

Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Budget Estimates May 2012

Infrastructure and Transport

Question no.: 152

Program: N/A

Division/Agency: (ARTC) Australian Rail Track Corporation

Topic: Sydney Office Lease Costs

Proof Hansard Page/s: 100 (23/05/12)

Senator JOYCE asked:

Senator JOYCE: Tell me about your office in Sydney. Whereabouts is that?

Mr Fullerton: It is on the 15th floor in Carrington Street.

Senator JOYCE: What does the lease cost on that office?

Mr Fullerton: I would have to take that on notice, but I think it is around \$150,000 a year.

Answer:

\$584,000 pa (ex GST).

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Question no.: 153

Program: N/A

Division/Agency: (ARTC) Australian Rail Track Corporation

Topic: Southern Sydney Freight Line

Proof Hansard Page/s: 102 (23/05/12)

Senator JOYCE asked:

Senator JOYCE: How much have you spent on the southern Sydney freight line in the previous 12 months?

Mr Fullerton: I would need to take that on notice, but the project itself will cost about \$1 billion when it is completed. I think, project to date, probably about \$650 million has been spent.

Answer:

Total expenditure as at 30 June 2012 is \$770 million.

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Question no.: 154

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: (ARTC) Australian Rail Track Corporation

Topic: Emissions and Air Quality Testing in Hunter Valley

Proof Hansard Page/s: 104 (23/05/12)

Senator RHIANNON asked:

Senator RHIANNON: That certainly is considerable work. A number of the locals have raised the issue of air quality and are worried about being exposed to diesel particulate. Are those types of concerns something the ARTC addresses?

Mr Fullerton: In relation to the Hunter Valley we have been. We are currently conducting tests at Islington and one other location.

Senator RHIANNON: In what form are those tests?

Mr Fullerton: It is measuring emissions and air quality adjacent to the track, in terms of both fine particulates and other gases.

Senator RHIANNON: How fine? That has been quite controversial in the Hunter Valley.

Mr Fullerton: It is obviously looking at dust that could be generated when trains run past.

Senator RHIANNON: If you want to take it on notice, could you give the micron size? There have been disputes about what is being covered, so that would be useful.

Mr Fullerton: I can take that on notice. The EPA has specified what we need to be measuring, but I can bring that back.

Senator RHIANNON: At how many sites is that being done?

Mr Fullerton: Two sites.

Senator RHIANNON: Which were they again?

Mr Fullerton: Islington is one. I need to check the other site.

Senator RHIANNON: Could you take that on notice too?

Mr Fullerton: Right.

Answer:

ARTC is currently undertaking dust monitoring at two sites in the Hunter Valley, namely Scholey Street Junction Mayfield and Raymond Terrace Drive Metford using real time particulate monitoring devices. The devices measure TSP (Total Suspended Particulates) PM10 (Particulate matter with a diameter of 10 micrometres or less) and PM 2.5 (Particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 micrometres or less). Analysis of the results is underway and when completed will be submitted to the EPA.

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Question no.: 155

Program: N/A

Division/Agency: (ARTC) Australian Rail Track Corporation

Topic: Rail Noise Measurements

Proof Hansard Page/s: 104 (23/05/12)

Senator RHIANNON asked:

Senator RHIANNON: Coming back to around Moorebank and any of your Sydney operations, are you looking at issues there to do with emissions?

Mr Fullerton: The planning process for building a freight line along that corridor is quite long and detailed. What that has led to on that corridor, particularly where noise would present as an issue to adjacent homes, is the requirement for us to build about six kilometres of noise walls at certain locations along that 36-kilometre length of track and, in some locations, to build double-glazing on houses and supply other noise mitigation. That is all being done as part of the project and to meet planning requirements.

Senator RHIANNON: You just said on certain parts of the route. I did understand the noise barriers are not right along the route.

Mr Fullerton: No. The assessment is that, where the noise is a certain amount above the current noise level, there is a requirement to build a noise barrier. It is around a 5½-dBA increase above the current noise level that obviously is generated by passenger trains running on the corridor. Where a dedicated freight line has lifted that threshold by that amount, we have a requirement to build—and have done—the six-kilometre noise walls.

Senator RHIANNON: How do you judge that it is above a certain amount? When are the measurements being taken? Clearly the noise varies at different times.

