

INQUIRY INTO PACIFIC HIGHWAY UPGRADES

Organisation:

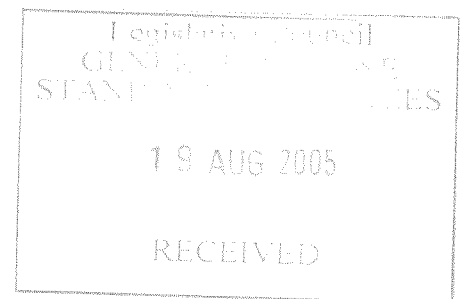
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Date Received: 19/08/2005

Subject:

Summary



The shortsightedness of State and Federal Governments regarding roads and transport and underhand tactics of the RTA have left us in a sorry state indeed.

It seems that the freight industry is being looked after at the expense of other road users.

Why has no thought been given by the RTA to the impact of freight on the Pacific highway a coastal road used extensively by tourists through heavily populated coastal communities.?

Why did the RTA allow B-doubles on an unfinished highway without community consultation?

Why is the RTA looking for alternative routes instead of upgrading the Pacific Highway between Ewingsdale and Tintenbar?

Now the RTA have outdone themselves by swearing to secrecy the community representatives of the liaison groups who are supposedly representing local communities.

The RTA breaks all the rules of democracy stated in the Standing committees brochure:

Because

- 1] They are not accountable
- 2] They do not promote public debate.
- 3] They do not encourage detailed analysis.
- 4] And seem to take no notice of what communities want.

Why should Ordinary taxpayers subsidise the interstate freight industry?

Why should communities have to sacrifice road safety for the freight industry?

Why is a coastal route through Midgen flat being considered when it would run through flood prone areas?

Why does the RTA seem to have no regard for environmentally sensitive and wildlife habitat, agriculturally productive or scenic land?

When I first arrived in this beautiful country Australia in 1981 I soon became aware that the road and transport systems in NSW especially, were inadequate for such a large country.

25 years later things are only marginally better with a patchy piecemeal Pacific Highway that will take another 20 years to complete, country roads that are falling apart, neglected railways and stranded commuters in the city. Things are worse in the country areas where roads are being upgraded just so the B doubles can have good roads on which to ply the trade of the Transport Industry.

I did not realise till I moved out of Sydney just how badly off country people are with narrow potholed roads some now better than country lanes now servicing large volumes of traffic between towns that have rapidly growing populations. The RTA's solution to all this is to upgrade the Pacific Highway [if you can call it that] joining strips of dual carriageway by slowly and painfully tearing their way across communities, into wildlife corridors, through coastal wetlands and the most productive agricultural and scenic land in the country.

All this to provide a smooth ride for the Transport industry so that thousands of B-Doubles a day can ply their trade between Sydney and Brisbane, thus making the highway a nightmare for the ordinary motorist

Who is subjected to speeding tailgating and sandwiching by deadline driven B-double drivers who are a law unto themselves having different numberplates back and front so they are hard to report not that complaints are followed up. Trucks should pay tolls for road upgrades and maintenance. Designated freight corridors both road and rail should be built inland away from coastal areas.

Less bridges would have to be built across wide river mouths near the sea and better roads would revive the more isolated communities inland.

We need vision and commitment from governments for the future of our roads.