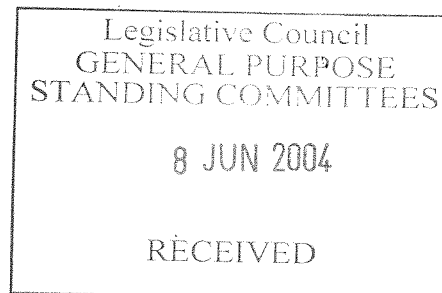


Chief Executive Officer: PO Box K349, Haymarket NSW 1238  
Level 6, 18 Lee Street, Chippendale NSW 2008 Tel: (02) 8202 3175 Fax: (02) 8202 2291

8 JUN 2004

Mr Robert Stefanic  
Clerk to the Committee  
General Purpose Standing Committee No.4  
Legislative Council  
Macquarie Street  
SYDNEY NSW 2000.



Dear Mr Stefanic

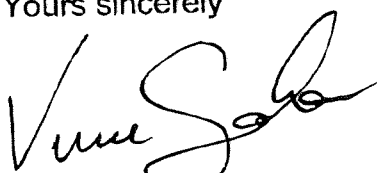
**Inquiry into the Closure of Casino to Murwillumbah Rail Services**

Please find attached responses to the questions taken on notice by RailCorp staff during the public hearing that took place on 20 May 2004.

Please also find attached responses to the questions placed on notice by Committee members after the same hearing.

As confirmed with the Committee, it is anticipated that the response to the call for documents will be provided to the Committee by COB Wednesday 9 June.

Yours sincerely

  
Vince Graham  
Chief Executive

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 1 (RailCorp Representatives)**

Please provide a breakdown of maintenance expenditure on the Casino to Murwillumbah rail service in 2002-03. (Hansard, page 5)

**Response**

Track maintenance expenditure for 2002-2003 was \$3.7 million. It should be noted that maintenance expenditure in any one year fluctuates depending on the cyclic nature of some activities, priorities elsewhere and climatic conditions eg drought and flood.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH**  
**RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 2 (RailCorp Representatives)**

Is there trend data over a period of time for passenger numbers on the Casino to Murwillumbah line. (Hansard, pages 5-6)

**Response**

In the six years since 1998, the number of passengers using CountryLink train services on the Casino to Murwillumbah line have declined by up to 36%.

The trend in declining passenger numbers is accelerating for both concession and non-concession passengers. Concession passenger numbers declined by 6.4% in 2002/03. Fare paying passenger numbers declined by 7.9%.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**

**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 3 (RailCorp Representatives)**

Please provide a comparison of the track condition index of the Casino to Murwillumbah line with other lines, or with an average across the network. (Hansard, page 6)

**Response**

The TCI for the Murwillumbah line in January 2004 was 49. This compares with a TCI for the north coast mainline in January 2004 of 47, and a statewide mainline TCI of 44. The Murwillumbah TCI of 49 is considered to be a fair to good result, as it is a highly curved track and has an inherently higher TCI than straight track.

(TCI is calculated using measurements recorded by a specialised car of four different measuring points of the track, these being: top (vertical alignment of the rail), line (horizontal alignment of the rail), twist (super elevation or cant of the track); and gauge (distance between top of rails).

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 4 (RailCorp Representatives)**

Please provide an indicative cost per kilometre of maintaining the overbridges for public roads on the Casino to Murwillumbah line. (Hansard, page 10)

**Response**

RIC does not record these costs per kilometre. The total direct cost of maintaining overbridges for public roads on the line is estimated at \$150,000 per annum.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 5 (RailCorp Representatives)**

Who in the Minister's Office made the verbal request for the Briefing Note on the Casino to Murwillumbah line provided prior to the Mini Budget. (Hansard, p.17)

**Response**

I am advised the request was passed on by the Minister's Chief of Staff.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 6 (RailCorp Representatives)**

Please provide more information on whether RailCorp self-insures its stations and structures, and whether a value can be placed on the Casino to Murwillumbah line. (Hansard, page 18)

**Response**

RailCorp, RIC and SRA fully insures its assets such as rollingstock, stations, building/properties, plant and equipment and selected infrastructure assets.

Infrastructure assets such as signal boxes and signaling/communications equipment, electrical sub stations and bridges are fully insured.