Mr Fullerton: I would need to come back with the detail about how that is measured, if I could.

Answer:

As described in Chapter 11 of the *Environmental Assessment*, ambient noise levels were assessed at representative locations along the proposed SSFL corridor using:

- Long-term unattended noise monitoring at 10 locations to determine the level of background noise, including daytime, evening and night;
- Attended monitoring of noise from individual train pass-bys at 10 locations, generally close to the unattended monitoring locations, to validate the noise modelling procedures;
- Monitoring of noise from train movements at bridges at Prospect Creek and Camelia Ave, to evaluate the acoustic performance of the proposed bridge designs.

The *Operational Noise and Vibration Management Plan* states that to quantify the potential for noise impacts from the SSFL, the assessment gave consideration to all types of noise-sensitive receivers adjacent to the SSFL corridor, including residences, schools, hospitals, places of worship, industrial receivers and recreational spaces, and inclusive of specialist receivers such as the Casula Arts Centre, WIN Radio and Warwick Farm Stables. Noise assessment included

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monitoring as described above and using this information for detailed modelling for noise-sensitive receivers adjacent to the SSFL corridor.

For noise assessment, the NSW EPA's key requirements include that:

1. The noise and vibration impacts of the SSFL line, and the cumulative noise and vibration impacts of the SSFL and activities on RailCorp tracks should be assessed against the planning goals outlined in Chapter 163 of the Environmental Noise Control Manual (ENCM).
2. For locations where cumulative noise levels exceed relevant criteria, the relative contributions from the ARTC line and the RailCorp lines should be identified.

Both the *Environmental Assessment* and the *Operational Noise and Vibration Management Plan* are on the SSFL website, readily available for public examination.

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Question no.: 156

Program: n/a

Division/Agency: (ARTC) Australian Rail Track Corporation

Topic: Time by Rail from Parkes to Sydney

Proof Hansard Page/s: 109 (23/05/12)

Senator JOYCE asked:

Senator JOYCE: How long does it take for a train to get from Parkes to Sydney?

Mr Fullerton: I would need to take that on notice, but I think it would only be about eight hours.

Senator JOYCE: How long would it for a train to get from Brisbane to Parkes by the inland rail?

Mr Fullerton: Again I would need to take that on notice but, as I mentioned earlier, the Melbourne to Brisbane corridor—

Answer:

1. Sydney to Parkes via Cootamundra is approximately 10 hours.
2. The expected transit time for a service from Brisbane to Parkes is approximately 11 hours.

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Question no.: 157

Program: N/A

Division/Agency: (ARTC) Australian Rail Track Corporation

Topic: Interstate Rail network comparative maintenance costs

Proof Hansard Page/s: Written

Senator FAWCETT asked:

1. What is the comparative maintenance costs attributed to passenger and freight operations on the interstate rail network?
2. Why does the current ARTC access pricing regime fail to reflect this difference?

Answer:

Access pricing on the ARTC network is set in accordance with ARTC's regulatory obligations in the form of two voluntary access undertakings with the Australian Consumer and Competition Commission (ACCC) and a separate regime with the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). The majority of ARTC's network is covered by undertakings approved by the ACCC which were finalised following extensive consultative programs with all of ARTC's freight and passenger customers.

Given the mixed nature of traffic on our network ARTC does not specifically differentiate between passenger and freight related maintenance costs. Therefore while maintenance costs are an element in setting prices they are only one of many contributing determinants of pricing. ARTC's pricing structure is published and is generally presented based on different train operating characteristics which considers whether a service has a contracted schedule or operates on an ad hoc basis and the maximum speed and axle load at which it operates. Services that operate at higher speed and / or higher axle loads will generally have impacts that result in a higher access price regardless of whether the services is freight or passenger and ARTC's access pricing structure is reflective of this.

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Question no.: 158

Program: N/A

Division/Agency: (ARTC) Australian Rail Track Corporation

Topic: Interstate Rail network comparative maintenance costs

Proof Hansard Page/s: Written

Senator HEFFERNAN asked:

1. What is the comparative maintenance costs attributed to passenger and freight operations on the interstate rail network?
2. Why does the current ARTC access pricing regime fail to reflect this difference? (follow-up)

Answer:

Refer to Question 157.