

MEDIA RELEASE

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DISAPPOINTED WITH MOLONGLO BRIDGE DELAYS

The Molonglo Valley Community Forum (MVCF) and Weston Creek Community Council (WCCC) today expressed their collective disappointment in the delay of the Molonglo Valley bridge over Coppins Crossing.

Minister for Transport and City Services, Chris Steel MLA, announced that construction of the new flood-proof Molonglo River Bridge is now scheduled to commence in 2023, with completion set for 2025 at the earliest.

Interim spokesperson for the MVCF, Ryan Hemsley said the delays are frustrating for residents and businesses of the Molonglo Valley, and for many Canberrans who are affected when Coppins Crossing floods.

"This new completion date is one year after the original date outlined in the ACT Government's 2019 Infrastructure Plan," said Mr Hemsley.

"This bridge is a vital piece of infrastructure for the Molonglo Valley, Weston Creek and Canberra. When Coppins Crossing floods, the pressure and congestion placed on the Cotter Road and Tuggeranong Parkway impacts businesses and residents right across the ACT."

Bill Gemmell, interim Chair of WCCC, expressed concerns that the signs are there for the future slippage of the completion of this vital piece of infrastructure should current budget pressures continue.

"As the events of Wednesday evening demonstrated, a couple of relatively minor traffic crashes showed us how the current arrangements have very little redundancy. Population growth will make the situation even more tentative," said Mr Gemmell.

"Many residents will remain concerned that there are limited emergency routes should a natural disaster such as bushfire require an evacuation."

Funding has already been allocated for the bridge's construction, with the Commonwealth Government contributing \$87.5 million and the ACT Government matching the funding in its 2020-21 budget.

"This bridge will significantly improve transport and traffic safety across the ACT. We will be asking Minister Steel for an explanation of this delay," said Mr Hemsley.

END

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