

Supplementary Response to Draft State Infrastructure Plan December 2015

RAIL Back On Track

Further to our submission previously submitted we wish to provide further documentation to highlight our concerns with positioning Queensland for a more sustainable transport future.

We have highlighted how bus reform, particularly for Brisbane, can help to deliver improvements in public transport capacity and efficiency. It is important to also consider the infrastructure improvements that will be needed in some more detail.

The population is aging and there will be considerable increasing demands made for public transport mobility solutions. The Draft SIP recognises that population generally will increase and there will be a need for increased public transport options.

We have a concern that the Department of Transport and Main Roads is too focussed on roads. There needs to be more of a focus on rail – passenger and freight.

Public transport infrastructure needs to be future proofed. For example stations – bus and rail need to be fully compliant for access under the Disability and Discrimination Act. There is much to do in this space.

Cross River Rail or its equivalent is necessary to enable the rail network for SEQ. Other extensions are also needed. Connecting SEQ 2031 : an integrated regional transport plan for South East Queensland is a good basis and should be reactivated.

Upgrade of the Sunshine Coast Line, particularly track amplification from Beerburrum to Landsborough North is an urgent priority. Further track improvements such as longer passing loops are needed north from Landsborough North.

Please find attached a number of media statements that address some of these concerns.

Thank you for the opportunity to be able to comment on the Draft SIP.

Robert Dow
Administration
admin@backontrack.org
RAIL Back On Track <http://backontrack.org>

Media Release 5 September 2010

SEQ: Improving transfer opportunities, improves the integration of the TransLink Network

RAIL Back On Track (<http://backontrack.org>) a web based community group and advocate for rail and public transport commuters welcomes the announcement of the Connecting SEQ 2031 plan.

In particular, the acknowledgment that rail is to be the backbone of SEQ is applauded by RAIL Back on Track. Of course, all great railway systems also have great bus systems that take passengers from their front door and feed them to the local railway station.

Robert Dow, spokesperson for RAIL Back On Track said:

"Brisbane already has a number of feeder buses and bus-rail interchanges but many have been forgotten about for too long, are underutilised and are in need of an overhaul."

"Some of the problems identified include:

- * Poor legibility of the service
- * Poor, slow, windy and indirect routes
- * Some major activity centres not serviced
- * Extremely limited service hours, many services have no evening or weekend service
- * Poor service frequency.

"Limited service hours and poor service frequency, have been shown to be extremely powerful disincentives for people to choose public transport over motor car. Many things can be done to fix these feeder services:

- * Improved branding and legibility for feeder services, similar to BUZ branding and marketing
- * Simplification and consolidation of routes so buses, to increase the frequency on common corridors
- * Extension of bus routes to major activity centres (e.g. alter and extend 104 to UQ Lakes station)
- * Overhaul the Great Circle line 599/598 to include full weekend operation
- * Use minibuses or MaxiTaxis on a fixed route/schedule in low demand areas (described briefly in SEQ 2031)
- * Increase service frequency, with an aim to meet every train service
- * Increase service hours to evenings and weekends
- * Increase train frequency.

"Agency liaison with TransPerth, the Toronto Transit Commission or experts in transfer-based network design should be undertaken along with community consultation on how to best re-design these feeder services into a fine mesh of interlinked cross-town bus-rail feeder services."

"Completely reviewing, overhauling and upgrading the existing, underutilised bus-rail interchanges, and feeder bus

services will help achieve goals within the Connecting SEQ 2031 plan. It is something that is relatively cheap, cost-effective and rapid to do compared with the larger, long term projects in the plan. It will also tangibly demonstrate the Government's commitment to turning the SEQ 2031 plan into a reality. Concurrently the frequency of rail services, particularly off peak, needs increases from two or one train per hour to 4 services per hour during the day and evening to encourage seamless transfers between bus and rail."

"A fare pricing initiative on the go card is needed to support and further encourage maximum public transport utilisation for the maximum overall benefit."

Contact:

Robert Dow
Administration
admin@backontrack.org

Media release 14th September 2014

SEQ: Will the BaT fly?

RAIL Back On Track (<http://backontrack.org>) a web based community support group for rail and public transport and an advocate for public transport passengers has said there is growing concern with the lack of detailed public information on operational aspects of the Bus and Train (BaT) tunnel.

Robert Dow, Spokesman for RAIL Back On Track said:

"Our members have attended consultation sessions for the BaT. They have expressed concerns with the lack of detailed operational information on how this tunnel will work, particularly the bus aspects."

"From the outset there has been concerns from transport planners that the concept is flawed (1)."

"These concerns are not being addressed. What future proofing is there for the bus component? Clearly single unit buses will not be able to meet the eventual passenger demands. This is a once in a generation opportunity and to paralyse future transport options for Brisbane and south-east Queensland on political whimsy is seriously flawed."

