

Submission  
No 81

## INQUIRY INTO PACIFIC HIGHWAY UPGRADES

**Organisation:**

**Name:** Mr Nick Casmirri

**Telephone:**

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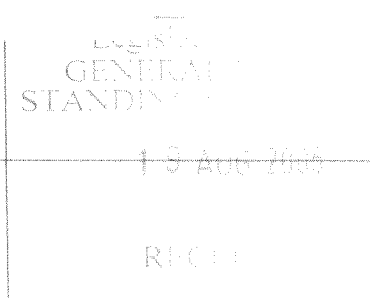
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**Subject:**

**Summary**

## GPSC4 GPSC4 - Submission for Pacific Highway Inquiry

**From:**  
**To:** <gpscno4@parliament.nsw.gov.au>  
**Date:** 18/08/05 22:29:14  
**Subject:** Submission for Pacific Highway Inquiry



The Chairperson  
 General Purpose Standing Committee #4

Dear Madam

RE: INQUIRY INTO PACIFIC HIGHWAY UPGRADES

Below is a copy of a letter to the editor which I had published in the Northern Rivers Echo on January 6 2005. The section of highway referred to near Brunswick Heads is the site of upgrade work currently under-way.

The upgrading of roads and construction of new roads typically encourages additional use of those roads. Where the road project is aimed at alleviating traffic congestion, the consequence is often that the accompanying increase in traffic largely cancels out any improvements made and/or just shifts the problem elsewhere. Many people argue that the upgrading of road infrastructure will always be outpaced by the increased road use that accompanies it.

Anyone looking for a practical example of this phenomenon is encouraged to visit Brunswick Heads this holiday season. I understand that last summer it was taking motorists around 45 minutes to traverse the section of highway between Brunswick Heads and the start of the Chinderah-Yelgun motorway. This year the delays have reportedly exceeded two hours. I understand that this traffic congestion was not of this magnitude before the opening of the Chinderah-Yelgun motorway.

What we need is more investment in our rail system to take some of the long term pressure off our roads. The starting point should be the re-opening of the Casino-Murwillumbah line, before it is left to fall into further disrepair. This year marks the 150th anniversary of the opening of the first rail line in NSW, which was also the first publicly-owned railway in the British Empire. In this anniversary year it is a great shame that whilst other governments around Australia and the world recognise rail as an integral part of the solution to future transport challenges, our rail infrastructure is being left to decay.

Railways won't instantly relieve the pressure on our roads, but they should be at the heart of long-term transport planning strategies. We need to stop looking for short-sighted quick-fixes, and start planning for genuine long-term solutions.

*Nick Casmirri*  
*Lismore*

I would also like to refer the committee to this website – [www.ptua.org.au/myths](http://www.ptua.org.au/myths). This site is from a Melbourne group called the Public Transport Users Association, but their information on common transport myths is of general relevance.

I am the Secretary of Northern Rivers Trains for the Future Inc, and a member of the Lismore City Council Public Transport Policy Advisory Group, but am submitting this as a private citizen.

Yours Sincerely

Nick Casmirri