

**NSW Government Response to General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4
Inquiry into the Closure of the
Casino to Murwillumbah rail service**

Recommendation	Response
<p>RECOMMENDATION 1 That the Government produce a comprehensive preservation plan for the Casino to Murwillumbah line, such plan to include, but not to be restricted to, the preservation of the line's overbridges.</p>	<p>Supported in principle.</p> <p>Existing arrangements fulfil this recommendation.</p> <p>As for other non-operational rail lines on the NSW network, the Casino to Murwillumbah corridor will be preserved.</p>
<p>RECOMMENDATION 2 That the Government develop guidelines requiring agencies such as RailCorp to consult with the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources on decisions affecting long-term transport planning, including the proposed closure of railway lines.</p>	<p>Supported in principle.</p> <p>Existing arrangements fulfil this recommendation.</p> <p>There is a prescribed process for closing a railway line, including the requirement of an Act of Parliament.</p> <p>Transport agencies, including RailCorp routinely consult with the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources (DIPNR) on planning for transport needs.</p> <p>In the medium to longer term, the Ministry of Transport will be working with DIPNR as part of the development of a Coastal Strategy (Far North Coast). This strategy will direct how development will occur in the region over the next 30 years. It will identify where growth will occur, the infrastructure required to support economic development and inform the State Government budget process.</p>
<p>RECOMMENDATION 3 That the NSW Government, in the event</p>	<p>Supported in principle.</p>

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of any future proposed closure of a passenger rail service, be required to provide 12 months notice of the closure to the Parliament to allow for community consultation.	However, at times circumstances will arise that necessitate greater flexibility in the decision-making process for government or the relevant operating authority.
<p>RECOMMENDATION 4</p> <p>That the NSW Government immediately introduce a new regular rail commuter service from Casino to Murwillumbah, which would connect at Casino with the XPT service between Sydney and Brisbane.</p>	<p>Not supported.</p> <p>The NSW Government has made its decision in relation to the Casino-Murwillumbah line. The fundamental issue is the need for substantial investment to make the line safe for any rail service to operate on the line, irrespective of whether it is a CountryLink or a local commuter service.</p>
<p>RECOMMENDATION 5</p> <p>That the NSW Government accept the Federal Government's offer to provide \$30 million over two years to help fund a new regular rail commuter service from Casino to Murwillumbah.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>See response to Recommendation 4.</p> <p>The NSW Government notes that matching the Federal Government's pre-election promise of \$30million leaves a funding shortfall of \$128 million for infrastructure and maintenance over the next twenty years to make the line safe.</p> <p>The NSW Ministry of Transport is working with the Commonwealth Department of Transport and Regional Services and the Australian Rail Track Corporation investigating the viability of freight options for the line.</p>
<p>RECOMMENDATION 6</p> <p>That the NSW Government use savings</p>	Noted.

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<p>from the Australian Rail Track Corporation Agreement to help fund a new regular rail commuter service from Casino to Murwillumbah.</p>	<p>See response to Recommendation 4.</p>
<p>RECOMMENDATION 7</p> <p>That the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources, in developing plans for links with interstate railway lines, identify a rail corridor between Murwillumbah and Coolangatta Airport.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Work on the assessment of future transport corridors on the Far North Coast is underway as part of DIPNR's Coastal Strategy (Far North Coast).</p>
<p>RECOMMENDATION 8</p> <p>That the NSW Government, in cooperation with the Queensland Government, commission a new study to examine the viability of extending the Casino to Murwillumbah rail line to Coolangatta to link with the proposed south-east Queensland railway line and upgraded Gold Coast rail services.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>DIPNR's work on the assessment of future transport corridors referred to in the response to Recommendation 8 will include consideration of linkages with possible interstate railway lines.</p>