

## **INQUIRY INTO INTER-REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

**Organisation:** Goulburn Mulwaree Council  
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**Date Received:** 16/05/2012

16 May 2012

The Chair  
State and Regional Development Committee  
Parliament House  
Macquarie St  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Sir or Madam

**RE: NSW Legislative Assembly, State and Regional Development Committee  
INQUIRY INTO INTER-REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

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Thank you for inviting submissions regarding the Inquiry into Inter-Regional Public Transport.

Goulburn Mulwaree Council is pleased to present the attached submission for your consideration.

In summary, Council would like to make the following points:

- Country Link services for work purposes to/from Goulburn should be provided where demand is evidenced in the Local Government Areas of Wingecarribee, Unincorporated ACT and Upper Lachlan.
- Country Link should be price competitive with City Rail services operating between Sydney and Goulburn.
- All levels of Government have a stewardship role to actively promote the triple bottom line benefits of public transport.
- A greater focus on investment in infrastructure along with financial incentives will provide a better mechanism for stimulating growth within Regional NSW.
- High Speed Rail is a critical long term infrastructure project which will benefit the South East NSW Region. Better recognition of the role of the High Speed Rail and potential integration with the NSW transport system is needed.

We trust that these matters will be recognised as part of your Inquiry.

Yours faithfully |

Chris Stewart  
Director, Planning and Community Services



**A Submission to:**

**NSW Parliament Legislative Assembly**

**State and Regional Development  
Committee**

**INQUIRY INTO INTER-REGIONAL  
PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

**May 2012**

Submission by:  
Goulburn Mulwaree Council

## Improving Country Link

### Increase rail services for employed Goulburn Mulwaree residents and workers

Country Link could be improved by providing rail services to arrive prior and after normal business hours in the direction where the demand is evidenced to be the highest.

The predominant amount of trips entering or exiting Goulburn Mulwaree for work purposes are from the Local Government Areas of Wingecarribee, Unincorporated ACT and Upper Lachlan.

11.1% or 1,234 of employed residents travel outside Goulburn Mulwaree for work.

- 23.8% or 294 of these employed residents travel to Wingecarribee.
- 21.8% or 284 of these employed residents travel to Unincorporated ACT.

12.6% or 1,300 of Goulburn Mulwaree workers travel to Goulburn Mulwaree for work.

- 44.7% or 581 of these workers travel from Upper Lachlan.
- 15.1% or 196 of these workers travel from Wingecarribee.
- 5.9% or 77 of these works travel from Unincorporated ACT.

Accordingly, an opportunity exists for Country Link to provide timely services to these locations where railway stations are present:

- Goulburn to Wingecarribee;
- Goulburn to Unincorporated ACT;
- Wingecarribee to Goulburn.

Goulburn to Wingecarribee		Goulburn to Unin. ACT		Wingecarribee to Goulburn	
Departure	Arrival	Departure	Arrival	Departure	Arrival
04:13	05:02	09:48	11:12	08:58	09:48
08:19	09:10	14:50	16:14	09:36	10:25
13:30	14:32	20:55	22:19	14:00	14:50
17:09	17:59			20:05	20:55
				22:28	23:17

Figure No 1, Source: Country Link Online Booking, Accessed: 27 April 2012  
Note. Timetabled trains vary slightly over the working week.

The timetable provided above (Figure No 1) illustrates the lack of rail services catering to normal business hours for two of the three dominant working destinations. While the table timetable below (Figure No 2) illustrates how the appropriate services are being provided in the direction of lower demand.

Queanbeyan to Goulburn	
Departure	Arrival
06:52	08:19
12:04	13:29
17:12	18:39

Figure No 2, Source: Country Link Online Booking, Accessed: 27 April 2012  
Note. Timetabled trains vary slightly over the working week.

This lack of appropriate services could be argued to be contributing to the decline of train as a method of travel to work. The 2006 census evidenced a 50% decline of 50 to 26 workers from 2001 census figures. This point is further supported by ABS (2008) figures indicating that the most commonly reported reason for not using public transport



to get to work or study was that there was no service available at a convenient time (28 percent).