"Brisbane bus issues can be fixed by implementing proper network review, and establishing proper bus priority on the surface network. Why waste billions of dollars?"

"If the BaT goes ahead as it is seem to be planned for, the end point will be a conga line of buses in the bus component similar to the Victoria Bridge bus conga lines. Really, is this getting anywhere for the longer term?"

"Eventually electric bi-artic buses, or even a rubber tyred metro system will need to operate in the bus component of the tunnel to handle the pax loads. This means there be multiple transfers for bus passengers, the bus network will be forced to operate as a trunk and feeder model. Meanwhile, rail passengers will have seamless rides into the new underground stations."

"A serious question is: Why is there no combined bus and train tunnel anywhere in the world?"

"The answer is obvious. No other jurisdiction has been as stupid as Queensland appears to be."

"Questions on the planned operational aspects need comprehensive and detailed explanations before wasting billions of dollars!"

References:

1. Bus and rail tunnel all show and no substance: transport expert
<http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/queensland/bus-and-rail-tunnel-all-show-and-no-substance->

transport-expert-20131118-2xrab.html#ixzz3DDY3F0p7

Contact:

Robert Dow
Administration
admin@backontrack.org
RAIL Back On Track <http://backontrack.org>

Cross River Rail	BaT Tunnel
9 Car Platforms	7 Car Platforms
Exhibition Station serviced	Exhibition Station not serviced
Services run north-south	Services run between south and Roma Street
More capacity Yeerongpilly to Bowen Hills	More capacity Park Road to Roma Street
New Stations: Boggo Road, Albert Street, Roma Street, Woolloongabba	New Stations: George Street, Roma Street, Woolloongabba
Station Upgrades: Rocklea, Moorooka, Exhibition, Yeerongpilly	Station Upgrades: Dutton Park
Bus Interchange: Boggo Road, Roma Street, Woolloongabba	Bus Interchange: Roma Street, Woolloongabba
Cavity built for spur to Trouts Rd Corridor	No cavity - spur cannot be built once tunnel is active

Media release 6 October 2015

Government must set timetable for Nambour track duplication and CAMCOS rail corridor to Caloundra

RAIL Back On Track (<http://backontrack.org>), a web-based community support group for rail and public transport and an advocate for public transport passengers, says the Sunshine Coast faces unprecedented traffic congestion due to increasing population growth and the development of the Aura town centre at Caloundra South. It has called on the state government to commit to a definite timetable for constructing dual railway tracks to Nambour as a priority and eventually building a rail spur to Caloundra along the CAMCOS rail reserve.

“The start on construction of a new city called Aura at the southern end of the Sunshine Coast will be a game-changer for the entire region. It will affect how and where people shop and will contribute to increased car-based transport activity that threatens our lifestyle,” RAIL Back on Track Sunshine Coast spokesperson, Jeff Addison, warned today.

“Let’s not forget also that, in addition to the 50,000 residents of Aura, another 20,000 people will be housed at Palmview. It is a recipe for transport chaos, made worse by the state government’s silence about any solutions, apart from road-based solutions financed largely by the federal government.

“It may be more affordable to buy land at Aura, but the trade-off will be increased transport costs for residents, as theirs will be two-car households where people will be forced to get behind a steering wheel to move outside the town centre and to find jobs elsewhere on the Sunshine Coast or, most probably, choke the Bruce Highway to Brisbane. There is a very real danger that Aura residents won’t relate to the Sunshine Coast at all. They will be living in a smart urban centre that would empty during the day, as the bread-winner takes the car south, leaving their spouse and children isolated in a weird social welfare utopia.

“Clearly, the state government has approved Aura in isolation without considering its impacts upon the wider Caloundra region.

“The new city with its huge new retail hub will become a disposable income sponge, soaking up the household spend of a much wider area beyond Aura itself and threatening the viability of Caloundra’s traditional Bulcock Street shopping precinct. Aura will assume the Caloundra town centre role, leaving Bulcock Street with slim pickings and empty shops. Certainly it will be much easier for people from the Blackall Range to shop for big-ticket items and source professional services at Aura, not Caloundra,” Mr Addison said.

“The focus of this new development has been on the design elements within the borders of Aura with scant regard to the wider implications and impacts as Aura residents travel outside their city the size of Gladstone.

“While Stockland, the developer, has made a significant contribution to ‘infrastructure costs’ such as drainage, parks and roads, the infrastructure plan does not include a commitment to building a transit centre shown in its promotional video. Most likely that is because the state government will not stipulate a timetable for augmented rail and feeder bus routes servicing Aura.

“Its only commitment to transport infrastructure at Aura is \$55 million for an East-West Arterial. That’s it.

