



Port Augusta

CITY COUNCIL

MEDIA RELEASE

Great Western Bridge closed to cyclists and pedestrians

The Great Western Bridge pedestrian bridge has closed effective immediately due to safety concerns raised in an independent engineering report, received by Council late yesterday.

Port Augusta City Council commissioned the report as part of its ongoing program to monitor the 90-year-old bridge's condition.

"Council staff have been completing increased inspections of the bridge since acoustic testing in 2014 identified a loss of structural integrity," Port Augusta Mayor Sam Johnson said. These inspections are done to observe deterioration and determine the need for repairs to maintain pedestrian safety.

"The engineering report has confirmed Council's assessment of additional timber movement in the bridge span, evidenced by the recent collapse of two light poles, and significant further deterioration of the abutments at each end of the bridge," Mayor Johnson said.

Council are now required to consider the short-term and long term options for continued access to the Great Western Bridge, as the integrity of the entire length of the bridge is compromised. Investigations are being made into funding opportunities through Federal and State Government to assist with the repair or replacement requirements.

To reopen the bridge in the short-term, works would be required to reinforce the abutments at both ends of the bridge and the light poles to be reinstalled with additional supports. Large expenditure of Council funds for the repairs of the abutments only, without funding being committed for the repair or replacement of the entire length, could be considered a waste of Council resources.

At over 90 years old, both the structure and the deck of the Great Western Bridge have deteriorated significantly. Council has been aware for some time of the need for a long-term solution as the structural issues cannot be addressed through repair.

Mayor Johnson has commenced negotiations with relevant Ministers in a bid to secure funding through the Federal Government's Bridges Renewal Programme with matching State Government funding.

Due to the closure of the Great Western Bridge, pedestrians will be required to use the Joy Baluch AM Bridge and it is important for the community to be cautious due to the likely increase in pedestrian activity across this bridge.

ENDS

For further information please contact Port Augusta City Council Mayor Sam Johnson on 8641 9100 or 0423 291 127 or email sam.johnson@portaugusta.sa.gov.au

MRS LEE HERON
ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
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