

## NEWS

# Call for highway duplication

TWO people from Western Australia died on the Dukes Highway after their car collided with a truck on Friday morning, 10 kilometres north of Tintinara.

Major crash investigators were called to the scene and the Dukes Highway remained closed for most of the day.

The fatal accident on the notorious highway has again ignited the debate for duplication between Tailem Bend and Keith.

The Federal Government has spent \$80 million and the State Government \$20 million this

financial year on the Duke's Highway, creating more overtaking lines and widening the centreline gap.

But Member for Hammond

Adrian Pederick said that it was money poorly spent.

"We could have duplicated the road to Coomandook for that money," he said.

"Instead of a band-aid approach, we really need to go all the way and duplicate the highway.

"Any money allocated to this highway should be spent on duplication regardless of who's in power."

The State Government recently announced a 30-year plan that included major infrastructure upgrades for the Mallee, including a duplication of the Dukes Highway between Tailem Bend and Keith, road widening of the Mallee Highway, Princes Highway, Loxton to Pinnaroo Road and the Pinnaroo to Bordertown

Road.

If elected the State Liberal Party will set up Infrastructure SA within 12 months to oversee their 36-year transport plan.

"Sadly we can't go sooner (duplication) than we would

like - it's a medium to long term plan," Mr Pederick said.

"I'm not taking away from the sad loss of these lives but it (accidents) has ramifications for everyone."

Federal Member for Barker Tony Pasin would not comment on whether the \$80 million was well spent but said he constantly advocated for further investment to improve the safety of his electorate's busiest road.

"The upgrade to dual lanes remains an aspiration goal, but something we should never lose sight of," he said.