

**Submission  
No 109**

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

**Organisation:** Snowy Hydro Limited  
**Name:** Mr David Hogen  
**Position:** Manager  
Public Relations and Community Affairs  
**Date Received:** 18/05/2012

9<sup>th</sup> May 2012

**Destination Jindabyne**

**Submission Re: NSW State and Regional Development committee “Inquiry into inter-regional public transport”.**

**1. How Country Link Services can be improved**

Snowy River Shire is possibly the only Shire in NSW that is not serviced by a regular CountryLink service with up to 14 services per week going through the neighbouring Bombala and Cooma shires.

Snowy Hydro support the efforts of the Jindabyne Chamber, Destination Jindabyne and Tourism Snowy Mountains of which we are a stakeholder member, that Snowy River Shire would benefit from both a community and tourism standpoint if a country link service was introduced

By providing this service the following sectors of our community would benefit:

**HEALTH**

The provision of a service to the Snowy Shire would allow ease of access to medical services, which include hospitals and specialist medical services, provided in both Cooma and Canberra and also Sydney.

**EDUCATION**

There are two K-12 schools serviced by school buses, but there is no service that would allow the high school students and those choosing to continue their education to attend University and TAFE courses that are offered outside of the normal school hours and outside our shire including the proposed University Learning Centre in Cooma.

**ECONOMIC**

Employment during the winter season increases exponentially with up to 5000 seasonal staff employed and that a regular service for those commuting to jobs within the Snowy area is seen as important.

**2. How Network Linkages between CountryLink train and coach services can be improved**

Network linkages between CountryLink train and coach services can be improved by a reconfiguring of the timetable to include return travel and provide a bus service that would link up with selected arrivals and departures from Canberra.

**3. How CountryLink can be better utilised to increase tourism in New South Wales**

The Snowy River Shire is one of the largest growing domestic tourism areas in New South Wales with tourism now exceeding agriculture/farming in local income by a factor of more than double. The NSW State Government have mandated that domestic tourism expenditure in NSW is to be doubled by the year 2020.

Over recent years there has been an increase in tourist numbers outside the winter ski season. There are now any number of spring/summer activities held in the region; Lake Light Sculpture, Dragonboat Flowing Festival, a growing number of mountain bike events, the iconic trout fishing and the Kosciusko National Park, which is one of the top 5 national parks for tourists to visit.

A significant constraints for the area in order to grow tourism within the spring/summer months is the lack of a permanent year round public transport service. While the winter season is serviced by private operators the summer season is not.

Studies undertaken by Tourism Snowy Mountains on understanding perceptions of the Snowy Mountains as a holiday destination, show the lack of public transport as the major issue to overseas and domestic tourism.

An integrated CountryLink service with the Snowy Shire would allow CountryLink Holidays to include many of the wonderful Spring/Summer events held in the area, refer TSM website - <http://www.snowymountains.com.au>, and would greatly improve access to international visitors.

#### **4. How the amount of inter-regional travel undertaken by public transport can be increased**

As our national capital is only two hours to our north with the large student populations in tertiary education many of whom are overseas students enormous potential exists to increase visitation to our region.

With many retirees now inhabiting our nearby coastal regions and reluctant to drive long distances or mountain roads potential for an increase in local domestic visitation also exists.

Increased domestic and international growth within our own "Snowy Mountains" region would be greatly enhanced by the ability to have access to the entire region not just select segments.

#### **5. The extent to which regional public transport networks are integrated and how they can be better integrated**

An extension of the existing CountryLink ticket would be an integrated ticket that allowed use of the Cityrail network.

VLine currently have a bus service that runs through Cooma and CountryLink may be able to partner with them to increase services for our region.

#### **6. The role local councils can play in improving inter-regional public transportation networks**

We understand that the Snowy River Shire Council is also doing a submission and we as a community support the Council in their submission.

Whilst there are existing Bus terminal facilities in Jindabyne with a large purpose built area designed to allow bus services to pickup/put down, including space for ticketing and luggage storage we are confident of the support of council in upgrading other regional facility requirements at Berridale and Dalgety.

#### **7. The type of buses and trains that will be required for the provision of regional passenger services in the future.**

Normal buses and those with wheel chair access would provide the necessary service.

David Hogan  
Manager, Public Relations and Community Affairs  
Snowy Hydro, COOMA