

Senator Sterle

I cannot find anything on the aph website about the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Committee inquiring into Freightlink, yet I didn't imagine what I heard on the news. Anyhow, here is a short submission for the Committee:

I note the 2015 federal budget plans for a truck highway from Fremantle to Kewdale. When there was an inquiry into large trucks on Leach Hwy held at the East Fremantle Football Club in 2003, a proposal was put forward to take advantage of the North Fremantle rail loop built under Keating's One Nation program.

Simply put all container freight would be consigned at source to Perth - Spearwood, Perth - Kewdale, or Perth - Wangara. At North Fremantle it would go straight from ship to shuttle train and be offloaded at a Spearwood, Kewdale or Wangara depot (If Wangara is included, it would require a rail extension). Trucks would take it from there.

No need to disturb the Beeliar wetlands, Fremantle remains the working port it wants to be, and 65,000 trucks a year aren't as concentrated on one route in southern Perth. There are almost certainly also carbon dioxide savings, not to mention reductions of nitrogen oxides and diesel particulate emissions compared to using road trucks.

It may be a lot cheaper too, so that some of the anticipated upfront capital cost of a road freightlink could instead be used to reduce shuttle rail charges for containers over an extended period.

I understand the WA state government has been acquiring land in the Spearwood area for a freight exchange anyway. This may well fit with the above proposal.

Thank you
Geoff Taylor

