



6 September 2016

Dear Legislative Councillors,

Re: Strategic Infrastructure Corridors Bill 2016

The Hobart Northern Suburbs Rail Action Group wish to raise concerns regarding the Strategic Infrastructure Corridors Bill 2016. The Bill jeopardises future rail developments including the non-operational rail corridor between Hobart and Bridgewater.

The Rail Action Group believes the Bill, in its current form, encourages non-rail use of railways presently classified non-operational. This is contrary to a media statement by the State Infrastructure Minister on 30 January 2016: *The Hodgman Liberal Government will preserve the rail corridor from Hobart to Granton so that its potential for light rail passenger transport can be considered in the long term.*

Our concerns and observations of the current Bill are summarised below:

- The Bill makes no mention of the strategic importance of the Hobart-Bridgewater Railway for future rail freight, passenger, or tourist purposes;
- The Bill appears to dismiss rail use as a future option for non-operational railways;
- The Bill is explicit in not including public roads which intersect with the rail corridor (level crossings) as part of the rail corridor, potentially removing the "right-of-way" that exists at these crossings; and
- The Bill gives the Minister power to determine future use of a railway corridor without consultation with relevant, rail-based stakeholders.

The Rail Action Group strongly recommends the following amendments:

- The future use of non-operational railway lines should be a decision made by the State Parliament, and not just the Minister;
- The existing railway infrastructure on the Hobart - Bridgewater corridor needs to be protected through legislation, remain in situ, and made available for future rail purposes;
- The future of each non-operational railway line in Tasmania should be treated individually on a case-by-case basis and not part of a collective whole.

The Rail Action Group was not consulted during the development of the Bill, indeed our requests to meet with the Infrastructure Minister have been denied on numerous occasions during this term of Government.

We appreciate your careful consideration of this matter.

Yours sincerely,

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