The difficulties in estimating a value for the line were outlined in the hearing of 20 May.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**

**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 7 (RailCorp Representatives)**

Please provide an estimate of the net savings associated with the net effect of the ARTC on the State Budget. (Hansard, p.20)

**Response**

The Treasury and Office of the Coordinator General's review of the ARTC proposal found a net financial benefit to the NSW Government, estimated at from \$800m in net present value (NPV) terms, over the 60 year term of the lease.

However, initial costs in giving effect to the ARTC proposal are substantial. The significant gains from the arrangement will be felt in the medium to long term.

As noted during the hearing of 20 May, the increasing demands for funding of the country and metropolitan rail networks are considerable. It is anticipated that money that is saved from the ARTC agreement would go towards providing support for the increased costs in subsidies that are required for both country and metropolitan operations.



**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**

**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 8 (RailCorp Representatives)**

Please provide figures on the access revenue earned by the country rail network, and total spending on the country rail network. (Hansard, page 21)

**Response**

The Country Network Statement of Financial Performance results for 12 months ended 30 June 2003 provides the only full year results that have been audited as part of the RIC Line CSO Agreement. Note that Country Network is a defined term in the CSO Agreement and includes specific sectors in the metropolitan area. Also note that total spending on the Country Network in the CSO Agreement includes allocated amounts for corporate overheads which are included in 'Other'.

	\$M
Access Revenue	78.6
Other Revenue	9.5
CSO Funding	285.8
MOT Capital Projects Funding	75.0
Total Revenue	378.9
Maintenance	206.9
Infrastructure Depreciation	284.4
Other	100.6
Total Expenditure	591.9
Profit (Loss) after Interest & Tax	(213.0)
Plus:	
Capital expenditure	101.8

Total Cash Expenditure

\$409.3 M (total expenditure + capital expenditure – infrastructure depreciation)

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**  
**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 9 (RailCorp Representatives)**

Please provide details of the decline in the number of concession holders traveling on the Casino to Murwillumbah line (Hansard, p.29)

**Response**

Current figures indicate that, approximately:

- 8% (30 of 398) daily passengers travelling on the Casino-Murwillumbah line pay full adult fare.
- 44% (176 of 398) daily passengers either travel free or pay \$2.50 (Country pensioner excursion ticket).
- The remainder (48%) travel on other forms of concession allowing a 40-50% fare reduction.

The percentage decline is shown in the response to Question 2.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**  
**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 1 (Committee Members)**

What have been the dividends to shareholders paid since 1996 by Rail Access Corporation (RAC)?

**Response**

This information is available in the 1997-98, 1998-99 RAC Annual Reports and the 2000-01 RIC Annual Report.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 2 (Committee Members)**

Since 1994, has the maintenance of bridges on the Murwillumbah Line been appropriately funded and implemented effectively?

**Response**

Access revenue and line CSO payments provide the funding for all expenditure including maintenance. Maintenance of bridges on the Murwillumbah Line since 1994 has been directed at ensuring the line is safe for use. To that extent the maintenance on bridges has been appropriately planned ("funded") and implemented effectively.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 3 (Committee Members)**

What has been the funding specifically for bridges?

**Response**

Approximately \$7.8 m has been spent on bridges on the Casino-Murwillumbah track over the past 5 years.

It should be noted that an estimated total of \$188 million is required for maintenance on the Casino – Murwillumbah line over the next 20 years. More than half of this expenditure is expected to be required in the next 10 years.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**

**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 4 (Committee Members)**

Can you confirm the steel bridge structure lying on the ground next to the line at Woodlawn was intended to replace a wooden bridge? When was this steel bridge delivered and why was it not installed?

**Response**

The steel trestles were purchased and delivered in 2003 to replace 2 existing timber trestles in the Woodlawn bridge. Subsequently the additional need and cost to undertake piling caused the project to be deferred until 2004-2005.

As a result of the CountryLink announcement the steel trestles are now to be used at a different location on the Country Network.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**  
**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 5 (Committee Members)**

In 1994 what were the speed restrictions on the Murwillumbah branch line bridges?

**Response**

Records have not been located that indicate the speed restrictions on Murwillumbah branch line bridges in 1994.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 6 (Committee Members)**

In 2004 what are the speed restrictions on the Murwillumbah branch line bridges?

