

Submission to
Maldon to Dombarton Rail Link Feasibility Study

Introduction

This submission is made in response to the invitation, issued by the Federal Government on Its website on Monday 6 December 2010, for persons interested in the need for the completion of the Maldon to Dombarton Rail Link (**Rail Link**).

As background to this submission, we (the undersigned) advise that we have been campaigning for the completion of this Rail Link for some 15 years, but more intensively over the last 5 years when we were informed that the NSW Government was about to enter into a public private partnership (**PPP**) with a commercial organisation for the completion of the Rail Link. A cursory perusal of the readily available data quickly made us aware of the need for its completion, BUT by the people of NSW, through its Government. PPPs tend to have 20 – 30 year terms and, had the deal be made at that time, the pay-back period for the toll railway would have been a mere few years and the rest of the term would have provided a mountain of profit to the entrepreneurial friends of the government. We must have struck a sharp chord with the NSW Government because it immediately, and ever since for 5 years, asserted that “no one has made a case for the viability of the rail link”!

We note that “feasible – feasibility” are words meaning “practicable, possible, plausible”. We believe that this study does not seek those criteria. It is of concern to us to see that the narrow vision of the Terms of Reference do not seek “feasibility”, but aim more to a certain outcome, namely, a PPP.

The financial and other benefits of this Rail Link to industry and the public at large are so great that a generous toll per tonne can be charged. We are confident that an issue of Government-backed bonds, to cover the construction costs, to the Australian superannuation industry, would be accepted as a gilt-edged investment and oversubscribed. A PPP will not be in the best interests of the people of Australia.

We trust that the Government will give serious consideration to the submissions of the many people, within the Sydney region, NSW and the whole of Australia, who recognise the desperate need for this Rail Link and the multitude of benefits which it will bring to all of us.

We submit the following points of facts and opinions to which we believe serious consideration should be given, so as to arrive at the best outcome for Sydney, NSW and Australia:

The New Beginning

1. We have to trust that, this time, party politics will not cause an outcome for the Rail Link being achieved which is not in the best interests of the people of Greater Sydney, NSW and Australia as a whole.

As stated in the Government's documentation, construction of the Rail Link was commenced in 1983 (by a Labour government) and it was aborted in 1988 (by the succeeding Liberal government). A significant amount of the construction contract work and supplies had been completed when the termination was effected. It was reported at that time that it cost more to terminate the unfinished contract than it would have cost to complete the remainder of the contract. There were further reports concerning of the commercial influences which fed that termination decision. The current value of the 75% of completed work would be in the region of some \$1 billion.

2. In the immediately following items, we address matters of interest and concern contained in the Terms of Reference and the Issues Paper. In these following items, our comments are made to draw the readers' attention to what has been presented by the Government to the consultant and to the public in those two documents. In many cases, a further and much more detailed commentary is made below about the matters which must also be considered in preparing this Feasibility Study.

Terms of Reference - undated

3. We are concerned at how restricted the Terms of Reference are in the following areas:
 - There is an excessive concentration on the fact that the Rail Link was originally to be constructed solely for coal transport and is now to be primarily required for coal transport, especially for future additional production.

- There is an excessive concentration on “*economic and financial analysis*” and “*Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA)*” which are to drive the decision making process.
- While “*land use and environmental assessment and planning matters*” are required to be addressed they are only to be considered in respect of the track site, which is not seen to be controversial.

We challenge the author's statement that the line was for coal ONLY. We refer readers to the original documentation of the Wran Government, in which the line was to be used for coal, grains and general cargos.

What we find truly amazing in the document is the total absence from the Terms of Reference of any requirement for a study to be made of the existing Greater Sydney rail network, into which the Rail Link will be integrated, so as to identify the adequacy, or inadequacy, of any part of that network upon which the Rail Link may have an adverse or beneficial effect.

4. In the Engineering Assessment, at Item 2, the author has decided that the locomotives shall be diesel powered. The original concept was for electrical powered locomotives, 25,000kVa system, which would make use of regenerative power braking, on loaded trains going down, to input power to the grid and mitigate the operating costs.

We commend the use of diesel power, the use of which opens the line to trains from all over NSW, including the Country Link passenger services. But, we strongly recommend that an electrical service must be provided. The Rail Link must be used as an alternative route for the people of the Illawarra, to and from Sydney/western suburbs during the all too-frequent daily occasions when that line is closed due to rain/slippage, the high level of maintenance and, unspoken, the need to allow more freight to reach the port as a matter of urgency.