### Price Competitiveness

Country Link could be improved by increasing its price competitiveness: 1) Between Goulburn and the Sydney Metropolitan Area (SMA) with City Rail; and 2) Between Goulburn and Wingecaribee and Unincorporated ACT with the road system.

#### 1) Between Goulburn and the SMA with City Rail

Country Link: Goulburn to Sydney (Cen.)			City Rail: Goulburn to Sydney (Cen.)		
Departure	Arrival	Time	Departure	Arrival	Time
04:13	6:55	2h 42m	04:59	08:11	3h 12m
08:19	11:02	2h 43m	07:14	10:00	2h 46m
13:29	16:21	2h 52m	13:15	17:22	4h 07m
17:09	19:54	2h 45m	19:28	10:54	3h 26m
One- Way Economy Ticket: \$28.25			One-Way Adult Ticket: \$8.20		
Figure No 3, Source: Country Link Online Booking, Accessed: 01 May 2012					
Note. Timetabled trains vary slightly over the working week.					

The table above (Figure No 3) illustrates that Country Link is three times the cost of City Rail. This increased cost may relate to the benefits of comfort and the consistent shorter trip lengths. Never the less, it is believed that cost is the key variable when determining a method of travel. The Australian Government's *State of Australian Cities 2010* described "Transport costs are the second-largest cost to households" (p.104).

#### 2) From/ To Goulburn from Wingecaribee or Unincorporated ACT with the road system.

The difficulty in promoting rail as a viable economic alternative is that vehicle owners are seeking to maximise the investment made on their vehicle that has also been purchased for non-work related trips.

The cost of a return economy ticket from Goulburn to Moss Vale and Goulburn to Queanbeyan ranges from \$20.98 to \$22.60 per day, which would equate to over \$100 for a five day working week.

City Rail data suggests that the cost of a small car to travel from Goulburn to Moss Vale based on \$1.50 per litre for fuel is \$276 per week (Figure No 5, p.3). Although this cost is significantly more, if car pooling is utilised, the cost is further reduced.

Country Link must provide fares that encourage commuters to their vehicles at home.

### Integration

Integration with other transport modes is critical. Given the fixed destinations that rail stations provide, connecting bus services or light rail systems are needed to redirect commuters once they have arrived at the desired railway station.

Further to this, it should be ensured that adequate, safe and cheap parking is also provided at the railway station to ensure integration with private vehicle transport.

### Promotion of Triple Bottom Line Benefits of Rail

Country Link must educate its potential and current passengers about the benefits of rail as a viable alternative to road and air travel. This could be achieved through education (e.g. public awareness campaigns), financial incentives (e.g. government subsidy of rail) and policy (e.g. urban densification at railway stations). The promotion of rail as the preferred travel mode is based on some of its triple bottom line benefits listed in Figure No 4 below.

Economic	Social	Environmental
Government return on investment in 'mass transit'. NSW Government spent \$1.6 billion of public transport in 2006-07 (NG. 2006, p. 30)	Increase of 'social capital' through integration of different socio-demographic levels (Jacobs. 1961)	Resilience to 'peak oil'. (NSWTP.2012)
Reduced household 'transportation costs' (AG. 2010, p.104)	Reduced stress caused by 'road rage' and 'grid lock'	Mitigation of 'climate change'. (NSWTP.2012)
Reduced economic costs of traffic congestion, estimated to be \$9.4billion in 2005 (AG. 2011, p.65)	Increased 'recreation time' for reading, music, etc.	Reduction 'air pollution', which leads to 3,000 premature deaths each year (AG. 2011, p.110)
Figure No 4, Source: Various, refer to Reference List.		

The City Rail website provides an excellent example of how education can be used to promote the benefits of rail. When selecting the 'fare calculator' for a given trip, it provides a breakdown of the economic and environmental cost when compared to using private vehicle transport.

