

Inner Down Inland Rail ActionGroup

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Ref: Independent Review of the Delivery of the Inland Rail Program

Thank you for the opportunity to give input into this review. We are hopeful that this review will be both independent in name and nature as with the Senate Inquiry into the Management of the Inland Rail Project and not the sham that has been inquiries initiated by both the Department of Infrastructure and Inland Rail/ARTC. Our criticism of these will be expanded upon later in our submission.

ART have a history of ignoring community as is evidenced by their most profitable line (Hunter Valley) which traverses the centre of the city of Scone with a ridiculous number of coal trains and next to no Noise Abatement Shields in place.

Consultation is meant to be two way street, however ARTC/IR have consistently treated all affected person like mushrooms (Quote). The Senate Inquiry details in submissions² time after time where meetings , be they public, meetings, private meetings CCC meeting, as a waste of time. These submissions refer to:

- . Constantly being talked down to
- . Meeting minutes and voice recordings not being available to members present at the meeting in spite of assurances
- . Meeting minutes not reflecting the tone of members dissent and omission of some discussions to sanitise the meetings
- . Meeting scheduling speakers that take the very large proportion of allotted time forcing times for questions being limited thus garroting any discussion
- . ARTC/IR refusing to answer/supply details. Some excuses Commercial in confidence, haven't been decided yet. Need to know only. Not answering the question is the most common. See IDIRAG supplementary submission with questions "answered" by Simon Eldridge.
- . ARTC/IR telling outright lies.
- . Scheduling public meeting at very inconvenient times and locations to limit participation (dissent)

Some of the most common questions avoided are:

- Design details and Engineering
- Crossings and Bridges
- Cuttings and Embankments
- Noise mitigation measures
- Fencing Design and Maintenance
- Cost blowouts
- Number of households/Landowners affected

In relation to the actual route selection in the Border to Gowrie section (B2G), ARTC/IR have acted in the most devious manner.

From details gleaned from FOI, Wagners partners met with ARTC on 3 occasions prior to the selection of the Pittsworth route to successfully get changes.⁶ Why would ARTC be so quick to accept advice from the biggest prospective tenderer to their project. Common sense says that the more expensive the project, the the larger the return to suppliers. There is NO benefit to them from taking the least expensive route so why did ARTC agree to their changes. As stated, Inland Rail will give preference to local suppliers. The main big ticket building items are Quarry Materials, Cement , Steel Reinforcing Materials, Prefab Girders for viaduct.

It should come as no surprise that Wagners head the list in some and are top 3 in others regarding SE Qld suppliers.

The decision was made for the Pittsworth route via the airport and the only problem was how to make look reasonable. Enter Bruce Wilson touted as the Independent Chairman of the options committee but an analysis of his CV shows multiple roles for AECOM/ARTC. The only other Independent Chairman of CCC of any tenure is Graham Clapham who has property on the Base Case line and the Forestry Route.. Hardly independent . Bruce Wilson refused to allow any input into the Route Selection committee on Forestry Route in spite of numerous objections that it was the best route. Bruce Wilson also presided over the values attached to the much criticised Muti Criteria Analysis (MCA)¹ The inappropriate scoring of community and property impacts and many other skewed the selection process to anything the ARTC wanted , virtually ignoring the massive effects on towns like Pittsworth and Millmerran. To illustrate the absurdity of some values, Flood immunity/Hydrology/Technical Viability gets a 3.6%. Property act 2.5% and Noise and Vibration 1.9%. It is clear that the Route Selection process has not been independent nor transparent, with values arguably being assigned in a pre-determined manner to arrive the “right” conclusion. It is our view that the Framework is fundamentally flawed and is based on miscalculations and a subjective methodology.

In reply to our question to ARTC on MCA values supplied by Simon Elridge 12, he refers in this general to “criteria and weighting developed progressively over the years from 2014 onwards”. Why was there no public input sought on such a vital piece of selection process?? Why was there no review process or opportunity for such review. Yet another example of the total lack of true community consultation. ARTC have a history of ignoring community as is evidenced by their most profitable line (Hunter Valley) which traverses the centre of the city of Scone with a ridiculous number of coal trains and next to no Noise Abatement Shields in place. Nor have they any advertised plans to shift the line from the centre of the city.