5. In preparing the economic and financial analysis, required at the first bullet point of Item 4, the consultant is required to address the costs/benefits of “*completing and not completing the line*” from various factors including “*impacts on the demand and future capital expenditure requirements for the Illawarra line, the Main South line to Moss Vale and the Sydney to Melbourne interstate freight rail line*”..

Whilst we readily recognise that these 3 rail lines will be dramatically affected by whether or not the Rail Link is, or is not, completed, the effects of such completion, or non-completion, will be felt over the whole of the Greater Sydney transport system (rail and road), as it is at the present time.

To prepare any analysis restricted to the 3 named lines is meaningless in the context of the real cost/benefit of the Rail Link.

6. At the second bullet point of Item 4, the consultant is required to prepare an “*analysis of the financial and funding options, including consideration of options for private sector financing of the construction of the line, such as public private partnerships and private finance initiatives*”.

Whilst such a requirement would be normal for a major road project, in the context of construction of the Rail Link, it lays bare the fact that the author of the Terms of Reference has not given any serious consideration to the vast amount of documentation which has been written, and similar (or greater) discussions which have taken place over the years by those who have been involved in trying to have the Rail Link completed.

7. The final comment on the Terms of Reference is one of lack of clarity. The original line was commenced in 1983, **27 years ago**.

Since the public campaign for completion of the Rail Link was commenced in earnest some 5 years ago, the public has been aware of the great need for the Rail Link to be completed so as to remove freight/trucks off our overcrowded roads and off the antiquated rail system.

In addition, as the populations of western Sydney and Wollongong grow, there is increasing demand for passenger rail traffic between those centres, for business, study, hospitals, recreation, etc.

The Terms of Reference do not EXCLUDE the contemplation of passenger service but do solely concentrate upon the freight requirements. We believe that the opportunity for inclusion of providing a passenger service must also be included in the Feasibility Study.

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8. In para 4 of the "Introduction", at Item 1, there are 2 statements which are a cause for concern.

Firstly, the Terms of Reference do not SPECIFY that the Rail Link MUST EXCLUDE passengers – they merely only address the freight requirements.

Secondly, it is stated that "*the pre-feasibility study*" determined that including passenger services would impose net economic costs on the line."

When our previous governments, of generations ago, made their decisions to build major items of infrastructure, did they ONLY carry them out on the basis that there would be a "*net economic benefit*"? the rail lines from Sydney to Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, etc? The Sydney Harbour Bridge? The Sydney rail network? Warragamba Dam. The list is endless. And, in those days, they did not have the technology, equipment, population, etc which we now have.

No, they did not! Such projects were considered "nation building"! The needs of our country were considered and provision made for future generations. WHAT FORESIGHT THEY DISPLAYED!

But, now, with all of our greater knowledge and technology, we talk about our needs - **but only if it is economic!** Where are the politicians with visions of the big picture?

It would appear that a freight line is more appealing to the purveyors of PPPs, where the successful developer will rake in the undisputed and disgusting profits which completion of this small piece of infrastructure will generate.

If our Government completes the Rail Line, we, the citizens, will gain the financial benefit.

9. In Item 2.2, Potential Benefits, the author of this document, also with a restricted vision, calls for us to consider "*the potential to assist Sydney in meeting its **future** freight transport needs by providing capacity for **anticipated growth***".

Supporters of the completion of the Rail Link commenced their campaign many years ago because the need for this infrastructure was already well known at that time. Since then, the population of Sydney, and especially the Illawarra Region, has increased dramatically, and will only continue to do so, and the throughput of Pt Kembla has increased commensurately. The need for the completion of the Rail Link is now even more glaringly and desperately apparent.

10. In Item 4, Demand, you are commended for requiring consideration to be given to the potential for container freight to switch from Pt Botany to Pt Kembla. We and others have advised that such a move is unavoidable because of the well known existing constraints on Pt Botany and the development of shipping technology, particularly in "mega" ships. We have had mega bulk carriers for minerals for a long time. Mega container ships and mega car carriers have already been built and will be coming to Australia soon – and they will not be able to enter Pt Botany because of its shallow depth.

11. Item 4.1.1, Transport categories (Coal), is misleading in its naïve statements of which lines are **used** for carrying freight while not making any mention of their respective debilitating deficiencies which impose an unacceptable economic burden on the users and Australia.

