

INQUIRY INTO PACIFIC HIGHWAY UPGRADES: COFFS HARBOUR

Organisation:

Name: Mr Richard Casey

Telephone:

Date Received: 14/11/2005

Subject:

Summary



Richard James Casey



The Director
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 4
Inquiry into Pacific Highway Upgrades
NSW Legislative Council
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Parliamentary Inquiry into Pacific Highway Upgrades

Please excuse my late submission to the Inquiry but the matters I refer to below only came to my attention this weekend.

The RTA elected to make a submission in relation to the Tintenbar to Ewingsdale section of the Pacific Highway Upgrade Project. The submission was made under the signature of Mr Paul Forward at that time Chief Executive of the RTA.

On the 1st page of it's submission the RTA states,
'On 14 April 2005, as a result of these community representations and various other investigations undertaken by the project team, the study area for the project was extended to the east. Following this decision, additional community information sessions were advertised and held in late April 2005 and the community liaison group has been reformed to represent the larger study area.'

This statement is a perfect example of the RTA's persistent habit of issuing material aimed at providing a misleading impression of the extent of RTA's community consultation.

The fact is that the RTA advised the community Mid-April 05 that the study area had been extended & that two only community information sessions would be held on 20 & 21 April 05. The RTA has not disclosed how it informed the community of these two sessions but it is obvious that the timeframe involved would not have been adequate.

Once again the RTA has setup a process which gives the appearance that it is being open & frank with the community & engaging with the community in the consultative process.

"CONSULTATION IS A DISHONEST EXERCISE IF THOSE "CONSULTED" HAVE NO REAL KNOWLEDGE OF THE CONSULTOR'S TRUE INTENTION"

Again in it's submission the RTA states,
'the impact on agricultural land is one of the key values to be considered in developing route options'

I ask this inquiry to establish from the RTA if this 'key value' is also applicable to other Pacific Highway Upgrade projects and just what are the other 'key values' that were considered in developing the Tintenbar to Ewingsdale Upgrade options.

Are these 'key values' applicable to the other seven upgrade projects currently being considered?

Are there other 'key values' which are applicable to some or all of the remaining incomplete upgrade projects?

In particular what are the key values applicable to the Sapphire to Woolgoolga project? The impact on agricultural land is obviously not one when one considers the ridiculous decision to adopt Option E.

Also in the submission the RTA claims that in regard to B-Doubles,
'The end result means fewer trucks on the highway creating improved safety and noise levels'

The RTA offers little evidence to backup the two major elements of this statement ie safety & noise levels but on the evidence in support of B-Doubles the RTA reveals a 30 truck reduction in the number of trucks using the highway since the introduction of B-Doubles.

The RTA does not offer any information in relation to road pavement damage by B-Doubles compared to conventional heavy vehicles.

The RTA submission also states,
'the Northern Pacific Highway Noise Taskforce made a series of recommendations for specific action to be taken to improve the regulation of these issues and these are being progressively implemented'

The RTA should be asked to provide these recommendations, in full, to the Committee along as to which ones have been completely implemented, which ones have been partly implemented and those which the RTA intend to dismiss.

Typically the RTA does not list in it's submission any matters negative to it's case it is putting forward. .

Richard James Casey
Sunday, 13 November 2005

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