**Response**

As at 26 May 2004 there were 23 speed restrictions in place on Murwillumbah Line bridges. For details see Attachment Q6 Speed restrictions



**RIC Speed Report****North Coast Temporary Speed Restrictions**

Report Criteria: Corridor=Casino To Murwillumbah, Not lifted restrictions, Public Reason =BUO

[Return to Main Menu] [Return to Report Query]

ID	Imposed Date	Forecast Lift Date	Basecode	Basecode Description	Dir	Start Kms	End Kms	Public Reason	Lifted Date	Perm Speed	Rest Speed	TEI
351827	11/2003	31/12/2004	10010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	819.513	819.600	BUO		F: 100 X: 110	F: 40 X: 110	F: 1.96
321002	09/2003	30/06/2004	10010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	826.684	826.840	BUO		F: 90 P: 90 X: 95	F: 50 P: 60 X: 60	F: 1.08 P: 0.25 X: 0.3
352027	11/2003	31/12/2004	10010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	836.750	836.897	BUO		F: 50 X: 50	F: 40 X: 50	F: 0.35
117207	07/1994	30/06/2008	10010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	840.800	841.050	BUO		F: 55 P: 55 X: 60	F: 20 P: 20 X: 20	F: 2.72 P: 1.14 X: 1.24
331030	09/2003	30/06/2004	10010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	843.541	843.589	BUO		F: 100 P: 100 X: 110	F: 20 P: 20 X: 20	F: 4.09 P: 1.41 X: 1.55
342311	11/2003	30/11/2004	10010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	844.080	844.160	BUO		F: 100 X: 110	F: 40 X: 110	F: 1.95
331130	09/2003	30/06/2004	10010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	844.503	844.541	BUO		F: 100 P: 100 X: 110	F: 20 P: 20 X: 20	F: 4.07 P: 1.39 X: 1.52
117923	07/1997	30/06/2007	10010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	851.500	851.600	BUO		E: 85 X: 90	F: 40 X: 90	F: 1.48
337728	10/2003	30/06/2004	10010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	854.545	854.580	BUO		F: 85 P: 85 X: 90	F: 20 P: 20 X: 20	F: 3.51 P: 1.17 X: 1.24
336624	10/2003	30/06/2004	10010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	862.311	862.343	BUO		F: 50 P: 50 X: 55	F: 20 P: 20 X: 20	F: 2.08 P: 0.65 X: 0.73
337828	10/2003	30/06/2004	10010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	867.325	867.357	BUO		F: 100 P: 100 X: 105	F: 20 P: 20 X: 20	F: 4.05 P: 1.37 X: 1.44
315813	08/2003	30/06/2004	10010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	888.448	888.796	BUO		F: 100 P: 100 X: 105	F: 20 P: 20 X: 20	F: 4.81 P: 2.13 X: 2.21
119314	02/2002	31/12/2004	10010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	895.880	896.318	BUO		F: 75 X: 80	F: 40 X: 80	F: 1.39
361119	12/2003	31/12/2004	10010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	896.318	896.368	BUO		F: 75 P: 75 X: 80	F: 40 P: 40 X: 40	F: 1.12 P: 0.38 X: 0.44
361219	12/2003	31/12/2004	10010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	896.368	896.850	BUO		F: 75 X: 80	F: 40 X: 79	F: 1.42 X: 0.01
378530	01/2004	30/06/2004	10010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	906.970	907.000	BUO		F: 60 P: 60 X: 65	F: 40 P: 40 X: 40	F: 0.63 P: 0.2 X: 0.26
116728	03/2002	30/06/2004	10010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	910.149	910.174	BUO		F: 65 X: 70	F: 40 X: 50	F: 0.79 X: 0.15
119623	07/1999	30/06/2005	10010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	914.544	914.635	BUO		F: 65 P: 65 X: 70	F: 20 P: 40 X: 40	F: 2.85 P: 0.29 X: 0.35
399312	03/2004	30/06/2005	10010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	919.724	919.814	BUO		F: 40 X: 40	F: 20 X: 40	F: 1.66

394503/03/200430/06/200510010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	923.938	923.996	BUO	F: 65 X: 70	F: 20 X: 70	F: 2.78
352428/11/200330/06/200510010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	928.117	928.179	BUO	F: 70 X: 75	F: 40 X: 75	F: 0.97
377523/01/200430/06/200410010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	930.886	930.896	BUO	P: 50 X: 55	P: 20 X: 20	P: 0.61 X: 0.68
119703/11/199330/06/200510010	Casino to Murwillumbah Single Line	B	933.655	933.676	BUO	F: 70 P: 70 X: 75	F: 10 P: 10 X: 10	F: 5.88 P: 1.79 X: 1.87