We note that coal from the Tahmoor mine has recently been barred from the low quality Moss Vale line and now has to proceed on the only other route, through the Sydney passenger network, at much greater cost and with unacceptable delays. The route via Sydney has a train turn around time 6 times greater than it will be on the Rail Link.

12. In Item 5.1, Rail capacity, statements are made about the 2 current rail lines available for access to Pt Kembla. The words merely say that they are **used** but no comment is made about the inherent debilitating deficiencies in both lines, even to the point that coal from the Tahmoor mine is no longer allowed on the Moss Vale line, presumably due to the wet weather and slippage, which also badly affect the Illawarra line.

Why is it that Terms of Reference do not require the consultant to investigate these inherent deficiencies? By whom, and for what reason, has such a blatant disregard for a “full study” been made?

13. In Item 5.2, Road capacity, it states that “*This study considers highways and arterial roads used by trucks to carry freight to, and from, Port Kembla.*” That statement is not correct. The Terms of Reference do not require the consultant to investigate the **suitability and capacity** of any highways or roads.

In addition, the further soothing and intentionally misleading statement is made that “*Appin Road and Picton Road have been upgraded as traffic has expanded, and further upgrades are expected.*” And yet we read, almost weekly, of deaths on the Picton road from road accidents.

Anyone living more than a few kilometres south of the centre of Sydney will be fully aware of the furore and campaign which has been raging for years, from Rockdale to and through the Illawarra Region and across to Picton and Bowral, about the poor road access up Mt Ousley and along the Princess Highway, Appin road, Picton road and Heathcote road.

As for the Illawarra line, it has been almost converted into a bus route because of the number of times passengers are forced off the line and onto buses because the line is closed due to slippage, to give preference to freight trains or to repair the damage done by the freight trains. And the Moss Vale line – closed to Tahmoor mine coal!

14. In Item 7, Cost-benefit, financial, employment and funding analysis. As in the Terms of Reference, the Rail Link is to be considered primarily as a “coal railway” and the decision will only be made on the basis of the “profit making” factor. No foresight and no nation-building here!!

It would appear that the author is trying to convince the public that if the contract for completion of the Rail Link (and maintenance for the next 20 to 30 years) is handed over to a PPP, the toll charges will be paid by the rich coal company owners and there will be no cost to John Citizen. If a toll is put on the Rail Link (as we accept will be reasonable to recoup the costs) the profits will be enormous but not only from coal. There will be as many more trains carrying grain, cars and motor vehicles, containers and general cargo than there will be of coal, especially when the current “bubble” of demand for minerals deflates over time.

Any contract for the completion of the Rail Link should be structured such that the contractor is paid for doing the work by the owner, being the Government, and future operation and maintenance is vested in the relevant operator of the Government’s rail tracks. Funding is a separate and straightforward issue. The Government can issue 10 year bonds and the toll per tonne set at a level which ensures that the construction cost is recovered in that period while providing a **reasonable** return to the investors.

The Government will be swamped by superannuation funds seeking such a Government guaranteed and nation building investment. It can be a precursor of a new form of investment in our much needed nation building projects.

Matters for consideration

15. Through the foresight of our forefathers, the **Sydney rail network** was laid out and built to suit those times, with best estimated as to what the future might require. But, they could not anticipate the extent of those future needs nor the paucity of support and improvement which later small - minded Governments would not carry out. Also, technology has allowed for bigger engines pulling bigger loads, heavier and longer wagons, especially the damaging long flat-tops which push the track off the ballast on the old, tight curves.

The following are some of the deficiencies in the current rail network which make the need for the Rail Link to be completed more compelling:

- (a) Currently, all **rail freight** to/from Pt Kembla from/to the north, west and south have to travel through Sydney, via the Tempe Triangle, to access the Illawarra line. A curfew is imposed on freight on all lines used by Sydney commuters for 4 hours, morning and evening, Monday to Friday, that is a total of 8 hours per 24 hour day – 30% of the time in each day! .

Outside those hours, freight will through at the slow rate of 40km/hr, in between passenger trains travelling at 100km/hr and maintenance of the network.

The effect of such delays to exports/imports can be seen in the number of ships anchored off Pt Kembla.

- (b) The **Illawarra line** has major age problems and also settlement occurs on much of the track down the escarpment to Wollongong. The track is so at risk of slippage that a permanent speed restriction of 40km/hr is imposed on freight trains (lowered to 10km/hr under light rain conditions) and, on a regular basis, during/after heavy rain periods, traffic is prevented altogether. Under those circumstances, freight stops and passengers are bussed.