“Today, RAIL Back on Track calls upon the state government and Deputy Premier Jacki Trad, the Transport and Infrastructure Minister, to spell out a clear and unequivocal timetable for duplication of the Sunshine Coast Railway line to Landsborough in order for Aura residents to access trains to Brisbane from the Beerwah and Landsborough stations. Augmented parking will be required to prevent commuters parking their cars all day in both towns, hogging frequent parking spots and affecting shopping convenience.

“While fast and frequent buses linking Landsborough and Caloundra via Aura will provide adequate public transport services in the interim, during the early stages of the Aura development, the state government must now start serious consideration about scheduling a start on building the CAMCOS rail spur to Caloundra and then to Maroochydoore.

“CAMCOS rail would draw Aura residents to the rest of the Sunshine Coast, linking to the proposed light rail network. As planned, Aura might as well be called ‘North Caboolture’. For all intents and purposes, it will be a satellite suburb of Brisbane, not integrated with Caloundra and the Sunshine Coast.

“Crucial to CAMCOS is the Beerburrum-Landsborough rail track duplication. The project has environmental approval, the plans have been drawn and it remains ‘shovel ready’. It makes sense for the Queensland Government to call for expressions of interest from qualified consortiums to construct it, especially as rail track equipment, specialised workforce and expertise is released from the Moreton Bay railway line, now nearing completion.

“Beerburrum-Landsborough rail realignment and duplication would provide jobs transferable from the mining sector, which is experiencing a severe downturn. Many of those mining workers are fly-in fly-out employees based on the Sunshine Coast,” Mr Addison said.

ENDS

Contacts:

Jeff Addison
Sunshine Coast Region Spokesperson for RAIL Back On Track

Robert Dow
Administration
admin@backontrack.org
RAIL Back On Track <http://backontrack.org>

References:

1. Caloundra South
<http://www.stockland.com.au/residential/caloundra-south.aspx>
2. Sunshine Coast and Caboolture line upgrades

<http://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/Travel-and-transport/Rail/Rail-infrastructure-upgrades-in-south-east-Queensland/Sunshine-Coast-and-Caboolture-lines.aspx>

3. The Sunshine Coast Case : Rail duplication Beerburrum to Nambour

<http://railbotforum.org/mbs/index.php?topic=6647.0>

4. Caboolture to Maroochydore Corridor Study

<http://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/Projects/Name/C/Caboolture-to-Maroochydore-Corridor-Study.aspx>

Media release 9th October 2015

Queensland: Call for a new public transport authority

RAIL Back On Track (<http://backontrack.org>) a web based community support group for rail and public transport and an advocate for public transport passengers has said Queensland needs a new public transport authority with the legislative authority and resources to get Queensland back on track.

Robert Dow, Spokesman for RAIL Back On Track said:

"Network improvements for public transport in Queensland have largely ground to a halt. TransLink lacks the resources and authority to do essential public transport improvement tasks such as bus reform for Brisbane. In our view TransLink is now greatly under-resourced and struggling to maintain even basic support services let alone improvements."

"We are going backwards in Queensland. Patronage has stalled, road congestion is worsening by the day. There is a slow down and a policy paralysis. This is reflected in a growing level of community frustration with poor service delivery outcomes."

"A good model is the Public Transport Authority of Western Australia (1)."

"Ignoring reality and pretending all is well is a formula for political oblivion."

Reference:

1. <http://www.pta.wa.gov.au/Home/tabid/36/Default.aspx>

Contact:

Robert Dow
Administration
admin@backontrack.org
RAIL Back On Track <http://backontrack.org>

Media Release 25 September 2009

SEQ: Western Brisbane Transport Network Strategy

RAIL Back On Track (<http://backontrack.org>) a web based community support group for rail and public transport and an advocate for public transport commuters has welcomed the public release of the Western Brisbane Transport Network Strategy (1).

Robert Dow, spokesperson for RAIL Back On Track said:

"We welcome recognition of the fact that rail is the backbone of the plan. The neglect of rail for a long period is the fundamental reason that we have a less than an optimal public transport system today."

"Rail can and will give the capacity needed for the future line transport needs in south-east Queensland. Augmented by bus, light rail and active transport options, there is a sustainable transport future outlined in this plan."

"A plan is nothing however unless it is actioned and turned into reality."

References:

1. http://www.transport.qld.gov.au/resources/file/ebd8430e44211d5/Pdf_wbtms_complete.pdf

Contact:

Robert Dow
Administration
admin@backontrack.org

Western Brisbane Transport Network Strategy

<http://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/Projects/Name/W/Western-Brisbane-Transport-Network-Strategy.aspx>

Updated April 2015

Media release 8th January 2015

Queensland: Call for an Inquiry into Public Transport

RAIL Back On Track (<http://backontrack.org>) a web based community support group for rail and public transport and an advocate for public transport passengers calls on all parties contesting the 2015 Queensland state election to commit to significant institutional reform of how public transport is managed in Queensland.

