



Regional rail and road networks inquiry

Public hearings in Queensland

The House of Representatives Transport and Regional Services Committee will hold public hearings in Brisbane and Toowoomba on Thursday and Friday of this week. The hearings are part of its inquiry into the operation of regional rail and road networks and the way those networks link to the ports.

On Thursday, the Committee will hear from the Queensland Government, the Port of Brisbane, the BHP Billiton Mitsubishi Alliance and several other witnesses in Brisbane. On Friday, it will speak with local government and transport industry representatives in Toowoomba.

Committee Chair Paul Neville said that these two centres were chosen for the hearings because of their importance to the Queensland freight network.

Mr Neville said the inquiry is examining the operation of regional road and rail networks in handling the rapidly growing task of moving Australia's freight. An important part of the inquiry is consideration of the way those networks connect with the ports.

He said that the Committee is looking for ways in which greater efficiency can be achieved in the freight transport task, and how the three levels of government can co-operate to achieve this outcome.

"The current resources boom has heightened the need for the more efficient use of our transport infrastructure and port operations," Mr Neville said. "This is particularly true in Queensland. During the hearings and the associated inspections, we will be examining road and rail access to the ports, recognising the need to have those sectors meshing smoothly."

The Committee is seeking the widest possible cross-section of views on the matters covered by the inquiry and is continuing to accept submissions. Over 150 submissions to the inquiry have been received so far. It expects to table its report later this year.

Members of the public and the media are most welcome to attend the public hearings.

Thursday

PUBLIC HEARING: 6 April 2006, 8.45 am – 1.15 pm

WHERE: Queen's Ballroom,
Brisbane Hilton, 190 Elizabeth St, Brisbane

Friday

PUBLIC HEARING: 7 April 2006, 9.00 am – 2.00 pm

WHERE: Comfort Inn Grammar View, 39 Margaret St, Toowoomba

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/