

Ref No 375/1/9 (O15162)

10 May 2005

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

Dear Sir

***Re : Inquiry into the Integration of Regional Road and Rail Freight Transport  
and their interface with Ports***

The District Council of Grant is situated located in the southern eastern corner of South Australia, incorporating areas of farming, forestry and coastline and has a population of 8,000 people. The South East Region of South Australia through the South East Local Government Association has recently submitted a proposal to AusLink seeking funding from the Commonwealth to undertake major transport corridor planning.

As you may be aware, 'The Limestone Coast Plantations Timber 2005 and Beyond Report' was recently released. The Report outlines opportunities to invest in the Limestone Coast Region forest and wood processing industries, drawing upon plantation resources of the Green Triangle Region.

The Report highlights amongst other issues, the distribution over time that will be transported to Portland for export. Indeed, "on average 4.1 million tonnes of wood per annum will travel to Portland between 2005 and 2039. This could range from around 3 million to 6 million tonnes per annum depending on plantation yields. In broad terms, this equates to 102,500 trucks per annum (based 40 tonnes per truck) or 436 trucks per day (assuming 235 operating days per year). In terms of road movements, this figure would double, as trucks would travel loaded one way and unloaded on the return trip" (p.13).

The District Council of Grant has highlighted strenuously that transport infrastructure in the Region is inadequate to deal with the projected increased volume of heavy vehicles which will utilise major arterial roads in this Region over the next ten (10) years.

Three (3) transport infrastructure issues will be researched as part of the major transport corridor plan. These include South East Freight Rail, the planning and construction of Border Road and upgrading of Arterial Roads, particularly to the Port of Portland. It is pointed out that produce and particularly chip bark from the South East Region of South Australia use the Port of Portland for export and the increase in heavy vehicles as a result of the harvesting of Blue Gum Plantations will need to be taken into account in the provision of infrastructure for the Port of Portland.

In addition, the Local Government Association of South Australia's budget submission to the South Australian Government indicates the following information :-

*'on a three year average the South Australian Government contributes approximately \$4.21 per km compared to New South Wales \$30.66 per km and Queensland \$56.26 per km to local roads'.*

Local Government therefore has limited capacity to maintain the regional transport network, particularly in view of the increase in the volume of heavy vehicles projected to occur in the next ten (10) years. The District Council of Grant also supports the South East Local Government Association's submission to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services on the Inquiry into the Integration of Regional Road and Rail Networks and their Connectivity to Ports.

It would be appreciated if Council's comments could be taken into account as part of this Inquiry. District Council of Grant representatives would also like the opportunity to appear before the House of Representatives Standing Committee regarding this Inquiry.

Yours sincerely,



Russell J Peate  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

RJP:mgm

