
NEWS RELEASE

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Transportation and Infrastructure

Improved maintenance coming to Highways 16 and 97

PRINCE GEORGE – The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure is changing the maintenance classification for Highway 16 and Highway 97 in northern B.C. to a Class A level, meaning more maintenance and quicker response times on both highways.

These highways are critical corridors supporting liquefied natural gas development and other industrial growth in the North.

Currently Highway 16 is maintained at a rural highway Class B level, except for main arterials through cities and the stretch of road between the B.C./Alberta border and Tête Jaune Cache, which are already maintained at a Class A level. The change will make the entire Highway 16 corridor Class A, from Prince Rupert to the B.C./Alberta border.

Currently Highway 97 North has a classification level of B for the portion between Prince George and Chetwynd. After the change, the entire northern section of Highway 97 from Cache Creek to the end of provincial jurisdiction for the highway north of Fort St. John, will be Class A.

These changes represent a significant increase in the maintenance commitment for both highways, and will result in more frequent patrols and quicker response times, and more plowing, snow removal, and salt and sand applications.

The changes are expected to be in effect by mid-to-late February.

In the past four years, the Government of B.C. has invested \$129 million in improvements and upgrades on Highway 16.

Quotes:

Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Todd Stone —

“Highway 16 and Highway 97 are both key corridors in the North, supporting the region’s growing LNG and industrial development. This change will ensure these highways are maintained to the best possible standards.”

Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and MLA for Prince George-Valemount Shirley Bond —

“Increasing the maintenance levels on important northern highways will support development in the North as we continue to see traffic growth on these corridors. This is great news for the thousands of people who live and work in our region, many of whom travel frequently in some very challenging weather conditions.”

MLA for Prince George-Mackenzie Mike Morris —

“Highway 97 North is a vital corridor for industry, and I know that commercial drivers and local users will be thrilled with this change in the highway’s maintenance classification for the Prince George to Chetwynd corridor.”

Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation and MLA for Nechako Lakes John Rustad

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“This is very welcome news for the residents and commercial drivers who use Highway 16 and Highway 97 on a regular basis. These changes will not only make travel safer and more efficient, they will have significant, positive spin-off effects for British Columbians throughout the North.”

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