Total records: 23

Total restrictions: 23

Category	Total TLI		
	Up	Down	Average
Freight	51.64	51.64	51.64
Passenger	12.78	12.78	12.78
XPT	13.99	13.99	13.99

**END OF REPORT**

[Export report to Excel]

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 7 (Committee Members)**

In the knowledge that the Travers Morgan technical feasibility study undertaken in the early 90's found that the extension of the rail line into South-east Queensland is technically feasible, what is the NSW Government's attitude to assisting in funding the project?

**Response**

This is a matter for the Government.

It should be noted at the time the report was released in October 1992 the then Minister for Transport, Mr Bruce Baird, announced that analysis showed that extending the line into South East Queensland was not economically viable.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 8 (Committee Members)**

Under what circumstances would the NSW Government be prepared to help fund the extension of the Casino to Murwillumbah rail line into South-East Queensland?

**Response**

This is an issue of NSW Government policy that is beyond the purview of RailCorp to answer.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 9 (Committee Members)**

Would NSW Government funding for the project be contingent on funding from the Queensland Government?

**Response**

This is an issue of NSW Government policy that is beyond the purview of RailCorp to answer.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**

**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 10 (Committee Members)**

Is the NSW Government prepared to identify a suitable rail corridor into South-East Queensland and fund the acquisition of this identified land?

**Response**

This is an issue of NSW Government policy that is beyond the purview of RailCorp to answer.

Note: the Minister has announced the establishment of a working party to look at preserving the existing rail corridor.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 11 (Committee Members)**

Is the NSW Government prepared to assist Councils, under the Just Terms legislation to preserve the rail corridor for the extension of the line into South-East Queensland?

**Response**

This is an issue of NSW Government policy that is beyond the purview of RailCorp to answer.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH**  
**RAILSERVICE**  
**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 12**

What duties are the staff at the now closed railway stations performing? How long is it expected that they will be performing those duties?

**Response**

The staff continue to perform their normal duties at each location. This includes Travel Centre reservations, ticketing, holiday sales and customer service roles, including maintaining station facilities and assisting customers with luggage check-in.

The staff will continue to perform normal functions prior to RailCorp finalising redeployment or voluntary redundancy option for those employees.



**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH**  
**RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 13**

Have CountryLink staff been offered alternative work in other locations or redundancy packages? If so, what is the breakdown of numbers offered both? What is the acceptance rate?

**Response**

All staff members affected by the Murwillumbah closure are ensured of employment within RailCorp with the following options:

- Redeployment to other suitable RailCorp positions
- Registration with the Workforce Management Centre for consideration for positions in other Public Sector Agencies
- Voluntary Redundancy
- Redeployment to a position in the Sydney Metropolitan Area

Discussions with staff regarding the options above are currently underway but are still at the preliminary stage.

The purpose of these discussions is to ensure that staff fully understand their options in regard to redeployment or acceptance of a voluntary redundancy payment. It also provides the employee with the opportunity to raise any personal issues/ needs that would assist in their case management throughout the decision making process.

Two financial seminars were conducted on 29<sup>th</sup> April for staff affected by closure prior to a one-on-one interview.

All employees were informed of the availability of StateRail's Employee Assistance Program and were provided with contact details.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**

**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 14 (Committee Members)**

On 16 April RailCorp issued two Special Train Notices advising that trackwork would be carried out between Lismore and Byron Bay from 6th to 9th May and between Byron Bay and Murwillumbah from 1st to 5th May. Why did RailCorp make a decision to conduct maintenance work on a line, after the announcement was made it was to close?

**Response**

The mini budget announcement of 5 April 2004 stated that coaches would replace the passenger service.

The Countrylink decision to run the last XPT on 17 May was made on or around 23 April 2004, which was after the Special Train Notices (STNs) were issued. It should be noted that the issuing of STNs for the maintenance work would take several weeks to prepare and would have been close to completion by 5 April.

