



**The Hon Anthony Albanese MP**

Minister for Infrastructure,  
Transport, Regional Development  
and Local Government  
Leader of the House

Reference: 10446-2008

- 2 DEC 2008

Mrs Julia Irwin MP  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Petitions  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mrs Irwin

Thank you for your letter dated 29 October 2008 about the petition regarding the Adelaide Rail Freight Movements Study.

I announced the Study on 3 September 2008 including the establishment of a project reference group. The Government has set aside \$3 million to undertake the Study with \$1 million being available in 2008-09 as an early start election commitment and the balance available in 2009-10. A copy of the terms of reference for the Study is attached.

A project reference group has been established to ensure that key stakeholders have input into the Study. The group has met once and is expected to meet again early in the new year. It comprises representatives of:

- The City of Mitcham;
- The Freight Rail Operators Group;
- The Australian Rail Track Corporation; and
- The Local Government Association of South Australia.

My Department is currently running a process to engage specialist consultants to assist the Study.

A Discussion Paper that provides the context of the issues under consideration in terms of the freight task and community concerns and presents a range of options including a realignment of the rail line to the north of the Adelaide Hills is expected to be released by the end of May 2009 with a view to having a final report to Government by around September 2009.

Thank you for raising this matter.

Yours sincerely

~~ANTHONY~~ ALBANESE

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# **Adelaide Rail Freight Movements Study**

## **Terms of Reference**

**September 2008**

## **1. Introduction**

The local community has raised concerns about noise levels, safety and inconvenience for road users of this main interstate rail line through the Adelaide Hills and has sought realignment to the north. These concerns and a proposed realignment of the track are reflected in a report that was prepared by the Mitcham Community Rail Freight Task Force in 2007 (the Task Force is an initiative of the City of Mitcham).

The interstate track runs parallel to the urban passenger rail network from Belair and crosses over urban passenger rail lines at Goodwood Junction and Torrens Junction with nine at-grade rail crossings between Belair and the Keswick terminal. Given the proximity of Goodwood Junction to the rail crossing on Cross Road, west-bound freight trains giving way to passenger trains often sit across the road causing road users to experience delays as the boom gates remain down for extended periods.

The rail industry is taking action to address the current noise caused by “squeaky wheels” with the installation of noise monitoring equipment to monitor noise levels. Data from this equipment is utilised in an ongoing program in conjunction with the State Environmental Protection Authority to analyse and identify the causes of wheel squeal, and to develop operational solutions to eliminate or at least minimise the problem. Reports are submitted every three months to the State Environmental Protection Agency showing trends for wheel squeal noise. The ARTC will trial an alternative method of rail lubrication during 2008, and assess the impact this has on wheel squeal. Wheel squeal is not unique to the Adelaide Hills.

The Australian Government has committed funds to undertake a comprehensive study into the feasibility of improving the capacity and the efficiency of the main interstate freight rail line between Murray Bridge and Adelaide. The study will look specifically at the feasibility of a new alignment that would run to the north of Adelaide. It will also identify other options that may involve any of capital investment, further maintenance or improved flow management.

## **2. Study objectives**

The Study objectives are to:

- Provide an analysis of both current freight rail movements and the forecast growth in freight movements to and through Adelaide (this includes freight moving east, west and north);
- Provide an analysis of capacity of the line to meet this demand both now and in the future including with respect to standards for track capacity;
- Provide an analysis of the impact of the current alignment of the main interstate freight rail line on community amenity (economic, social, safety and environmental impacts); and
- Identify options to ensure the forecast growth in demand can be met along with an assessment of their feasibility in terms of costs and benefits (in this context, costs will take account of the likely impact on community amenity).

## **3. Study area**

The Study is to include consideration of the current alignment of the Melbourne Adelaide interstate freight rail line and the proposed northern access alignment which is described at Attachment A. This will include the two key points where the interstate

track crosses over urban passenger rail lines at Goodwood Junction and Torrens Junction and the impacts these junctions have on rail and road movements.

#### **4. Other studies**

This Study should consider other transport infrastructure studies including but not limited to:

- Transport Sustainability Study in South Australia;
- Northern Connectors Study;
- South Australian Rail Freight – a bypass to save the heart of Adelaide;
- Melbourne-Adelaide Corridor Strategy;
- Adelaide Urban Corridors Strategy; and
- Adelaide-Perth Corridor Strategy.