ARTC/IR have stated that even though the changes to the design of the crossing of the Brookstead means over double the actual viaduct (bridges) the budget for it remains the same. In the budget estimates for selected Pittsworth route there is no allowance for fencing or maintenance and the budget for land resumption/purchase like so many other items, is grossly underestimated.

Deputy Prime Minister /Infrastructure Minister ordered a review of the Forestry Route which was conducted by GTA Consultants. In their Executive summary⁷, they say that they did not repeat the use of the much maligned MCA values but focuses on the service offering and cost differences between the routes.

In an article dated December 8⁷, 2020 in the High Country Herald titled Inland Rail “Factual discrepancies in the Forestry Inquiry” the author details 7 factual “discrepancies”.

1. Properties affected on Forestry ARTC says 134 actual 60.
Similar discrepancies in Options report as stated Senate Inquiry Pittsworth Route ARTC 203 Rural Allotments 42 Houses IDIRAG Senate Submission Actual Rural Allotments 657 Residential Lots 915

2. Floodplain Length	Brookstead	ARTC 12km	Soil Scientists 31Km
	Forestry	ARTC 33km	Soil Scientist 31km
Bridges required	Brookstead	ARTC 6.1km	Soil Scientist 12.8km
	Corridor Options ¹ Brkstd	ARTC 3.3km	
	Forestry	ARTC 6.3km	Soil Scientist 4.75km

The review did not compare like for like with a large portion of the Forestry crossing on the floodplain overland flow that does not require a bridge. Interestingly the Brookstead crossing is perpendicular to the flood plain while the Cecil Plains is at an angle. More trickery. This bridge discrepancy makes the cost comparison a joke.

3. Length of the Rail Line 15km longer not 20km Even this is 15km should be shorter because of error in chain length. See submission K. Loveday. Interestingly in the review, allowance is made for operating cost

over 45 years at the 20km. How desperate are they to get the costs closer together. The distance and operating cost were not considered in the original Route Options Report. More distortions.

4. Easy construction fewer crossings. ARTC value forestry land at 5 times the per hectare rate for prime agricultural. The forestry route land is very poor agricultural land that will grow very little which is the reason settlers didn't clear and farm it.

5. Confusion on route. Why include via Wellcamp airport when 0.01% of rail freight ever is airfreighted.

6. Costings nebulous of both the Forestry and Pittsworth route with so many assumptions made.

7. Wrong corridor studied.

From Page 21⁵, ARTC estimate 30 months delay caused by route change with EIS changes accounting for 18 months. They have no EIS now, the routes are 20kms apart. What rubbish.

From the Service Offering Metric chart⁵, we believe that the transit times are incorrect but the ARTC refuse to give us the speed maps for us to review their calculations and test their assumptions. We think that a much higher sustained speed would be achievable on the windless, flatter straighter alignment of the Forestry route. ARTC have consistently emphasised transit times. Why then even consider the Wellcamp route.

The game changer for our organisation came when some design works showed a 10 metre embankment less than 100 metres from the outskirts of Pittsworth. This direct line of sight to over 1000 people's homes inside 1km, means that the 28 trains (including coal)⁸ per day at 1.8 kms long travelling at 60km per hour (Uphill) or less would cause approx 1 hour per day where you couldn't watch TV, talk to your neighbour, go about your normal business.

The ARTC were pushed at numerous public meetings for details of the Noise Abatement measures that they have planned but all we get is silence. On our visit to Scone, we experienced something like what ARTC have in line for us. The budget for Noise Abatement is all ARTC cost estimates are minimal so do not largely influence the cost comparison between Forestry and Pittsworth route. Should there be a reasonable amount of Noise Abatement measures, this also would skew the costs in favour of choosing the Forestry Route.