Robert Dow, Spokesman for RAIL Back On Track said:

"It is very apparent that things are not working. Growth in public transport patronage has effectively stopped. There is no longer a pipeline of continuous service improvements. Delivery rates for new buses have slowed to their lowest point since integrated ticketing commenced in South-East Queensland in 2004. Many parts of South-East Queensland do not have any services on Sundays or on weekends at all. Regulatory competition between TransLink Division, Queensland Rail, Brisbane City Council and other portfolio offices in the Queensland Government creates poor lines of accountability, mixed branding and messaging, and inefficient planning. Long distance rail services are withering away. The fare system for SEQ has unaffordable fares and is prone to rorting."

"We call on the government elected from the upcoming election to call an Inquiry into Public Transport."

"The Inquiry should be conducted on as broad a basis as possible. The terms of reference should be developed with significant input from the community, including commuters."

"The Inquiry should be conducted by a panel of respected experts, who are free of political or institutional connections to the Queensland Government or any political party. We would suggest that it may be wise to appoint 3 members – a respected transport academic, an official from an agency administering an internationally recognised well-performing transport network, and a senior or retired Australian public servant or judge from a jurisdiction outside Queensland. We believe strong preference should be given to considering whether international expertise should be sought for the first or second chair, including expertise originating outside the Anglosphere."

The Inquiry should, at minimum, be called upon to investigate and make recommendations upon:

- The goals and purposes of the public transport system
- Managing or removing conflicting objectives from different stakeholders in the system by institutional reforms
- The efficiency of Queensland's public transport system against international and Australian benchmarks
- The organisational structure of Queensland's public transport agencies, systems, operations and governing legislation and standards
- The manner in which public transport infrastructure and services are planned, procured and managed
- The oversight of contracted operators

- Public transport ticketing products and pricing
- Public transport funding and cost recovery
- The benefits of public transport and how to consolidate and improve upon them

"If conducted on a sensible, rational basis, we would then expect the government to implement as many reforms as are possible to allow the public transport system to be optimised and turned around."

"The public transport system is ailing and in desperate need of attention. Simply promising isolated bits of infrastructure or nebulous promises to carry out a 'review' are no longer acceptable. A systematic and methodical cleaning out of the entire underpinnings of the system is now required before any meaningful change can occur."

"It is time to deliver real reform!"

Contact:

Robert Dow
Administration
admin@backontrack.org
RAIL Back On Track <http://backontrack.org>

Media release 18th July 2014

Queensland: Next Generation Public Transport ticketing

RAIL Back On Track (<http://backontrack.org>) a web based community support group for rail and public transport and an advocate for public transport passengers has welcomed the commencement of the Request for Information process for the Next Generation ticketing Project (1).

Robert Dow, Spokesman for RAIL Back On Track said:

"The present go card system is aging and lacks options such as open payment with credit cards and smart phone payment (2)."

"The failed fare structure, high cost and bizarre and in fact anti-public transport (3), is partly the result of the limited system options set up in 2007."

"We welcome moves to upgrade/replace the Automatic Fare Collection system (AFC). In so doing however it is important that detailed community consultation occur with respect to actual fare products such as possible periodical options and so forth as the project develops."

"Particular importance needs to be given to the present qconnect urban bus network. Qconnect fares are around half of what fares cost in south-east Queensland (4). A move to a Queensland wide AFC, although desirable needs to be considerate of possible fare cost impacts on rural Queensland public transport users."

References:

1. TTA13-087 Request for Information for Next Generation Ticketing Project

<https://secure.publicworks.qld.gov.au/etender/tender/display/tender-details.do?id=12630&action=display-tender-details&returnUrl=%2Ftender%2Fsearch%2Ftender-search.do%3Faction%3Dadvanced-tender-search-open-tender%26amp%3BchangeLevel%3D%26amp%3Binputlist%3DhasETB%26amp%3BorderBy%3DcloseDate%26amp%3BwithdrawalReason%3D%26amp%3BexpiredReason%3D%26amp%3BtenderState%3D%26amp%3BtenderId%3D%26amp%3Bpage%3D3>

2. Could fingerprint scans replace Queensland's Go Card?

http://www.itnews.com.au/News/389986_could-fingerprint-scans-replace-queensland8217s-go-card.aspx

3. Fare unaffordability crisis in SEQ

<http://railbotforum.org/mbs/index.php?topic=10048.msg144110#msg144110>

4. qconnect urban bus services <http://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/travel-and-transport/qconnect/urban-bus-services.aspx>

Contact:

Robert Dow
Administration
admin@backontrack.org
RAIL Back On Track <http://backontrack.org>