

## SUPPLEMENTARY SUBMISSION NO. 165

Mr Pail Neville  
Chair  
House of Representatives Standing Committee  
on Transport and Regional Services  
Parliament House  
Canberra. ACT. 2600  
28.4.2006

Dear Mr Neville,

Thankyou for the opportunity of meeting you and your committee in Toowoomba. It was an excellent meeting in the context of having the other submissions in light of our own. (Even the dog was interested – should make for an interesting recollection)

You asked about the Moree and north west NSW group responding to the Warick Rathdowney option v the Toowoomba Range crossing.

Having reviewed the submissions I make the following comments.

1. The initial comment was made; “we would like to see a fast efficient service straight to port from upcountry; ie. Northern NSW and western Queensland. Fast, flat and double stacked.”
2. General consensus is that storage and packing facilities will move up country located near source stock as urban real estate increases, quality control and inventory management issues increase (happening now). In this case we need direct access to port – no drop offs from up country. That is what makes rail viable; it is volume related and predominately export. Grain into Brisbane etc. for domestic processing will continue to be road dominated for some time – the local rail infrastructure needs a big overhaul and in some cases is non existent.
3. Fast, flat and double stacked would not support an inter change at Bromelton or Charlton where freight was broken down into single stacks; it defeats the purpose. We need access straight through to port either via Toowoomba or Bromelton.
4. There are future issues relating to funnelling transport and freight in and around Ipswich. I believe these can be overcome as long as the appropriate corridors are consolidated and future planning outcomes achieved. Ipswich I believe will become a major distribution and industrial area similar to Campbelltown in west Sydney. Our freight would not want to drop off here – straight to port. Inter state freight would want to stop/drop off here for distribution and vice versa it would be a consolidation point for freight in the region to be shipped out both domestically and export.
5. Both fully upgraded range crossings would be good but not affordable. Our feeling is that we need to maximise existing infrastructure and project into the

- future. In the short term it maybe feasible to engineer rail wagons to accommodate more weight capacity down the range and test the market. Toowoomba is a key interchange for Northern NSW and Southern and Southern Central Queensland. (Dunavant would support such a move). At the same time put the bulk of the funds into the Warwick – Bromelton option and take a long term position on accessing the port of Brisbane double stacked. A future road link would need to be developed between Ipswich and Beaudesert
6. Toowoomba, Charlton are key areas in the overall scheme. Inland Rail means Inland and this area is pivotal for development north south east and west. Infrastructure upgrades need to be pulled over the range because this is where the business is. Coal will drive development north and it won't take much effort to pull Xstrata and other mining operators together to underwrite the Wandooan to Banana line. With the upgrade of the line from Moree/North Star to Goondi you would have an immediate Melb. to Brisbane line with some wagon configuration could operate without any breakdown of freight (retractable axles). The freight out of Moree alone would underwrite the development and would only grow out of the wider region as in the short term wagons were able to cope with increased capacity down the Toowoomba range. You painted the picture of access into Gladstone from the south; this should not be underrated which is why I initially favour the upgrades in and around Toowoomba to get the ball rolling. The eventual fast, flat and double stacked east coast freight may go out of Gladstone or eventually Darwin.
  7. The Moree north development is simple, cost effective and would support either range crossing, so we can sit without biased comment. Neither option will be viable though without the Moree – Goondi link being completed as it will provide both enormous regional freight (user pays) and essential through put of freight from the south on the eventual outer inland rail bypass as discussed by Warrick Moppett and his group from Central NSW.
  8. In Short: In order of time frame.
    - Complete dual guage from Goondi to North Star/Moree and extend narrow gauge to Narrabri. This will allow direct access to Brisbane Port. This is a simple can do project that will immediately break down inter state connectivity. It will have a very positive effect psychologically on business and potential rail users.
    - Upgrade wagons to increase weight capacity down the Toowoomba Range. Review initial Range upgrades (cost effective) to cope with increase of capacity.
    - At the same time cost out both the Toowoomba Range Crossing and the Cunningham option in terms of construction and future planning for fast, flat, double stacked. Ensure costings allow for direct access to ports for export containers and possible increase in export bulk product.
    - Once decided on long term option ensure road links connect any inter modal sites; ie. Ipswich to Bromelton. Toowoomba – Ipswich – Brisbane Port. Road works and associated Networks may in fact cost out more than rail.
    - Encourage the Queensland Govt, ARTC and Industry to get the Wandooan rail option to access Gladstone back on track. Feds to take a lead.....

Please give me a call if we can be of any further assistance.

Regards,

Kevin Humphries Moree.  
(042812006 – mob.)