



Regional rail and road networks inquiry

Public hearings in Canberra

A parliamentary inquiry examining the operation of regional road and rail networks and the way those networks connect with ports will hold a public hearing at Parliament House in Canberra tomorrow (30 November).

The House of Representatives Transport and Regional Services Committee, which is conducting the inquiry, will be hearing from the Bureau of Transport and Regional Economics. Committee Chair Paul Neville said that the task of moving freight around this country is growing rapidly.

“The Bureau of Transport and Regional Economics has an important role to play, in providing the data needed to plan the future growth of Australia’s transport networks,” he said.

At tomorrow’s hearing, the Committee will be discussing issues such as: the relative shares of the freight task being carried by road and rail; the transport arrangements for the grain harvest and the proposed Melbourne to Gladstone rail link.

“The ability of the regional transport networks to move Australia’s freight efficiently and quickly, will have a major impact on Australia’s pattern of growth,” Mr Neville said. “The business community recognises this and that is reflected in the fact that more than 125 submissions have been received.”

The Committee has already visited NSW, Queensland, Victoria and the Northern Territory and is planning to conduct more public hearings at important transport centres around Australia over the next few months. It is seeking the widest possible cross-section of views on the matters covered by the inquiry and is continuing to accept submissions. The Committee expects to table its report around the middle of next year.

Members of the public and the media are most welcome to attend the public hearing, details of which appear below.

PUBLIC HEARING:	30 November 2005, 9.05 am – 10.15 a.m.
WHERE:	Committee Room 1R4, Parliament House, Canberra
WITNESSES:	Bureau of Transport and Regional Economics

For **media comment**, please contact: Paul Neville, House Transport and Regional Services Committee Chair, on (02) 6277 4940 or (0419) 704 767.

For **background information**, including the full terms of reference and copies of submissions, please contact the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 2352 or visit the Inquiry website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/trs/networks/index.htm>