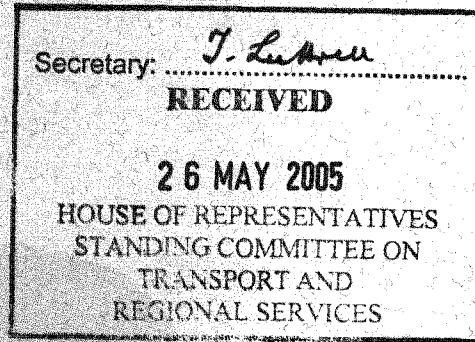


Our Ref: RPF:MES

24 May 2005

Committee Secretary
House of Representatives
Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



Dear Sir

Inquiry Into The Integration Of Regional Rail And Road Freight Transport And Their Interface With Ports

On behalf of the local authorities of Beaudesert, Boonah, Warwick, Inglewood, Stanthorpe and Tenterfield I submit the views of the group, especially in relation to a rail link to service freight from Melbourne to Brisbane.

First and foremost the selected route must be chosen on the basis that it achieves the best outcome for Australia in providing the most cost effective and efficient transport network available.

There is great need for a co-ordinated plan to ensure that we see reduced freight on our roads and increased use made of rail with this service offering an efficient and cost effective option to road transport.

The development of a transport network involving a co-ordinated approach through road, rail and the ports is seen as essential to the future of this nation. A link, as proposed, from Melbourne to Brisbane that provides an efficient rail network to reduce the level of road freight is an integral part of such a network.

It would appear that focus of a rail link into Brisbane, from the southern States, is currently from Inglewood - Millmerran - Toowoomba, taking in the proposed Charlton Wellcamp Industrial area and then onto Brisbane. Member Councils met recently to discuss the proposed Cunningham Rail Link, which runs from Inglewood - Warwick - Rathdowney - Bromelton - Yeerongpilly.

A clear majority agreed this link is by far the best outcome based on the following:

- 1) The cost, as estimated in the 2001 Cunningham Rail Link report, is significantly less than the Inglewood - Toowoomba - Brisbane option by some \$140 million.

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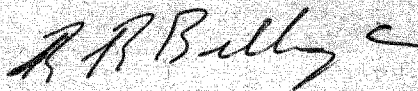
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- 2) The proposed transport hub at Bromelton (near Beaudesert) only adds to the benefits of this line as it would provide the facilities, outside of Brisbane, to distribute the freight and then only transport into the Port that which has to go there.
- 3) The Inglewood –Toowoomba - Brisbane proposal faces major problems in that it relies upon use of the existing rail lines, which are heavily utilised for public transport in Brisbane while the Cunningham Rail Link does not have this barrier.
- 4) The South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan also identifies the focus on the Western Corridor for extension of the rail network, which will be a further benefit with the development of the Bromelton site.

All member Councils agree that there is a role for all levels of government to work together on the future of transport networks for Australia but that the best outcomes will only be achieved with the involvement of private enterprise as a joint partner.

On behalf of the member Councils I ask that your Committee take into account the above comments.

Yours faithfully



Ron Bellingham
Mayor