The risk to this line is so great that the line has been fitted with automatic warning sensors for rain and slippage occurrences.

- (c) The **Stanwell Park viaduct**, 70m high and of brick construction, is in its last stages of decay. It now has a concrete slab in lieu of ballast under the rails to spread the load over the columns. The columns have had "tie-bolts" passed through the bricks at the arched tops to minimise cracking and failure. A recent addition has been concrete buttressing between the columns to further delay total collapse. People who know the line refuse to travel on it.
- (d) The **Moss Vale line** is reportedly an alternative southerly route for access to/from Pt Kembla to the Main South Line at Moss Vale, which provides access back north to Liverpool/Sydney or south to Melbourne. This line is single track, with 3 short passing loops, traverses many farms with at least 37 level crossings and also traverses the escarpment with the same, or worse, slippage problems as the Illawarra line.

As stated above, recently Tahmoor mine was barred from sending its coal down this line (18 hour turn around per train) and must now send it via Sydney (24 hour turn around per train). The Tahmoor mine operators have assessed that the turn around time on the Rail Link will be about 4 hours and with no curfews during peak commuter hours.

- (e) The **new Sefton deviation**, from Sefton to Glenfield, is currently under construction. This line will allow all rail traffic from the western and northern areas NSW to by-pass the Sydney network (and all of its constraints) and connect to the Main South line.

We are extremely pleased to see that this initiative of the Governments has already recognised the need for the completion of the Rail Link to allow access of this traffic to Pt Kembla.

- (f) **Demurrage fees**, payable by the NSW Government to the rail freight operators, is some \$5,000 per 15 minutes (\$480,000 per day) for unscheduled delays to each and every freight train so delayed. The annual demurrage fees would go a long way to pay the relatively small cost of completing the Rail Link. We believe that very few members of the public, and quite probably few politicians, would be aware of this cost to the State's taxpayers.

16. Currently, **road transport** is not favourable for Pt Kembla or the residents of the Illawarra Region. There are only 5 roads up the escarpment of which only 1 is "suitable" for heavy trucks, namely, Mt Ousely.

We refer you to Item 18 below, which identifies the increased throughput of cargo at Pt Kembla and note that there has not been any significant in the capacity of the road or rail systems to cope with the increase in cargo nor the similar increase in the population of the Illawarra Region.

- (a) The Mt Ousely road has a dangerously steep gradient with significant gear and speed limits on heavy vehicles and a very high police presence. At the top of Mt Ousely, traffic may go:
- > north on Princes Highway/F6 Freeway to Sydney
 - > north on Princes Highway and Heathcote road to western Sydney
 - > north-west on Appin road and Campbelltown to western Sydney, or
 - > west on Picton road to the F5 Freeway and beyond.
- All of these road are a mixture of near-saturation level or just dangerous. The Picton and Heathcote roads are constantly in the media as a result of road deaths. Mt Ousely is closed on a regular basis as the result of accidents and truck breakdowns.
- (b) The **Princes Highway/F6** is notorious for its high volume of traffic, multiple village centres and the two bridge crossings over the Georges River, which prevent the use of alternative routes in the event of the closure of that road.
- (c) At the **Picton road/F5 Freeway junction**, we are not aware of any plans for the construction of a major flyover, together with the necessary associated feed-on/feed-off lanes, to allow the increasing numbers of trucks to make a seamless transfer. The current system is a tangle of 4 slip-roads on and off the Freeway and 4 stop signs, a recipe for accidents.
- (d) **Intermodal depots** are proliferating along the F5 Freeway/M7 Motorway, and even at Moss Vale. The Rail Link will be an ideal mass transit conduit provided that both ends are designed for rapid loading and unloading.
- (e) The usage of **B-Doubles** has become the norm for heavy freight but freight companies want even greater efficiencies. The **B-Triple**, after much developmental work, has been approved for use on public roads in Victoria. B-Triples will be the truck of choice for freight to and from Pt Kembla if the Rail Link is not completed.

17. The **transport “Perfect Storm”**, for the people and businesses of the Illawarra, comprises a major accident on Mt Ousely during a period of heavy rain, which will automatically close the Illawarra line. This event occurs more often than it should.

During such an event, there would not be any transport of freight out of the Illawarra by rail or road and no passenger transport by rail. Car transport would be possible, with difficulty, via Mt Keira road, Bulli Pass road or on the coast road through Stanwell Park. All are very steep, very winding and dangerous in wet weather.

