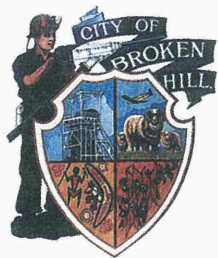


## **INQUIRY INTO INTER-REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT**

**Organisation:** Broken Hill City Council  
**Name:** Mr Frank Zaknich  
**Position:** General Manager  
**Date Received:** 4/05/2012



# Broken Hill City Council

... a safe, vibrant, prosperous and culturally rich City achieved through community leadership and sustainable management.

Quote No D12/5764 - 11/161  
FZ:RM

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April 30, 2012

Mr Andrew Gee MP  
State & Regional Development  
Committee Chair  
Parliament of NSW  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Gee,

## Inquiry into Inter-Regional Public Transport

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Legislative Assembly State and Regional Development Committee into its inquiry into inter-regional public transport.

Broken Hill City Council has made a number of submissions concerning rail transport and in particular a concerted approach to the State Government to support an increase rail in passenger rail frequency into the Far West region of New South Wales.

Council's 2010-2030 Integrated Strategic Plan. Key Direction Two Our Economy (2.7) Promote Broken Hill as a transport hub and regional gateway. Key Direction Four Our Services (4.4) to provide improved access to public transport within Broken Hill City support this submission.

As a council and community your terms of reference particularly ***section (d) How CountryLink can be utilised to increase tourism in NSW*** is pertinent to our region.

Our city should be considered a significant rail destination. Presently we have a single return train service once a week leaving Sydney on a Monday and returning Tuesday. CountryLink provides a daily bus link to Dubbo. This service leaves the city at 3.45am to enable passengers to link from Dubbo to Sydney by train.

Council in 2010 was invited to make submission on rail services to our region. The CountryLink Up 2010 report recommended CountryLink investigate an additional weekly service to Broken Hill.

This recommendation – one of three specific to Broken Hill – was vigorously supported by the community. No further action has been taken in regard to this recommendation despite repeated attempts by Council and Local Member John Williams to get a commitment from the present Government.

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It is our belief that additional rail services will have a positive impact on tourism across Far West NSW.

Our region is unique – it offers a range of opportunities associated with mining, tourism, film, arts, sustainable energies, environment and events. By providing an additional service, it will provide passengers with a range of options into the outback and allow for affordable and frequent transportation to the state's capital.

Council believes that an increased service would also allow the consideration of ***section (c) the potential for CountryLink services to carry light freight.***

Broken Hill's mining sector is currently experiencing a major resurgence. It is our belief that the opportunity to rail-freight mining equipment and materials would be utilised by companies across the far west region. With an increase in rail frequency CountryLink could provide a guarantee of service in delivering a range of light freight items in a relatively short time.

Whilst the terms of reference are broad ranging as a Council we believe at ***section (a) how CountryLink services can be improved*** and ***section (g) the role local Councils can play in improving inter-regional transportation networks*** allows Council to provide an overall comment in relation to the inquiry.

The vibrancy and prosperity of our region relies heavily on appropriate, reliable and affordable public transport services and infrastructure.

CountryLink services could be improved by a service guarantee level of an additional train service to our city on a weekly basis. As early as February 2012, we were faced with the prospect of losing our one direct service to Sydney.

Passenger rail is an essential service for our residents particularly linking the city to the state's capital. It is incomprehensible that residents of Broken Hill and the far west are forced to travel to Dubbo via bus to get a rail link to Sydney when the national rail network is a key feature of Broken Hill.

While Council appreciates the opportunity to make comment into this latest inquiry, one wonders at the efforts needed to get our message heard.

Certainly our response to the Country Linkup 2010 report highlighted the need, and the city's willingness, to support a second rail service into the city yet there has been no action taken to implement this.

A further enhancement to the service could be the use of VFT technology to link Broken Hill to regional rail hubs such as Dubbo. This would provide a comfortable level of service to passengers in meeting both business and personal travel needs.

The City serves a region that extends north toward Queensland, and south toward the Victorian border and into South Australia for several hundred kilometres in each direction. Its region of influence is also reflected in transport routes - Broken Hill being at the crossroads of a network linking the east coast with Adelaide and north western Victoria with western

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Queensland. The City is also a major stop on the trans-continental railway for freight and passengers.

Thank you again for allowing Council to make a submission to your inquiry, we look forward to progressing key issues raised in our submission.

Yours faithfully

FRANK ZAKNICH  
GENERAL MANAGER