As a result of the CountryLink announcement, the planned maintenance work was cancelled and the STNs were withdrawn.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 15**

In relation to the replacement bus service:

- a. What criteria is used for how many buses are needed?
- b. When is the cut off time for ordering the buses for each service?
- c. What provisions have been made for passengers who need to toilet facilities?
- d. What provisions have been made for appropriate refreshment breaks?
- e. If a bus breaks down while in service what is the turnaround time for getting a replacement bus?
- f. If a bus does break down on its way to Casino with passengers scheduled to catch the Casino to Sydney service, will the XPT service wait for the passengers?
- g. If not, what will happen to the passengers on that bus?
- h. Will CountryLink pay for overnight accommodation and meal expenses? If not what provision will be made for passengers who do not have the financial means to pay for such expenses? Will they be returned to their home station free of charge and given a free trip the next day? What provision will be made if there are no seats on buses returning to their home station or if there are no available seats on the next day's service?

**Response**

The replacement road coach service will operate in accordance with existing CountryLink coach protocols i.e:

- a) The criteria for determining the base level of service is the historical average numbers of passengers per day.

Additional coaches are supplied as required to supplement an individual service according to demand.

CountryLink operates a reservations system, which records and summarises bookings as they occur by service and sector. The numbers of bookings for each service are reviewed daily to determine the likelihood of capacity being reached.

Should it be determined that bookings are nearing capacity with several days remaining until the day of travel, and provided there is capacity on the connecting train service, an additional coach will be ordered to operate to the same timetable, or if trends dictate, as an express.

Indeed, CountryLink is currently in discussion with representatives of a group of 200 seeking to travel from Brisbane to Melbourne and return in September 2005. Those discussions might well result in up to 4 coaches commencing from various centres in suburban Brisbane to pick up en-route and convey the party to Casino to connect with the train. This group will likely be picked up nearer their homes rather than having to make their way to the Brisbane CBD.

This process has been in place for the past 10 years in the ordering of coaches for the entire CountryLink coach network

In the case of the Casino - Tweed coaches, all locations are capable of being served by more than one coach. The arrangements with the supplier are flexible enough that should it be required during off-peak times, a coach with unused capacity can be diverted to make additional stops to absorb spot demand and even up coach loadings without affecting timetables.

- b) Additional coaches can usually be sourced up until, and including, the day of travel.
- c) In line with current CountryLink protocols across its' rail and coach network, the CountryLink road coach specification includes the requirement for all coaches on journeys of more than one hour be fitted with a toilet.
- d) In line with current CountryLink protocols across its' rail and coach network, all CountryLink road coach timetables for journeys of more than four hours duration include refreshment stops. None of the services in the Tweed region exceeds four hours in duration.
- e) In line with CountryLink procedures, all coaches on the route are fitted with mobile telephones and two-way radios and are in contact with each other. The first line of response would be to use available capacity on other coaches on the route.

If that were not available, and should the breakdown occur nearer Tweed Heads, a replacement would be sought from the supplier's depot. Spare buses are on standby.

Alternatively, in line with practice across the CountryLink network, emergency coaches would be sourced from the nearest available supplier.

- f) In line with current CountryLink protocols across its rail and coach network, the XPT train would be held to connect with a late running coach for up to 30 minutes.

The operation of CountryLink trains and coaches is monitored on a daily basis by Operations Co-ordinators and Customer Service Managers to ensure connections are maintained or to manage customers' travel arrangements interrupted by late connections. In line with current CountryLink protocols across its' rail and coach network, contingency plans include the operation of the service by road coach throughout to Sydney if required.

- g) In line with current CountryLink protocols across its rail and coach network, and in the travel industry more generally, CountryLink customers whose plans are impacted severely by mechanical breakdown are generally compensated in some way dependent on the circumstances. The compensation may include complimentary tea, coffee or a snack on boarding the train through to a complimentary journey when next they choose to travel.

CountryLink provides economy class travel on the coach network. Customers who have paid for a full fare or concession first class rail ticket are re-imbursed the difference between economy and first class rail fares for the rail journey if part of it is by a coach.

Contingency arrangements as a result of severe disruptions are always put into place in consultation with affected travellers. Should CountryLink not be able to deliver the service on the day, alternative arrangements, which suit the customer, are put into place. This may include alternative transport with CountryLink or another carrier or re-booking to the next or another day.

In the circumstances described, a refund would be due should the customer choose to either make their own arrangements or choose not to travel.

