

Legislative Council

Financial Sustainability of Tas Rail

Richard Swift 23/6/2015.

Tasmanian rail transport commenced to meet the requirements of transport of goods using technology of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The three foot nine" gauge chosen because of Tasmanian geology. Launceston to Hobart, Launceston to Wynyard, the Derwent Valley line.

Rail provides the ability to transport heavy loads over long distance with dependableness in adverse weather with less driver fatigue than a truck driver experience's. One freight train can replace a lot of trucks, with suitable freight distribution centres a reliable community service is provided.

Rail Transport supports manufacturing, provides durability, compactness of freight and the ability of worn out equipment to be recycled. Rail freight provides employment for a broad cross section of the community including those with low academic standards. The workforce enjoys reasonable working conditions.

#### Tasmanian Road Transport

A truck driver has to have fitness, mental ability, gain accreditation for the class of vehicle he/she will drive. Deserves good service conditions, wages, social opportunities, canteen access, holidays and long service leave.

Truck drivers have a lot of responsibility needing to make instantaneous decisions.

If rail transport is withdrawn, an increased requirement for extra truck drivers may not be able to be supplied from the community, as in all occupations only so many people want to be or are suitable for truck driving.

Rail transport withdrawn required will be more truck service centres, more traffic inspectors to police trucks, more mechanics.

The Tasmanian Government will gain more revenues from truck registrations, compulsory third party insurance. Private insurance companies will have increased truck insurance revenue. All costs drive up the prices of consumer goods. Truck registrations are expensive.

Trucks have a dependence on fossil fuels adding to carbon emissions, lack of spare parts can put a truck off the road. Trucks are more complicated than freight wagons. Truck tyres cannot be recycled as easily as steel railway wheels.

If Freight transport transfers to trucks, road traffic will increase, road maintenance will increase, thus an analysis of road compared to rail maintenance per one hundred kilometres would help in decisions of freight transport. Federal Government, Tasmanian Government, local councils share the cost, ultimately costs again reflect on consumer goods they being impartial (the consumer goods) are required by the rich and poor in the community. Wet winter, visibility poor, fog on the Midlands highway and elsewhere, slippery road conditions (ice), driver errors, speed, inattention (it is hard to stay focused after hours of driving), road signage confusion, death and destruction will happen. Rail transport of freight is safer than road transport per kilometre, the freight being separated when on rail from road vehicles (passenger cars).

#### Summary

Be aware of what the Tasmanian Government and Federal Government can control.

The generation of Electricity Water, solar, Wind Farm.

Thus a power source for locomotive power for rail freight that will be available into the future due to Tasmania's geographic location.

The availability of Australian iron ore, an abundance for the rail manufacturing infrastructure.

The Tasmanian Government and Federal Government can not control fossil fuel availability, petrol, diesel supply and price into the future.

Electrification of locomotive power, widen the present gauge three foot nine inches to British standard gauge, four foot eight and half inches, thus allowing more stability, faster speed for freight trains Victorian rolling stock would then if required be available.

The price of power costed to freight transport rates. The whole cost of the introduction of an electrified system could be paid for by a freight rate applying over a time period. Long time period financed by Government.

Rail transport maintain what exists with gradual improvement to track and track curvatures. Short term, long term future, electrification track widening.

Electrification and track widening is a long term project, an engineering task requiring design and construction, costing. A project for the future, not forgetting that the future soon arrives. Countries investing in rail passenger and rail freight include England, Japan, France, Germany, Australia.

If the rail corridor in Tasmania is closed, Tasmanian Government should retain ownership as fifty years or one hundred years from now (2015) rail freight maybe again required utilizing Hydro, wind turbine, solar, power.

Fossil fuels are running out. The way forward of motor vehicles (passenger cars) will be electric propulsion.

### The future of the Hobart to Bridgewater and Derwent Valley line.

This rail line was reconditioned in 2010 (not the Derwent Valley line) and is in reasonable condition it would be a wonderful tourist scenic line. (Hobart to National Falls) especially for overseas passengers from cruise liners in summer. A steam train excursion.

This train line using light rail (existing gauge) would provide a service from Brighton to Hobart with selected stops for passengers.

Track maintenance, signals, vegetation control, signage safety a Tas rail responsibility. A yearly or longer right to operate this service contracted to the operator or Government run by Tas Rail.

The passenger train service on this line ceased in 1974 due to a decline in passenger numbers. Northern housing divisions beyond Chigwell where not established then (1974). Since 1974 housing has expanded out beyond Claremont to Bridgewater and Brighton. Present bus travel to Hobart can be uncomfortable, congested and slow from Bridgewater, Brighton, Claremont similarly the return trip.

The line would have to be cost effective, or the Tasmanian Government could treat this light rail service as a community benefit to transport, fare structure structured against costs, bringing new life to Hobart business district.

At the moment this rail corridor is closed but should be retained by the Tasmanian Government to allow future developments of Government projects.

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