	Cost (per week)	Cost (per year)	Carbon emissions (per trip)	Carbon emissions (per week)	Carbon emissions (per year)
Train	\$59	\$2,360	2.69kg	26.9kg	1,289kg
Small car	\$276	\$13,745	9.72kg	97.2kg	4,664kg
Medium car	\$382	\$19,157	12.56kg	125.6kg	6,029kg
Large car	\$508	\$25,538	15.17kg	151.7kg	7,281kg
4WD	\$398	\$19,896	17.46kg	174.6kg	8,380kg
Figure No 5, Source: City Rail website, Fare Calculator, Goulburn to Moss Vale, Accessed: 27 April 2012					

## Increasing Inter-Regional Public Transport

Firstly, the opportunities and demand for inter-regional public transport must exist. The census data previously discussed is the best reference available to indicate that demand is present. Despite this, limited low cost and timely public transport options currently operate.

Private inter-regional transport services have been operating due to this perceived demand. In 2008, Bowman's bus lines ran a commuter service between Goulburn and Canberra three times a day that has since ceased due to a lack of patronage. While Murray's Coaches currently runs an express bus service between Canberra and Sydney every hour between 6am and 7pm. However, this express service does not stop at Goulburn.

Goulburn's future growth will be attributable to its strategic location within the Canberra-Sydney corridor. Goulburn is one hour commuting distance from Canberra by road and

roughly 1hr 20mins on the Southern railway line. Accordingly this location provides an excellent opportunity for new residents to purchase relatively affordable housing and maintain a working life in Canberra.

Investment in public infrastructure could potentially address these identified public transport shortfalls and best facilitate growth in Goulburn. Evidence to this theory is provided by the OECD Report (2009) *How Regions Grow*, which suggests:

*“that higher economic growth is driven by education, supporting infrastructure, (such as transport links), and propensity for innovation. Proximity to other regions with large populations and higher growth rates also influences growth- consistently with the rapid growth of “capital satellites” in Australia” (Daley. 2012, p.5).*

These opportunities for Goulburn's growth could be facilitated by an increase in low cost and timely public transport. For example, the State Government could subsidise a low cost rail service between Goulburn to Canberra and Goulburn to Moss Vale. This service would run at times convenient for commuters working normal business operating hours.

This service would be consistent with the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) National objective and criteria for future strategic planning of capital cities:

*“5. Consider and strengthen the networks between capital cities (i.e. Canberra) and major regional centres (i.e. Goulburn), and other important domestic and international connections” (AG<sup>1</sup>. 2011, p.87)*

Further to this, the NSW Government currently supports the growth of regional centres through its *Regional Relocation (Home Buyers Grant) Act 2011*. This scheme provides applicants with a one-off payment of \$7,000 to assist them with the cost of relocating from their metropolitan home to a regional home. It is believed that investment in public transport infrastructure connecting Goulburn with identified employment markets would assist the State Government to achieve this policy objective of regional relocation.

In short, this suggested service would provide a further incentive for regional relocation and provide opportunities for inter-regional services for existing residents that is consistent with State and Federal Government objectives.

## Role of Councils

Council can improve inter-regional public transport by educating its constituents about the benefits of public transport. It also has a role to work with neighbouring councils and transport groups to achieve the best transport outcomes for its region.

As a result, Goulburn Mulwaree Council will continue to promote Goulburn as a growing regional town whose strategic location on the Hume Highway and Southern Railway Line provides excellent opportunities for regional relocation and an increase in environmentally responsible public transport.

As identified by the recent submission to the 'NSW Transport Master Plan', Goulburn is supportive of the following objectives for transport in the south-east region of NSW:

- A greater focus on investment in infrastructure versus financial incentives will provide a better mechanism for stimulating growth within Regional NSW



- The Main Road 92 extension from Nerriga to the Hume Highway must be identified as a priority project linking the South Coast with the Australian Capital Region
- High Speed Rail as a critical long term infrastructure project which will benefit the South East NSW Region. Better recognition of the role of the HSR and potential integration with the NSW transport system is needed

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