



Julatten and Mt Molloy Association of
Residents and Ratepayers Inc
PO Box 30 Mt Molloy 4871
ABN: 54 830 892 004

<http://www.jamarr.org.au>

JAMARR MEDIA RELEASE: 26 AUG 2014

Audit confirms: B-Doubles on Range Road fails public safety requirements



*New trucks and trailers but same old problem: the road is not fit for 25m B-Doubles.
(Photo: JAMARR member, July 2014)*

The Rex Range Road fails to meet proper standards of road safety, according to a Road Safety Audit (RSA) recently undertaken by an independent Registered Senior Road Safety Auditor.

The Audit proves the road does not meet road safety requirements as a transport route for B-doubles. This is no surprise to the locals and visitors who have been clamouring for State agencies to take the safety issue seriously since April 2013 when Mackay Sugar Ltd publicly announced the massive increase of cane to be hauled from the Tablelands to the Mossman Mill.

Frustrated with lack of response from Department of Main Roads and state politicians, JAMARR saw no option but to fund the Road Safety Audit directly. President Diana Abiad notes: "We asked the agencies to provide road traffic data, road safety studies, and economic modelling. In other words, we asked for evidence that would help the community weigh up the risks and benefits. We got nothing of substance back. They were unable to produce any safety audits or crash modelling or

even road damage projections. Neither the bureaucrats nor the politicians want to face the facts, so they simply don't do the studies. They have rubber-stamped the approvals and it's just not good enough. This Audit proves that there are significant public safety concerns, and it's just a start. There needs to be much more intelligent handling of the situation. We ought to have much better options."

The Audit documents 15 Safety Deficiencies, as defined under the Audit Guidelinesⁱ published by Austroads, the national organization that mandates Road Safety Audit processes and formats.

Of greatest concern are the two Category A deficiencies, the highest severity which demand action as a priority. The report cites insufficient lane widths and shoulders as being a severe safety deficiency. The road is too narrow to accommodate B-doubles without impacting the safety of other drivers.

The RSA should be an embarrassment and a wake-up call to the State agencies and politicians. However, Ms Abiad does not claim to be a road safety engineer. "That's why we worked with an independent, Registered Auditor. Typically these Audits are commissioned by the agencies themselves to assess the risk factors of a road *before* they approve a massive increase in traffic volumes. In this case, the agencies have not faced up to their duty of care. What are they planning to say in court when they are asked to produce evidence that this route got the tick for an extra 42,000 B-Double movements? Where is their independent Road Safety Audit?"

The JAMARR RSA was undertaken in June-July 2014 by a Registered Senior Road Safety Auditor (Level 2), assisted by interviews with Queensland Police Service officers Greg Matthews (Mt Molloy), OIC Sgt Matt Smith (Mossman), and OIC Sgt Damien Meadows (Port Douglas).

The Audit backs up the common-sense view that many people in the district already share: the route is unsuitable for this type of heavy transport at this volume. Ms Abiad points out: "People know that cane has been hauled to Mossman in years past, but Mackay Sugar are claiming approvals for a massive increase. The Range Road has never been subject to these volumes. No one actually knows how bad it's going to get. As shown in our Audit, this scheme puts the public at serious risk."

The Audit's findings could be seen as confirming negligence on the part of State agencies and politicians who approved the route without first exercising their duty of care to all public road users.

Media Contact: Ms Diana Abiad, 0416 035 131 (di@dianaabiad.com.au)

The RSA is downloadable from the JAMARR website: <http://www.jamarr.org.au>

JAMARR is a small, not-for-profit association with a 20 year history of representing the interests of residents and ratepayers in the Julatten-Mount Molloy district.

ⁱ Austroads Road Safety Audit Manual, <http://www.austroads.com.au/road-operations/road-safety/resources/guide-to-road-safety>