

AUSTRALASIAN RAILWAY ASSOCIATION INC
Association Number A03958 ABN 64 217 302 489

Committee Secretary
House of Representatives Standing
Committee on Environment and Heritage
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Secretary:.....

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- 6 NOV 2003

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

Dear Committee Secretary

I refer to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment and Heritage's inquiry into sustainable cities. Please find attached our submission responding to the transport elements of your inquiry's terms of reference.

The ARA fully supports a more sustainable approach to the planning, investing and managing of cities' transport needs as they relate to the movement of both passengers and freight.

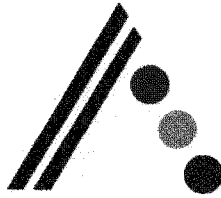
We would be pleased to expand on any of the issues raised in our submission if it would assist the Committee. Contact details are Kathryn Rayner on telephone 02 6270 4508 or email krayner@ara.net.au.

Further information on the ARA is available on our website www.ara.net.au.

Yours sincerely

Bryan Nye
Chief Executive Officer
Australasian Railway Association

4 November 2003



AUSTRALASIAN RAILWAY ASSOCIATION INC

Submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Environment and Heritage Inquiry into Sustainable Cities 2025

Introduction

The ARA is interested in promoting sustainable transport planning that allows for integrated port, road, and rail planning and investment. The ARA also supports direct competition between the modes where the market will support several modes, in other areas modal choices need to be made. Modal choices and investment should be undertaken within a framework that considers not only the economic costs of each mode, but also the environmental, safety and community amenity costs and benefits. It is recognised that this approach would require a changed relationship between the different levels of government and a new approach to infrastructure investment.

Planning

The development of a more sustainable approach to city planning needs to be supported by good transport planning to meet both the public transport and freight needs of the community. Transport planning needs to be multi-modal offering supportive and complementary services where demand for direct competition is not sustainable.

Planning should take into account the best modal choice for each element of the transport plan, balancing investment and operational costs against environmental and social costs.

Influencing of modal choice to meet planning objectives can be further supported by a range of government levers, including taxation, fostering a private sector investment environment, direct government investment, CSOs and pricing.

Transport planning should also be integrated into the total land use planning exercise and have the flexibility to adapt to changing community land use requirements.

Sustainability

Rail is the safest form of land transport and also the lowest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. In addition to this, the industry is working on developing noise standards to reduce the impact of rail operations on urban communities. However, the sustainability

advantages of rail as often not taken into account in infrastructure investment decisions. In some cases rail passenger patronage has declined as a direct result of tollway developments, the convenience and pricing of which make rail public transport uncompetitive.

The increasing privatisation and/or corporation of freight and passenger transport operations have improved the sustainability of the industry allowing for a more commercial approach to delivering transport services. This has resulted in improved service levels, more competitive pricing and greater customer satisfaction.

Freight

A major issue facing the rail industry is the movement of freight into and out of urban areas, this includes the movement of freight to and from ports. Solutions require a multimodal approach and consideration of city edge intermodal terminals to limit freight moving through cities. Dedicated freight lines from ports to urban edge terminals is also an option.

Transport infrastructure has to accommodate the community's passenger and freight needs; this is best approached in a way that maximises asset utilisation without compromising customer demands. Simple passenger priority solutions do not necessarily deliver the best performance in either meeting customer demands or managing the infrastructure assets.

Auslink

The Federal Government's proposed Auslink initiative is a good approach to national land transport planning but could be expanded to proactively involve all levels of governments and cover the total land transport planning task. This would allow for better integration between "national" transport networks and urban transport networks. The focus should move away from interstate freight corridors to one of transport corridors and intra and inter city movements for both freight and passengers. Any transport plan must incorporate both the passenger and freight tasks as they are not separated on the infrastructure and without proper planning demand cannot be met.

Summary

The development of passenger and freight transport networks is a key element in establishing sustainable cities. Decisions about modal options, investment, and social impacts require careful balance if they are to meet the expectation of customers.