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PRESS RELEASE

RURAL LOCAL ROADS

During a visit to Redland Bay, the Prime Minister said he had been informed that the local Redland Shire Council had been forced to stop road work on Stradbroke Island by a delay in the allocation of funds provided by the Australian Government.

To date this financial year, the Australian Government has provided \$23.4 million to the Queensland Government for road construction and maintenance. This represents four months' allocation of the total amount to be provided to the Queensland Government for the 1974-75 year.

Queensland has received its instalments in exactly the same way as the other States. There has been no delay on the Australian Government's part in the provision of those necessary funds.

Of the \$23.4 million provided, about \$5 million has been for rural local roads. These funds are provided with no strings attached. How and when it is shared among local governments is the responsibility of the Queensland Government. If the Redland Shire Council, or any other shire council, has been starved of funds, it is fairly and squarely the fault of the Queensland Government.

Mr Whitlam said that the arbitrary bottleneck created by the Queensland Government meant a decline in the quality of rural services, and resulted in council staff being thrown out of work.

17 November 1974