

# Pacific Highway Upgrade Woolgoolga to Ballina

## Project detail

### DURATION

Contract award April 2015  
Open to Traffic 2020

### PROJECT PARTNERS/STAKEHOLDERS

#### Lead agency:

Pacific Complete is a JV between Laing O'Rourke and WSP (formerly Parsons Brinkerhoff)

### CONTRACT VALUE

\$5.3B AUD

### CONTRACT TYPE

Delivery partner

### DESCRIPTION

W2B is Australia's largest regional infrastructure project and involves the duplication of approximately 155km of road to a four-lane divided road on the Pacific Highway. The upgrade began 6km north of Woolgoolga (north of Coffs Harbour) and ends approximately 6km south of Ballina.

- 12 grade separated interchanges
- 155 bridges including major crossings of the Clarence and Richmond rivers
- 932 hectares of clearing and 15 million m3 of earthworks
- Major works through 30km of flood plains
- 100 crossings for threatened fauna such as koalas and emus
- 850,000 m2 of rigid concrete pavements
- 930 of precast elements
- Peak workforce of 3500 people
- Sustained monthly turnover averaging \$100m per month during peak construction in CY 2018 & 2019



## Procurement process

Transport for NSW (TfNSW) and the Delivery Partner, Pacific Complete, worked as an integrated team to fast track the procurement process to manage the critical path whilst working to maximise indigenous and local industry participation.

Work packages were structured to best suit market capability and the program's strategic outcomes. More than 170 work packages have been awarded ranging from <\$100k to >\$500m. By mid-2020 with the program at 90% complete, \$64m has been spent with aboriginal businesses, exceeding the 1.5% government target.

Local industry participation was maximised on the NSW North Coast by awarding contracts to 9 local quarries along the alignment, which had an added benefit of reducing time spent in transit on the local road network.

The program-wide approach to procurement ensured consistency in delivery. A great example of this was utilising the Laing O'Rourke Next Gear Safety System, which included inducting >12,500 site personnel. From a delivery perspective, 155 bridge designs were standardised to influence a program-wide precast and logistics strategy, which included supply contracts in regional locations such as Coffs Harbour, Macksville and Dubbo.

## Project delivery

Some key highlights include:

- Open to Traffic in 2020 is on-track despite flooding, bush fires and COVID-19 risks
- Safety Next Gear Principles have been included by contractors in their corporate safety policy

- Annual cash-flow targets for 3 years have been >2% of the commitment
- Successful resolution of sensitive environmental and heritage issues
- Installation works for 278 properties was completed prior to open to traffic, and operational compliance testing.
- Use of technology enabled timely decision making such as releasing hold point for soft soil settlement areas and the management of interfaces between contractors

## Outcomes and achievements

Some highlights include:

- Reduced travel times and incidents on the highway
- Exceeded aboriginal participation targets
- Independent staff engagement score exceeding 'high performing team' threshold

*'Having been involved over the last 40 years in most of the Pacific Highway projects between Newcastle and the Queensland border I would just like to say that I believe that this approx. 35km section is one of the best if not the best section of Highway Upgrade opened ... the project as a whole is a real credit to all those involved. This sections outcome is a great example of the positives that the Delivery Partner concept has brought to the upgrade.'*

**Mike Bulmer**

*Pacific Highway Design Manager (Retired)*

