

**Submission
No 42**

INQUIRY INTO INTER-REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT

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The Chair
State & Regional Development Committee
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Sir/Madam

Inquiry into Inter-Regional Public Transport

Council is pleased to provide the following submission in respect of the abovementioned matter.

Background

The Bathurst Regional Local Government Area is consistently one of the fastest growing inland centres in NSW. Improvements in public transport links would be expected to yield higher growth rates.

Bathurst is the gateway to the central western area of NSW. Transport improvements within and to Bathurst will benefit not only the Bathurst population but also the wider region.

How Countrylink services can be improved?

Bathurst requires a daily dedicated rail commuter service direct to Sydney with a limited number of stops providing a maximum 3 hour journey for commuters. It is envisaged that if the service departed Bathurst at 6.00am, it could then depart central at 5.00pm. This service would be in addition to existing services and would facilitate travel to Sydney for business purposes.

In the longer term it is recommended that electric Cityrail services should be extended to Bathurst.

A daily commuter service or ultimately more frequent electric rail services would improve rail passenger transport times to and from Sydney, reduce traffic on existing highways to Sydney and increase commuter opportunities between Bathurst and Sydney.

It is also important to maintain low cost fares between Bathurst and Sydney particularly for pensioners who frequently access medical services in the metropolitan area.

The potential for Countrylink services to carry light freight

Council supports any increase in freight rail services. If combined with passenger services, the timing of departure should be geared to suit the passenger as the first priority.

How can Countrylink be better utilised to increase tourism in NSW

Countrylink should be able to respond to special events in Country areas (eg the Bathurst 1000) and provide special train services to bring passengers to and from those events. In this regard local government would benefit from gaining a better understanding of who to contact within Countrylink and what are the conditions/regulations for applying for this additional service.

Bathurst currently receives a daily XPT service that accommodates day trippers from Sydney by leaving Sydney early in the morning, arriving Bathurst mid morning and leaving Bathurst late afternoon. The timing of this service is important to accommodate day trippers and should not be halted or reduced.

How the amount of inter-regional travel undertaken by public transport can be increased?

As mentioned earlier this can be achieved through a daily return commuter service from Bathurst to Sydney and ultimately through the extension of electric train services to Bathurst.

Council looks forward to receiving information about the outcomes of this inquiry.

Yours faithfully

D R Shaw
DIRECTOR
ENVIRONMENTAL, PLANNING & BUILDING SERVICES