- h) With extreme cases of service disruption, in line with practices in the passenger transport industry generally, CountryLink arranges accommodation at its cost for travellers in transit whose plans have been disrupted. In the past, this has usually been as a result of bushfire or flood where alternate means of transport was not possible.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**  
**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 16**

In relation to the current XPT and Xplorer fleet:

- a. What major refurbishment and upgrade projects are planned for the XPT and Xplorer fleet?
- b. Has planning commenced for the replacement of the XPT fleet?
- c. What are the expected costs of this replacement program and what is the timeline for this process?
- d. Will services be disrupted during the changeover?
- e. How does the cancellation of the Casino to Murwillumbah XPT leg affect the average distances travelled by the trains?
- f. Will the new trains have improved facilities and level of comfort? If not, will they be the same as the current fleet?
- g. Will the new trains be capable of travelling at higher speeds than the current fleet?
- h. Will the new trains have incorporated crumple zones to reduce the impact of a collision with a car in the unfortunate case of an accident?
- i. Will their late night visibility be improved to assist drivers using level crossings?

**Response**

In relation to the current XPT and Xplorer fleet:

- a) A major refurbishment programme has commenced for the XPT trains with a total budget of \$19.6m.

The scope of work encompasses upgrading of the vigilance control systems, buffet food handling compliance upgrades, safety upgrades to crew cabs and luggage handling facilities, and attention to passenger areas and equipment.

The project is being staged with the highest priority areas of vigilance control upgrades and food handling being addressed first.

Stage one of the XPT vigilance control upgrade is underway and will be complete by 31 July.

A similar programme is planned for the Xplorer fleet.

- b) The Minister has recently announced a long term plan to replace rolling stock across the entire CityRail fleet. Over the next 18 months, studies will be carried out in relation to the CountryLink XPT fleet to identify future options.
- c) see b) above
- d) see b) above
- e) The termination of the XPT train at Casino has resulted in a reduction of 260 XPT train kilometres or 3% of the 9136 XPT train kilometres formerly operated daily.

- f) see b) above
- g) see b) above
- h) see b) above
- i) CountryLink trains are required under the Network Rules governing the operation of trains on the NSW network to operate with headlights on at all times including daylight. Should the headlights, which are rated at 900w on high beam with a further 240w from the supplementary fog lights, not be operable, the train must operate at reduced speed and come to a stop at all level crossings.

In addition, to increase visibility, all CountryLink trains are fitted with roof-mounted strobe lights which flash for a period of 12 seconds during and after the operation of the train's warning horn.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**

**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 17 (Committee Members)**

Bruce Farrar A/GM Access at the Rail Infrastructure Corporation (RIC) wrote to private rail operators about the closure of the line – letter dated 29 April 2004. It was seeking submissions from rail operators who were interested in providing alternate funding to maintain on-going operations on the line. They were advised that Community Service Obligation funding would not be available and that RIC was intending to classify the line as “non-operational”.

- a. Have any private rail operators lodged submissions to RIC stating their interest in providing funding?
- b. If so, how many operators have lodged submissions? Who are they?
- c. In general, do the submissions indicate that private rail operators are prepared to provide enough funding to fully cover the line?
- d. What services are they offering to run on the line?
- e. What is the status of consideration of these submissions?
- f. What are the consequences of the line being classified as “non-operational” by RIC?

**Response**

No private rail operators have lodged submissions to RIC.

The consequences of the line being classified as “non-operational” are services not permitted to operate on the line.



**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**

**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH  
RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Questions Placed on Notice by Committee Members**

**Question No. 18**

Now that the Government has removed rail services at Lismore, Byron Bay, Mullumbimby and Murwillumbah will the railway stations at these locations be maintained or sold to private interests?

If they are to be sold:

- a. How will the sale process occur?
- b. What are the likely proceeds from such sales?
- c. What provision is going to be made to return them to public hands if the rail line is reopened?
- d. Does RailCorp expect there to be a financial penalty involved in doing so?

If they are to be kept in public hands:

- e. Will they be left empty?
- f. If not, what alternate purposes will they be used for?
- g. If they will be able to be used by community groups, how can interested parties lodge an expression of interest?
- h. What restrictions will be placed on uses?
- i. What provision will be made to allow them to return to public hands if the rail line is reopened?
- j. What are the projected costs of maintenance in coming years? How is this broken down?
- k. What precautions against vandalism and hooliganism are being taken?

