

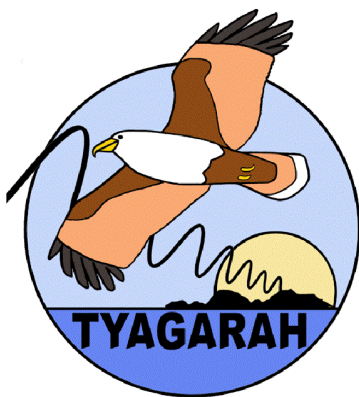
**INQUIRY INTO THE CLOSURE OF CASINO TO  
MURWILLUMBAH RAIL SERVICES**

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**Subject**

**Summary**



## Tyagarah Sustainable Community Alliance

traditionally known as the  
Tyagarah Progress Association  
and Hall Committee, Inc.

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**By email; [gpscno4@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:gpscno4@parliament.nsw.gov.au)**

Director,

We are a small community on the North Coast of NSW the state's fastest growing regions. Yet our regional centre is now the only one without a train service. Tourism is growing every year and we do not wish our infrastructure to be dismantled any further.

Millions of dollars have recently been spent on upgrading this line and stations. Yet now the government claims it is not viable.

Our community is split by the Pacific Highway, since the opening of the Yelgun to Chinderah by-pass the numbers of the noisiest most polluting vehicle the truck, not only prime movers with single trailers but B-doubles with two trailers, grossing 60-odd tones per truck has increased, by day and well into the night. This has detrimentally affected many people in this areas life.

A steel wheel on a steel rail has one-seventh the friction of rubber tyred wheel on bitumen.

Rails long-term decline has been because of a huge disparity in spending on rail compared to road. In a shocking case of shortsightedness, the Federal Government has spent \$800-million a year on upgrading national highways in the last few years, compared to less than 200-million on upgrading existing rail lines. This neglect is partly due to the strength of the road lobby in Australia, there are 60 road groups with effective representation in Canberra and the States. The rail lobby group has one office in Melbourne.

We seem to have no problem with massively subsidizing our roads and all who use them, while at the same time insisting that rail run at a profit. The road freight industry is very vocal about narrow profit margins and dangerous practices, the media often run horror stories about fatigue, drug use and speeding.

From a 1996 study there were more truck fatalities on Australian roads per kilometer traveled than in the UK or the USA. Truck safety has not improved since then and it would be reasonable to assume that with the predicted increase in freight activity the number of accidents and fatalities will increase.

The fine particles in diesel have been found to cause significant harm to human health and have been banned in some US states. Australia refuses to ratify the Kyoto agreement and do anything about our polluting practices that are linked to climate changes occurring all over the world.

Rail is the most environmentally friendly and safest way to transport people and freight. It makes sense to get some of those big trucks off the road by investing in railway. It will make the roads safer, decrease noise and pollution, the cost of freight will be cheaper and trucks will still be used to transport freight from the railhead to the customer.

The public transport in this area is minimal and expensive. The rail corridor is an asset owned by the people of NSW and it should be used for a regional commuter service. There are many who attend Southern Cross University who would use a commuter rail, as well as people traveling to regional towns to shop and be entertained.

Taking into account rising fuel prices and environmental concerns, the rail line is an asset that you should be improving for the future, not destroying now.

Yours sincerely