

28/07/2015  
Mr David Portersmith

The Secretary  
Administration Committee A.  
TasRail Inquiry.  
Parliament of Tasmania  
Parliament House  
Hobart Tas. 7000

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for the opportunity to putting a submission to the inquiry above. Here is my submission for the TasRail Inquiry and hope it fills your terms of reference.

One of the biggest barriers is having the comments from TasRail about not running a passenger train from Hobart to Launceston since they are responsible for running the mainline railway. Other than running local (suburban) trains in Hobart, Launceston and other major towns, the Hobart - Launceston line would be the most important long distance train in the state. With the line passing by Launceston Airport with Western Junction Station close by, it would give you an instant Airport rail link when you start the line again. Perhaps in future TasRail could look into appointing people with passenger train experience, when they are looking to appointing new people on the board or management to give passenger services in Tasmania a better opportunities.

One of this opportunities you could look at, is redesigning the Bell Bay docks to accept roll on, roll off rail boats. With this, it could unload/ load up quicker because you could just hook up the loco and roll out the line of carriages out of the boat and then with the train having all the carriages, they can then transport the load to the destinations. For it to work, you want to may consider having a dual gauge of the standard 4' 8 1/2" and the Tasmanian gauge 3' 6" to Hobart from the docks and a transfer area at Launceston for the containers to be transferred for the Northern line to Devonport or Burnie. The upgrade of the tracks can happen during the normal rotation of line maintenance to keep some of the cost down whilst causing little disruption to the trains already on the line. Having the option of the standard gauge, as well as the gauge we currently run our trains on is the best option as many countries that we ship to would more likely have the standard gauge and not our current gauge.

The north coast has a wonderful scenic coastline which could be one of the most wonderful train trips in the world. I went to Penguin for the first time for work and found it was quite beautiful and wondering why there wasn't a passenger train running through here.

For the cruise ships in Burnie, the tourist could hop of the cruise ship jump on the train from the Don Railways and enjoy a most beautiful train trip to Devonport and then the train could run shuttle trips between Devonport and Don where people could look at some historic railway items and this would tie in perfectly when the new living city development finishes. Then the tourist would be able to enjoy the markets and other produce available there.

Another route you could run is down to the west coast. The train stop at Zeehan have a bus service to the West Coast Railway dropping the tourist off at Strahan and then picked them up at Queenstown to take them back to the cruise ship. You could build another station along the line and have another shuttle bus service to Cradle Mountain showcasing one of the most beautiful parts of Tasmania. The train could have a buffet in one of the carriages displaying the fine local produce that guests could nibble on while enjoying their train ride. One more possible train trip is Stanley to

Smithton. Here tour buses could be arranged to cover both the towns and the Tarkine region. As mention earlier, Launceston to Hobart run would be ideal for a intra state service linking the states two major cities. With stops at Western Junction (Airport) with connections to North Coast line, Campbell town, and Brighton, for connection to Hobart suburban railway. With a train in the morning to arrive at the destinations around 8 – 8:30. Leaving around 4 – 4:30 for the locals and maybe a 'tourist' train leaving around 11 with a buffet of local produce and a running cometary of the history and any points of interest along the route, with a motor rail at the back for the cars. When I drive to Hobart on Friday nights, I quite often see a line of cars around 7 heading to Launceston from Hobart for the weekend. So there should be plenty passengers for the train trip.

A train service from Burnie to Launceston is a good idea as well, with connections to the Hobart train at Western Junction, but not as a higher priority than the Hobart to Launceston run.

A suburban train could be part of the larger plans for the cities of Hobart and Launceston. This would help provide a different form of public transport and ease traffic congestion in both cities. With suburban and intra state trains to Hobart, you might consider to move the planned Riverline Light railway to the Brooker Ave to leave the rail corridor for the future usage of trains.

You could have a suburban train from Burnie to Wynyard and/or Ulverstone/Penguin, with connection or extension to Devonport, and Ridgley to the south, to help commute people to and from work or schools etc.

Just image, if we had a train running from the Western Junction or Wynard, we could boast of having two Airport links while other states are still arguing to have just one Airport link.

With many festivals and events happening around the state, you could run special trains to the events which could entice more people to the events knowing they only have to catch the train and the shuttle bus to/ from the event. Tourists and locals alike would then be more relaxed and would be able to enjoy the event more and arrive back home more refreshed.

Both AFL matches in Hobart and Launceston could have special trains with a connecting bus service, spectators would be able to enjoy the game knowing that they won't be late for the game because they can't find a car space. AGFEST has a rail line a couple kilometres away so people could take the train to Oaks (Carrick) and take a connecting bus trip to the festival and if they get tired at the end of the day, they can sleep on the way home on the train. There are many other examples where this can happen but those are the major events.

Having a couple of passengers carriages at the back of goods trains and making them a mixed goods train is a good idea if the trips are within close timing with the road vehicles and there are no shunting along the trips to load/unload containers for the train. It would be a good measure on how popular the passenger service run would be along that sector of line and where to focus on getting a passenger service up and running first.

I hope this helpful and within your term of reference. You can keep many of the costs for these suggestion down by upgrading the lines, when the line is due for usual maintenance services.

Thank you for the opportunity for be part of this inquiry.

Your Sincerely,



David Portersmith.