18. The **port system** in NSW is also far from perfect, with only Pt Kembla and Pt Botany being relevant to the “feasibility” of the Rail Link. Also having an influence, is the continuing development of shipping technology and the mega ship concept.

- (a) **Pt Kembla** is the only deepwater port in NSW. It has been through a series of major expansion programmes for many years and was given an extra stimulus by the closure of Sydney Harbour to cargo shipping in 2007. Sydney Harbour cargo included general cargo, grains, motor vehicles and containers. The containers were diverted to Pt Botany and the remainder now pass through Pt Kembla.

The cargo throughput of the port has increased as follows:

	<u>Year 2003/04</u>	<u>Year 2009/10</u>	
Total throughput	22.1mt	31.0mt	(increase 40%)
Coal component	8.3mt (38%)	13.7mt (44%)	(increase 65%)

In all of the Environmental Impact Statements for the port expansions, there was a certain disturbing constancy in the statements on transport, namely, 80% of all port throughput must go by road and only 20% would go by rail and that, in every case, the road system from the port was adequate to cope with each new port expansion.

Pt Kembla is developing plans for another major expansion, with land reclamation of a 42ha site in the Outer Harbour, for a bulk cargo berth and a container berth, with work starting in first quarter of 2011. In addition, the operators of the Coal Terminal are considering plans for expansion of that facility.

We trust that the NSW Government will reverse the obligation of the port to transport 80% of all throughput by road - to 80% or more by rail.

- (b) **Pt Botany** has out-grown its previously ideal location. The only rail access is a single line spur with a 5km speed limit and it even has 3 level crossings on it! The whole surrounding road system is a suburban nightmare. Waiting trucks have to park in the roads or cruise until they can gain access to the port. The only "relief" is the M5 Motorway, with its long unventilated tunnel, which the truck fill with life threatening fumes. During peak hour, the M5 has the slowest travel times of all of Sydney's "main" roads.

Botany Bay has an existing shallow draft for shipping but this has been further compromised by the pipeline from the new Desalination Plant.

- (c) **Mega-ships** are changing the face of shipping. We have had mega bulk coal and ore carriers for many years. During 2007, 2 new mega-ships were launched, the largest container ship and the largest Roll On/Roll Off motor vehicle carrier ship.

The *Emma Mærsk*, has a draft 15.5m, with a capacity of 11,000 containers, double the current capacity. It cannot enter Pt Botany and will be diverted to Pt Kembla.

The *Stockholm Faust*, has a capacity of 8,000 vehicles, double the current capacity, and heralds a new style of Large Car & Truck Carrier (LCTC) in which the floors are movable and it will be able to backload varied cargos.

Previously, vehicles were delivered to Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. The new plan, with the mega carrier, is for only 1 point of discharge, Pt Kembla, from which the vehicles will be distributed on land to Brisbane and Melbourne. The imports currently run at 240,000 vehicles per year. Logically, they must be moved by rail transport.

With movable floors in these mega-ships, they will be able to back-load goods (palletised or containerised) from Australia to Asia and elsewhere, a practice not previously available.

Effectively, this will double the number of trucks having to visit Pt Kembla for each such ship, which will require more transport and dockside storage space.

- (d) The subject of **Customs inspection** at ports is an "elephant in the room" for politicians. It is an "open secret" that such inspections are only a tokenistic operation. But, as per the Terms of Reference for this Feasibility Study, "customs inspections" do not respond well to "*economic and financial analysis*" and "*Benefit Cost Analysis (BCA)*"!
- (e) **Passenger services must be included on the Rail Link.** When a Government builds a freeway, to ease traffic congestion, what happens? Commuters recognise the benefits and use it to its full potential. In the nation-building style of our forefathers, we must make provision within this facility for the use by passengers.

The only reason for excluding passengers is because Government has a preference for a PPP process and it expects/knows that the developing consortium will not want to have passengers - because they have feelings and vote.

Cost estimates

19. In our campaign with the NSW Government, commenced 5 years ago, we did not need to do estimates of cost for completion of the Rail Link. Estimates were already available from 2 expert sources. The (then) State Rail Authority had made a preliminary estimate for the cost to complete the Rail Link in the amount of \$140m to 152m but noted that the "final" cost could be in the order of \$215m to \$227m.

Dr Philip Laird, of Wollongong University, had estimated that completion of the Rail Link would cost in the order of \$100m to \$150m, in early 2006.

