

SOUTH EAST LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION INC

Incorporated under the provisions of The Local Government Act

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Business Hours - 9.00 am to 5.00 pm - Monday to Friday

Date: 9 May 2005

President:
Mayor Steve Perryman
Executive Officer:
Ron Ellis

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

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Inquiry into Integration of Regional Road and Rail Networks and their Connectivity to Ports

Member Councils:

City of:
Mount Gambier

Districts of:
Grant

Kingston
Naracoorte Lucindale

Robe

Tatiara

Wattle Range

The South East Local Government Association represents the interests of seven Councils that cover the southeast region of South Australia.

The Association wishes to make the following submission to House of Representatives Standing Committee inquiry into Regional Road and Rail Services and their Connectivity to Ports, as invited in your letter of 5 April 2005.

Our Association has become increasingly involved in the debate and concern about the strategic freight transport needs of this area of South Australia and the neighbouring, southwest region of Victoria. The focus is on the growing freight task that will result from the harvesting of Blue Gum forests and the movement of hardwood chip product to the Port of Portland.

In short, the Local Governments on both sides of the SA/Victorian border believe that the freight transport infrastructure in this region is not adequate to deal with the increase in freight movements expected to occur over the next 10 years. To illustrate the point, the Port of Portland is now exporting about 1.2 million tonnes of woodchip per annum. Estimates compiled by the Limestone Coast Regional Development Board and the SA Department of Trade and Economic Development, using up-to-date industry data, forecast that figure to grow to over 4 million tonnes by year 2014.

Obviously, Local Governments are not responsible for providing the region's major transport corridors. That is for the State and Commonwealth to do. However, Local Government can draw attention to issues that impact on the region's economic performance, and the safety of tourists and the travelling public.

Local Governments on both sides of the border are disappointed that the Auslink White Paper released by the Commonwealth Government did not recognise this region as having a strategically important transport corridor. It is now up to Local Government to act to redress this disadvantage.

As a first step, we are seeking the agreement of Transport Ministers to visit this region to meet and to hear from Local Government and industry leaders about what we believe to be a critically important issue for this region. A letter addressed to Ministers Anderson, Batchelor and Conlon is attached for your information.

As a second step, SELGA along with three Shires of southwest Victoria, have submitted a proposal to Auslink seeking financial assistance from the Commonwealth to undertake the major transport corridor planning that we believe is now necessary. A copy of the submission is attached. In the process, we will be seeking State Government support from Victoria and South Australia to co-fund the project.

The South East Local Government Association brings this issue to your attention as we believe it contains issues match precisely the terms of reference of your inquiry.

Yours sincerely

Ron Ellis
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION HELD BY THE
COMMITTEE**

ATTACHMENT TO SUBMISSION NO. 40

**ATTACHMENTS, APPENDICES AND PHOTOGRAPHS PROVIDED
WITH SUBMISSIONS ARE HELD IN THE COMMITTEE OFFICE**