requested to review this modification report prior to submission to the Department of Planning (DoP).

# 04 Environmental Management

## 4.1 Environmental Management Framework

All construction activities conducted during the extended hours on a Saturday would be undertaken in accordance with BBA's existing environmental management system including the approved Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), the associated sub plans, Environmental Procedures and Environmental Work Method Statements (EWMS). The CEMP sub plans include:

- Groundwater and Settlement Management Sub Plan
- Construction Traffic Management Sub Plan
- Flora and Fauna Management Sub Plan
- Integrated Wetland Management Sub Plan
- Construction Noise and Vibration Management Sub Plan
- Soil and Water Management Sub Plan
- Acid Sulphate Soils Management Sub Plan
- Spoil and Fill Management Sub Plan
- Urban Design, Landscape and Rehabilitation Sub Plan
- Indigenous Heritage Management Sub Plan
- Construction Air Quality Sub Plan
- Hazards and Risk Management Sub Plan
- Waste Management and Reuse Sub Plan.

BBA's Environment team ensures strict environmental compliance in accordance with these procedures and plans through inductions, 'toolbox talks', environmental training and performing rigorous onsite environmental audits and conducting daily inspections. The Project General Superintendent, Area Superintendents Engineers and Foremen are all responsible for the construction and maintenance of environmental controls.

The extended hours of works period is not expected to increase any environmental risks and is considered to be indifferent to other permitted work periods. To date, the approved CEMP, sub plans, Environmental Procedures and EWMS management tools have been successfully implemented on the project and are expected to continue managing potential environmental issues.

The potential environmental impact associated with the extension of hour's period is primarily noise, which is discussed in Section 4.2.

The appointed EMR for the project would continue to be consulted in regard to potential construction issues, including the extended hours on a Saturdays.

## **4.2 Noise Management**

### **4.2.1 Noise Related Complaints to Date**

Since June 2008, there have been a total of four (4) noise complaints received on the Ballina Bypass, within the northern project area. Details of the complaints are as follows:

- One complaint was regarding general trucks on the existing highway using exhaust brakes; and
- Three complaints were received regarding night works at Ross Lane during September 2009 (one of these was in relation to the use of a generator which was considered too loud).

Each of these issues were addressed and resolved to the satisfaction of the each complainant.

No complaints regarding construction noise have been received for the Tintenbar to Ewingsdale tie to the Ballina Bypass section of existing works (including clearing, relocation of services, drainage and initial earthworks).

### **4.2.2 Noise Impact Assessment**

As identified in Section 3 of the NVMP, there is a range of potential noise generating activities associated with construction of the Ballina Bypass Alliance Project. These include:

- Excavation
- Piling
- Spoil loading and unloading
- Vehicle arrival and departure (including loading/unloading of large plant and equipment)
- Operation of generators and pumps
- Removal and re-instatement of road pavement
- Concrete paving and cutting and asphalt paving
- Traffic diversions
- Tree removal

The activity with the greatest potential to generate noise is piling and blasting. This construction activity will not be undertaken during the proposed extended hours.