



**PORT of
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13 May 2005

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

**RE: INQUIRY INTO THE INTEGRATION OF REGIONAL RAIL AND ROAD FREIGHT
TRANSPORT AND THEIR INTERFACE WITH PORTS**

Submission regarding Terms of Reference

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Terms of Reference for the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Transport and Regional Services inquiry into the integration of regional rail and road freight transport and their interface with ports. I have reviewed the Terms of Reference and provide the following comments for your consideration.

The role of Australia's regional arterial road and rail network in the national freight transport task.

This item should consider the existing regional transport network and infrastructure with respect to its role, capacity and current status, to meet existing and future freight transport requirements. Additionally, consideration should be given to the existing investment in regional infrastructure and the benefits to be obtained from investment in efficient regional transport networks.

The relationship and co-ordination between Australia's road and rail networks and their connectivity to ports.

It is considered that the relationship and coordination between Australia's road and rail networks and their connectivity to ports should consider the conclusions from the previous item and should be addressed from an assessment of both the current and future freight requirements.

Ports are coming under increasing pressure from urban and residential encroachment and there is an urgent need to ensure the preservation and integrity of transport networks and connectivity to ports is maintained.

Policies and measures required to assist in achieving greater efficiency in the Australian transport network, with particular reference to:

Land transport access to ports

This item should address the existing access routes to regional ports and the associated restrictions and challenges. For example, such issues would address, residential encroachment, restriction to operational hours, restrictions to vehicle size etc.

Capacity and operation of major ports

The capacity and operation of major ports should consider an assessment of the existing capacity of ports and the anticipated future trade demand in regional centres. This is particularly relevant with respect to Townsville where there is a significant base load and, with increasing trade demands, regional transport connectivity is increasingly posing a potential constraint to both existing operations and potential future trade growth.

Movement of bulk export commodities, such as grain and coal

The movement of bulk commodities is an essential component of trade management at the Port of Townsville. Consideration of the movement of such commodities should extend to



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both import and export and address the major cargoes handled in the regional ports included in the Inquiry assessment.

The role of intermodal freight hubs in regional areas

Intermodal freight hubs are increasingly becoming important in regional centres. It is considered that this item should include an assessment of existing hubs, suitability including capacity of available infrastructure, future freight demands and potential efficiencies of service. This item should also consider the cost differentials between regional and metropolitan centres.

Opportunities to achieve greater efficiency in the use of existing infrastructure

This item should include an assessment of existing infrastructure and the potential future freight demands with a view to identifying opportunities for improved efficiencies and priority items requiring additional infrastructure investment.

Possible advantages from the use of intelligent tracking technology

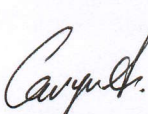
It is considered that a review of the potential advantages from the use of intelligent tracking technology would be of assistance particularly where the use of such technology may serve to improve efficiencies of the existing transport networks. Such a review should also consider the possible advantages of such technologies in relation to maritime security.

The role of the three levels of Government and the private sector in providing and maintaining the regional transport network.

This item should include an assessment of the current role of government and the private sector and some of the challenges presented by the existing structure. It is assumed that this inquiry will allow the identification of potential avenues through which these roles could be clarified in an effort to provide certainty regarding the provision of efficient regional infrastructure that meets expected demand. Additionally, this item should consider the current funding structures for new infrastructure and infrastructure upgrades and should consider mechanisms that enable the acknowledgement of existing regional investment and the potential flow-on effects through freight, employment and trade that stem from the provision of reliable, efficient and effective transport networks.

I trust these comments are of assistance in your finalisation of the Terms of Reference and we would welcome the opportunity to provide further input to the Inquiry into the Integration of Regional Rail and Road Freight Transport and Their Interface with Ports.

Yours sincerely,



Caryn Anderson
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