The study should also take account of work associated with upgrading the public transport network in Adelaide, including re-sleepering and electrification.

#### **5. Methodology**

In order to fulfil the Study objectives and deliver key outputs, an indicative project methodology, which may be modified and/or refined in consultant submissions, is as follows:

- An analysis of the east-west rail freight task along the Melbourne to Adelaide and Adelaide to Perth and Adelaide to Darwin corridors and the Adelaide Urban Corridors – the analysis will need to consider the current task and forecast growth in the task over the next 5, 10, 20 and 30 years, using previous studies where relevant. The analysis should consider at a minimum:
  - Frequency of freight trains;
  - Origin and destination of freight;
  - Volume of freight moving along the corridors;
  - Value of the freight moving along the corridors; and
  - any significant developments that would have an impact on the freight task (eg the proposed pulp mill at Penola, and possible intermodal hub at Monarto).
- A detailed assessment of the current rail alignment from Murray Bridge through the Adelaide Hills into Adelaide, including connections to the Port of Adelaide and intermodal terminals at Dry Creek and Islington. The assessment will need to consider at a minimum:
  - Performance capability of the corridor and train operations requirements – existing and future constraints in terms of 1800metre trains double stacked, with appropriate speed & axle loading capability, speed, end-to-end journey times and rolling stock and gauge requirements;
  - connectivity with the Port of Adelaide and existing and proposed intermodal terminals;
  - interaction with the passenger rail network and road network;
  - safety issues; and

- environmental issues, including specifically noise levels through the Adelaide Hills (including wheel squeal).
- The identification of options to ensure the forecast growth in demand in the rail freight task can be met – options will need to be consistent with the performance capability of the corridor and may include (but should not be limited to) capital investment options (e.g. alignment options), maintenance options (e.g. reducing cant deficiencies), flow management options (e.g. reduced speed or improved signalling technologies). A strategic merit test and rapid appraisal, consistent with the *National Guidelines for Transport System Management in Australia* (ATC, 2006), is to be completed for each option.
  - The strategic merit test is to be used to identify how well each option would contribute to transport system objectives, policies and strategies along with any barriers to its implementation.
  - The rapid appraisal for each option is to incorporate an indicative assessment of the main benefits and costs associated. It is also to include a high level risk assessment of the financial, engineering and environmental issues for the option.

The indicative project methodology is expected to involve the engagement of one or more consultants with relevant expertise in the areas of economic research, modelling and/or forecasting demand for infrastructure needs, undertaking cost benefit analysis of infrastructure projects, advising on current infrastructure in relation to appropriateness, efficiency and effectiveness to meet future needs and identifying best practice models in provision of infrastructure.

## **6. Meetings**

Consultants will be required to liaise directly with the Project Manager regularly throughout the Study.

It is envisaged that regular (at least monthly) meetings of a Project Steering Committee will ensure appropriate guidance and governance of the consultants. The Project Steering Committee will comprise the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government and DTEI.

## **7. Consultation**

The consultants will convene regular meetings and briefings with a Project Reference Group during the study process. The Project Reference Group will be established to ensure appropriate input from and engagement with key interest groups. The Project Reference Group will include the Australian Rail Track Corporation, the Freight Rail Operators Group, Mitcham Council and the Local Government Association of SA.

The consultants will be required to prepare a discussion paper by Mid April 2009 and invite submissions over the period May to July 2009. Where the issues raised in submissions warrant, they are to be followed up through targeted consultation. The Project Manager will attend all such consultations.