**Response**

No determination has yet been reached regarding the railway stations at Lismore, Byron Bay, Mullumbimby and Murwillumbah.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**

**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 19 (Committee Members)**

A letter from Michael Deegan, Director General, Transport NSW, dated 21 March 2003 states that a total of \$25m has been spent on the Casino-Murwillumbah rail line over the preceding 5 years, ie an average of \$5m each year. Yet an answer, dated 18 February 2004, to a question in the NSW Legislative Assembly, indicates that the amounts spent on maintaining the line between 1997 and 2002 were:

1997/98	\$1.76m	
1998/99	\$1.39m	
1999/2000	\$2.02m	
2000/01	\$2.98m	
2001/02	\$3.59m	[total = \$11.74m]

- a. How is the discrepancy between the total figures of \$25m and \$11.74m to be explained?
- b. Prior to the decision to close the line, what was the amount forecast to be spent on maintenance for 2003/04?

**Response**

RailCorp does not have a copy of Mr Deegan's letter however the quoted average amount of \$5m per year is possibly the total estimated annual CSO amount for the Casino-Murwillumbah rail line. It is noted that CSO funding together with access revenue supports all associated costs and not just maintenance costs.

The figures given in response to the question in the NSW Legislative Assembly are specific elements of particular costs associated with the maintenance of the line.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**

**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 20 (Committee Members)**

What was the average annual size of maintenance gangs employed on the line for each of the last 15 years?

**Response**

RM maintenance gang employees on the line for the last 15 years are:

<u>1989</u>	<u>32</u>
<u>1990</u>	<u>32</u>
<u>1991</u>	<u>32</u>
<u>1992</u>	<u>32</u>
<u>1993</u>	<u>38</u>
<u>1994</u>	<u>38</u>
<u>1995</u>	<u>61</u>
<u>1996</u>	<u>52</u>
<u>1997</u>	<u>29</u>
<u>1998</u>	<u>26</u>
<u>1999</u>	<u>25</u>
<u>2000</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>2001</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>2002</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>2003</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>2004</u>	<u>13</u>

Staff numbers peaked in 1995 as this was the height of a bridge upgrading project.

The gradual decline in staff numbers since then is a result of a more mechanised approach to maintenance processes.

The smaller gang sizes represent improved efficiency gains and reflect typical benchmarks now in the industry.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**

**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 21 (Committee Members)**

In 1978, the Wran Labor Government budgeted \$20m for bridge restoration works.

- a. On what bridges was this money spent?
- b. Was any restoration of bridges carried out under this program on the Casino-Murwillumbah line?

**Response**

This level of detail is not available for 1978.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**  
**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**  
**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 22 (Committee Members)**

The AK Test Train has visited the line on two occasions over the last 6-9 months. What were the results of each visit?

**Response**

The results of the AK Test Train are:

13 January 2004	Track Condition Index 49
1 September 2003	Track Condition Index 47

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**

**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 23 (Committee Members)**

How often should Tie Gang and Tamping machines operate on rail lines?

**Response**

Frequency depends on the terrain, track condition and usage. On each maintenance visit only some of the line would be tamped. Typically over the whole network RIC will tamp about 20% of the total each year (i.e. average 5 year cycle). Tie gang visits are typically about 5 – 7 years apart for each section of the line.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**

**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 24 (Committee Members)**

How frequently have Tie Gang and Tamping machines been used on the Casino-Murwillumbah line over the last 5 years?

**Response**

In 2001-2002, 8000 steel sleepers were installed over approx.20 kms of track including resurfacing.

In 2000-2001, 12000 steel sleepers were installed over approx.30 kms of track including resurfacing.

**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 25 (Committee Members)**

Were offers of access to the line made to any accredited operators prior to the mini-budget announcement of closure of the line?

**Response**

Rail operators with Access Agreements were able to use the line if they complied with RIC's Train Operating Conditions Manual.



**GENERALPURPOSE STANDING COMMITTEE No.4**  
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF THE CASINO TO MURWILLUMBAH RAILSERVICE**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

**RAILCORP**

**Question No. 26 (Committee Members)**

Is there any compensation payable to any accredited operator on the line as a result of the line's closure?

**Response**

No.