

No. WI-43 (12)/63

*Dated the 21st September, 1963*

To

The Chief Engineers of All State PWDs

Sub : Damage to National Highways

The State Governments were requested (with copies to the State Chief Engineers) in this Department's letter No. WI-6 (4)/56, dated the 22nd March, 1956, to issue instructions to the local officers, in charge of National Highways, to report to this department immediately after the occurrence, direct by wire or telephone, whichever is quicker, and thereafter to send a detailed report with regard to damages caused to the National Highways by floods, earthquakes etc. Thereafter, the State Chief Engineers were requested in this Department's letter No. WI-51 (12)/58, dated the 2nd January, 1959 to instruct the officers in charge of the National Highways to intimate to this Department by telegram whenever any breach on a National Highway got extensively damaged and was closed to traffic. Such telegrams were to be followed by detailed reports showing the particulars of the damages and the causes thereof, the period for which the affected breaches were likely, to be closed to the traffic and alternative arrangements were made in the aforesaid letter to the State Chief Engineers that wide publicity should be given whenever a road was closed to traffic and suitable warning signs should be posted and diversions were provided, they should be prominently indicated at the site. They were further requested that the roads, after restoration of the damage, when reopened to traffic necessary intimation should be sent to this department telegraphically.

2. It is, however, noticed with regret that from some States no reports are received at all for example in the recent floods there have been serious damages in certain National Highways and traffic thereon has been dislocated for many days but still no report from any local officer was received in this department.

3. It will be realised that this department being responsible for the maintenance and development of the National Highways should be given upto date information with regard to any unusual damage to them which might result in the dislocation of traffic. The necessity of this department getting all this information promptly particularly in the present emergency cannot be over emphasised. Moreover, a large number of queries in regard to the condition of roads are received from time to time from Members of Parliament, tourists, Government departments and non-official agencies. In the absence of reports from the local officers correct information about the condition of the roads cannot be supplied by this Department.

4. I am, therefore, to reiterate the necessity of sending by telegram or telephone, the reports of damage to the National Highways immediately after such damages have occurred, followed by detailed reports about the extent of the damage and measures taken to restore it and the time expected to be taken in opening the road to traffic. It is further requested that suitable instructions may be issued to all Executive Engineers in charge of the National Highways for strict compliance with these instructions. Action taken in the matter may kindly be intimated to this Deptt.