

SUBMISSION TO SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE

Management of the Inland Rail project by the Australian Rail Track Corporation and the Commonwealth Government

I would like to put forward the following submission for consideration to the Inquiry into Management of the Inland Rail project by the Australian Rail Track Corporation and the Commonwealth Government.

I will address the points of interest as listed on your website in order and with reference to the Queensland section of this Project with particular reference to the section from Kagaru to Acacia Ridge and Bromelton. I will also submit this as an attachment to be submitted.

As per your list of interests.

The management of the Inland Rail project by the Australian Rail Track Corporation and the Commonwealth Government, with particular reference to:

a. financial arrangements of the project

As an Engineer I have had discussions with Rob McNamara, North Start to Gowrie (NS2G) Project Director Inland Rail, and Tony Lubofsky, Director Public Private Partnership Inland Rail and discussed the PPP Funding arrangements and as an Engineer and Project Manager know this is a common form of funding arrangement for Infrastructure Projects and as such have no complaint about it.

b. route planning and selection processes;

The Route of major concern is the section from Bromelton to Acacia Ridge and is currently a point of conflict between State and Federal Governments. See attached Statement from Mark Bailey State Minister for Transport and letter from Michael McCormack Federal Minister for Infrastructure stating opposite plans for the Bromelton to Acacia Ridge link.

Media Statements Mark Bailey 190821.pdf

Michael McCormack MP 190930.pdf

c. connections with other freight infrastructure, including ports and intermodal hubs;

The connection from Bromelton to the Port of Brisbane is still being considered by a joint Investigation into options from Acacia Ridge to the Port of Brisbane being currently undertaken by the State and Federal Governments. This report was due 17 April 2019 but as yet has not been done but due by end of this year. As such a final route is still not decided and as such ARTC cannot request from the Coordinator General a recognition as a Coordinated project. In my discussions with the Federal Department of Infrastructure, the Coordinator Generals Office and Mark Bailey, Minister for Transport, there is a conflict between State and Federal Governments on the best way to get from Bromelton to the Port of Brisbane. The Port of Brisbane Authority has stated that sending

SUBMISSION TO SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE

double stacked containers directly to the Port would stop double handling of the freight and the Port was designed to handle this. The ARTC Business Case 2015 states clearly that the preferred and eventual option will be the Eastern Corridor (see below), and with slight modification to start this further out closer to Bromelton it would be cheaper and better option.

d. **engagement on route alignment, procurement and employment;**

As yet not started on the section from Bromelton to Acacia Ridge however as the final alignment of this section is in dispute this cannot be started yet.

e. **urban and regional economic development opportunities;**

The regional development by having regional Logistics hubs at Bromelton and the proposed one at Ebenezer will not only bring local employment directly into the freight service but flow on employment from those people working and living locally. This would also be enhanced if the past plans to shift Acacia Ridge Logistics terminal further out perhaps to Bromelton were implemented and take the freight handling away from high density suburban areas. This also raises the problem that currently all freight is destined to go to Acacia Ridge with its chaotic effect on local traffic already a problem for that area.

f. **collaboration between governments;**

See: Notes in item b. above and attachments on how State and Federal Government are conflicting on critical parts of the plans. In my discussions with Rob McNamara, North Start to Gowrie (NS2G) Project Director Inland Rail, he stated to the Engineers Australia Conference, that this section into Brisbane is the most difficult of the whole Project. Better consideration is required to get from Bromelton to the Port and how to address the on flow truck traffic from Bromelton, and Acacia Ridge along Mount Lindsay Highway and Beaudesert Roads.

g. **interaction with National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy;**

The recent Sale of Acacia Ridge Logistics Terminal to Lindsay Transport and the Rail Logistics from Aurizon to Pacific National needs to be recognised and plans made to support their move to regional freight logistics hubs such as Bromelton and Ebenezer. It would be beneficial for them to move there if Inland Rail were to utilise regional Freight hubs and the Port Freight go directly to the Port and not need to offloaded onto trucks at Acacia Ridge.

SUBMISSION TO SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE

h. **any other related matters.**

- i. If a new route from Bromelton to the Port of Brisbane were decided then coal trains could go there through low density areas and not through highly populated areas.
- ii. If this new route from Bromelton were in place and all local freight handled regionally at the regional freight hubs then the problems with track alignment and future passenger rail from Beaudesert to Salisbury would no longer be a problem.
- iii. I draw your attention to the ARTC Business Case which States:

**ARTC Business Case
2015
Page 31**

Notwithstanding the marginal economic result, timely action to preserve a corridor for the Eastern Freight Rail Corridor could be a prudent measure. Further investment in the existing route would postpone, but not remove, the eventual need for the new route.

**ARTC Business Case
2015
Page 48**

Even with these upgrades, at some point in the future, a new, dedicated route will be required. Passenger services will inevitably grow over time and progressively 'squeeze out' freight paths on the shared network.

**ARTC Business Case
2015
Page 305**

Upgraded Existing Corridor: Upgrading the existing corridor was rejected as an ultimate, double track alignment as it passes through dense, inner-city residential communities, making it technically difficult to construct and socially unacceptable. Large numbers of properties would be resumed and numerous major arterial road structures would be completely rebuilt, causing huge logistical challenges.

The cost would be high, yet the end product would not meet best practice, with too many substandard curves and gradients.

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