



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services

MEDIA ALERT

Issued: 15 August 2005

Chair: Paul Neville MP

Regional rail and road networks inquiry

Public hearings in Canberra

The parliamentary inquiry examining the operation of regional road and rail networks and the way those networks connect with ports will hold a further public hearing at Parliament House, Canberra, this Wednesday (17 August).

The House of Representatives Transport and Regional Services Committee, which is conducting the inquiry, will be hearing from the Department of Transport and Regional Services.

The Chair of the Committee, Paul Neville, said the task of moving Australia's freight was growing rapidly and would pose a significant challenge to existing regional infrastructure over the next few years.

Mr Neville said that the future capacity of regional arterial road and rail networks to cope with that challenge is a matter of major importance. He said that the Committee would be seeking ways to promote greater efficiency in the freight transport system and, in particular, how the three levels of government can co-operate in that task.

"There has been strong interest in this inquiry" Mr Neville said, "and, so far, more than 110 submissions have been received." He added that the Committee is planning to conduct more public hearings at important transport centres around Australia over the next few months.

Mr Neville said that the Committee is seeking the widest possible cross-section of views on the matters covered by the inquiry and is continuing to accept submissions. The Committee expects to table its report in the first half of next year.

Members of the public and media are most welcome to attend the public hearing, details of which appear below.

PUBLIC HEARING:	17 August 2005, 9.10 am – 10.15 a.m.
WHERE:	Committee Room 1R4, Parliament House, Canberra
WITNESSES:	Department of Transport and Regional Services.

For **media comment**, please contact: Paul Neville, House Transport and Regional Services Committee Chair, on (02) 6277 4940 or 0419 704 767

For **background information**, including the full terms of reference and copies of submissions, please contact the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 2352 or visit the Inquiry website at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/trs/networks/