



## MEDIA RELEASE

# Thunderbolts Way upgrade to spark New England's growth

28 Aug 2018

Freight vehicles and drivers in the New South Wales Northern Tablelands region will be able to reach Newcastle and Sydney much more quickly thanks to a wider and safer Thunderbolts Way.

Federal Member for New England, Barnaby Joyce, said the Coalition Government's \$3.84 million investment includes widening and re-sealing of 14 sections of the 290-kilometre Thunderbolts Way, to better connect inland communities to the coast.

"This project will see heavy freight vehicles travel more quickly and safely along the shortest route between Newcastle and our inland towns," Mr Joyce said.

"I've been fighting for upgrades on this road and now we're delivering - it's all helping to build our corridor of commerce and a stronger regional economy in the New England electorate."

Mayor of Walcha Eric Noakes said Thunderbolts Way connects traffic and freight from southern Queensland and northern New South Wales to Newcastle and Sydney.

"This upgrade will help our community meet the increasing demands of traffic and freight movements to and from these regions," Cr Noakes said.

Mayor of MidCoast David West said the improvements include widening, replacing any unsuitable surfaces and applying a thicker pavement base to the road.

"These upgrades will only become more important as the economic connection between inland New South Wales and Newcastle continues to grow," Cr West said.

Mayor of Uralla Michael Pearce said the upgrade will benefit up to 1,500 vehicles which use the road each day.

"This project provides a safer and more efficient transport route for freight vehicles as well as locals and visitors to the region," Cr Pearce said.

This project was jointly funded with the Coalition Government investing \$3,840,000, Walcha Council \$374,874, Gloucester Council \$931,984 and Uralla Council \$299,809.

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Hon **Barnaby Joyce** MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND

(ENDS)

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