Both of these estimates included electrification of the Rail Link. Based on these estimates, one could safely say that the estimated for completion could have been in the order of \$200m at that time. That cost estimate would have increased through inflation over the intervening 4½ years, plus additional costs of more recent/stringent environmental and other factors and legislation. One might surmise at a current cost to completion of some \$300 million.

Summary of Benefits of completion of the Rail Link

20. Completion of the Rail Link will provide a vast range of benefits to Greater Sydney, NSW and Australia, including the following more obvious items:

(a) Freight trains will by-pass the City commuter network and thereby:

- reduce wear and tear on the City commuter network;
- no longer be subject to curfews for 8 hours per day, providing an additional 60% of train operating hours per week day (assuming no other delays occur); and
- allow trains to run at a normal travelling speed.

(b) Freight trains will by-pass the Illawarra line and thereby:

- reduce wear and tear on the very old track and structures (especially the Stanwell Park viaduct), all of which currently incur costly and time consuming downtime and maintenance;
- avoid further operating delays due to the speed restrictions (down to 10km/hr), outages caused by rain/slippage and maintenance, plus the high cost of such maintenance; and
- lessen the potential risk of a complete line failure between Waterfall and Thirroul.

When items (a) and (b) are added together, the freight trains on the Rail Link may achieve a 100% increase in efficiency.

(c) With the impending massive increase of imports and exports through Pt Kembla, the majority of all cargo can be transported by rail instead of by road (not as currently mandated by the NSW Government) and will:

- open up direct access to the intermodal depots in western Sydney and elsewhere; and
- provide more job opportunities away from the inner Sydney area.

(d) The absence of freight trains passing through the City commuter network and on the Illawarra line will:

- allow Sydney commuter trains to travel unimpeded and achieve compliance with their scheduled timetables;
- minimise the growing rail congestion in Sydney Metropolitan region; and
- lower the need for track maintenance (primarily caused by the heavy freight trains) and allow maintenance to be performed without having to accommodate the needs of the freight trains, thereby lowering operating costs, maintenance costs and track downtime.

(e) The Rail Link will be used for passengers and will open up access between the western suburbs of Sydney and the Illawarra.

21. The Rail Link will provide an alternative rail route from the South Coast to Sydney, with only a small increase in travel time, when the Illawarra line is closed during rain periods, maintenance, or other regular line closures.

22. The Moss Vale line, may become a back-up line, instead of a primary line, for freight and passengers.

23. In addition to all of the other benefits, the Rail Link provides a significant saving in travel distance and turn around time over the existing routes, exemplified by coal from Tahmoor Mine to Pt Kembla:
- | | | |
|-----------------|-------|------------------------|
| • via Sydney | 175km | Turn around – 24 hours |
| • via Moss Vale | 118km | Turn around – 12 hours |
| • via Rail Link | 72km | Turn around – 6 hours |
24. By moving the majority of freight from road to rail, major benefits will be provided to millions of road users, including:
- the Mt Ousley/Princes Highway and Picton/Appin/Heathcote roads will avoid a massive increase in truck traffic (currently prescribed by the NSW Government's 80%), which is inherently unsustainable; and
 - lessening of truck traffic will minimise the congestion, which increases the risk of road accidents and the resulting trauma and hospital/human costs.
25. The environment will benefit because:
- fuel consumption and exhaust pollution will be dramatically reduced; and
 - spills of harmful chemicals into the Water Catchment Area (Picton and Appin roads) will be minimised by less road accidents.

CONCLUSION

We believe that:

1. the necessary expansion of Pt Kembla Harbour is leading us into an untenable future in Greater Sydney, Illawarra Region, NSW and Australia as a whole;
2. the information detailed above, and supported by established facts, amply proves that the Rail Link must be completed so as to provide security, safety, prosperity, financial success and increased employment opportunities for all;
3. the current and potential unnecessary inefficiencies and costs, imposed on exporters/importers and rail and road operators and other users, plus the unacceptable environmental and human damage which will be incurred if the Rail Link is not completed, cannot be allowed to continue;
4. the ownership of the Rail Link, together with operation and maintenance, must be retained under the control of the people of Australia, through their Governments;
5. the work for completion of the Rail Link must NOT be the subject of a PPP, which would deny the citizens of Australia the significant financial rewards which will flow from this project; and
6. the cost must be funded by the Government by the issue of Government bonds.

We also call upon all Australians to apply pressure on the Federal Government to have a high priority applied to the completion of the Rail Link.

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