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The Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Primary Industries and Regional Services
House of Representatives
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600 FAX 02 6277 4424

Dear Secretary,

**Inquiry into the infrastructure and the development
of Australia's regional areas**

Would you please accept this letter as a supplementary submission to the Committee.

1. The Queensland tilt train has now established itself as a regional success story. By April of 1999, it had carried 100,000 travellers, and in May 1999, it established the current Australian rail speed record at 210 km per hour.

In July 1999, an additional weekday Brisbane - Bundaberg service was added to complement the daily Brisbane - Rockhampton service. In August 1999, 25 000 journeys were made, as compared with 11 000 journeys in August 1998 on the previous intercity electric train - a patronage increase of 130 per cent (Aust. Fin. Rev. 29 Sept 1999, p44).

As per the main submission, the Queensland tilt train provided many regional jobs during its construction at Maryborough. The associated upgrading of the existing track, which was necessary for the tilt train to reach its potential and to allow for more efficient rail freight services, also generated regional employment.

2. On the other side of Australia, in the Pilbara Region, significant incremental developments have occurred in 1999 to improve the efficiency of the major iron ore railways operated by BHP and Hamersley Iron. Details can be supplied if relevant. The main submission stated that over 130 millions of tonnes of iron ore in the Pilbara region of Western Australia are now moved each year in the world's most efficient freight trains, the actual amounts in 1997-98 are about 154 million tonnes (see Australasian Railway Association Year Book 1999). The "world best practice" efficiency of the iron ore railways was also noted by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Communications, Transport and Microeconomic Reform in their 1998 report 'Tracking Australia' (eg p,25 see also p47,73).

Yours sincerely,