## **8. Key outputs**

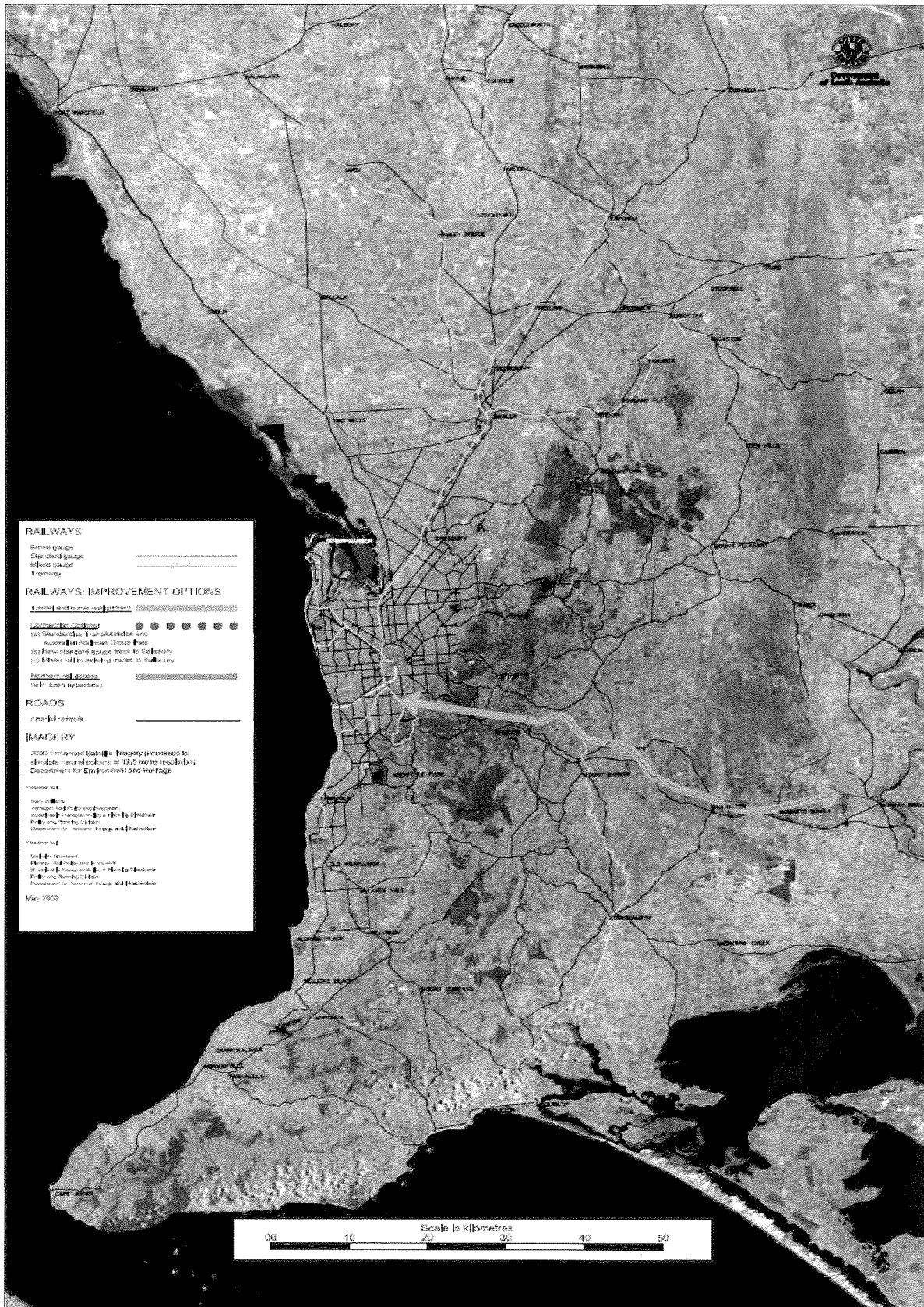
The key outputs of the Study are to be presented in the form of a:

- A report of the analysis of the east-west rail freight task along the Melbourne to Adelaide, Adelaide to Darwin and Adelaide to Perth corridors and the Adelaide Urban Corridors and the detailed assessment of the current rail alignment from Murray Bridge through the Adelaide Hills into Adelaide.

- A draft report identifying options to ensure the forecast growth in demand can be met along with an assessment of their feasibility in terms of costs and benefits.
- Discussion Paper that provides the context of the issues under consideration in terms of the freight task and community concerns and presents a range of options including a realignment of the rail line to the north of the Adelaide Hills.
- A final report setting out the feasible options that would ensure the forecast growth in demand in the rail freight task can be met along with an assessment of their feasibility in terms of costs and benefits – this report will take account of issues raised in response to the Discussion Paper.

The final version of each report is to be provided in bound hard copy (10 copies) and soft copy (both Word and PDF format to enable loading to the Departmental website).

Current Alignment of Rail Track and Proposed Realignment



Adelaide Metropolitan Fleurieu Peninsula and Mid-North Rail Network  
**ADELAIDE HILLS CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS**

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