ARTC have consistently ignored advice on a Heritage site on Myola on a property owned by the Owen Family directly in the B2G route. It involves a Pioneer Grave of Maria Tibbs and the remains of the original Beauaraba settlement³. ARTC only inspected the site after History Pittsworth gave an opinion that it would be a shame to lose this piece of history in an EIS submission to the Queensland Coordinator General. Meaningful consultation would have saved everyone a lot of angst.⁴

A perfect example of the ARTC and Dep of Infrastructure 's mishandling of the whole project is their treatment of the Independent Flood Plain Experts Panel. This panel was required because of the ARTC methodology and data was so flawed when pointed out in a privately funded report from flood expert Dr Sharmal Markel. Rather than seize the opportunity to explore the best way to cross the Condamine Floodplain , ARTC/Infrastructure garrotted the inquiry by limiting it's scope. An age old political tactic to deflect criticism. From the TOR^o:

As an advisory body the Panel will not make decisions or recommendations in regard to approvals for the Inland Rail route and engineering design

This is part of the garrotting process that makes the panel unworkable,

- *Appropriateness of the alignment, with regard the related flood impacts, within the current EIS Study Corridor*
- *Consider Whether reasonable and practical steps have been taken to mitigate flood impacts, if any, outside of the project boundary*

Yet another example the failure of Inland Rail to do their job is their refusal to inter-react with the trucking industry to solve the problems of the very expensive range crossing at Toowoomba. The absurdity of the original engineering design and even subsequent attempts result in a very slow and dangerous descent. Trucking Industry representatives have stated that a truck could load at Gowrie, drive down the new Toowoomba Bypass Range crossing, deliver in Brisbane and surrounds (inc unload) and drive back to Toowoomba in the less time than the train travelling down Inland Rail tunnel.

In this review, the Minister has the opportunity to look at the big picture. The Goondiwindi Toowoomba Brisbane route is the most flawed route in both concept and cost. Brisbane Port is small, privately owned, shallow , requires constant dredging, cannot take the bigger container ships and because of location necessitates travel through the centre of Brisbane and suburbs (coal trains). A tunnel would be required and to avoid traffic mayhem, it would need to be about 40 kilometres long. (not the 18km suggested).

The Brisbane Goondiwindi Miles Gladstone route with side track using Queensland Rail (widened and upgraded) Miles to Toowoomba to Brisbane proposed by Professor John Abbot and backed by Inland Rail's father Everal Compton provides a much better and cheaper alternative. The costing on this route have been done by a man as an engineer was responsible for most of the iron-ore railways in Western Australia. These aren't pie in the sky estimates by desktop jockeys that have proved so flawed that the cost estimates and obvious business case implications are so maligned. Dr Abbott suggests the Qld Government owned port, next to a massive government area, with deep water access, able to take the Biggest container ships, not in a residential area, would open up vast areas of prime farming land to fast port access. The Inland Rail would be a game changer in so many ways.

More freight means less chances of the "white elephant" suggested by many pundits. Cost benefit analysis show that container ships would do the China/Japan/Taiwan route to Gladstone then Auckland then home. In terms on time, costs (inc stevedoring) the Gladstone Brisbane Sydney Melbourne Auckland Home route would be less attractive. This would mean that Inland Rail would return a profit and provide some many benefits as described so eloquently by Everal Compton.

The environmental impacts in particular the koala population in B2G , I will leave to other submissions. The actions of Inland Rail in B2G have had many adverse impacts to the mental and general health of a large number of affected persons with a personal friend's cardiac arrest publicly blamed by me on the harassment by Inland Rail.

The behemoth that Inland Rail has become, with massive staff on huge salaries is an embarrassment and with \$2billion dollars spent and there is not a lot to show for it. The initial total cost budget was around \$5.6 billion. What are we up to now? ARTC wont say! \$25billion? and rising fast and they don't care.

Limitless chequebooks will do that to you.

Our submission to the Senate Inquiry runs to hundreds of pages and the Qld Co-ordinator somewhat less. As these matters have been covered in detail, we have in the interest of brevity limited our submission to 4 pages.

Neil Owen

Larry Pappin

1. AECOM Corridor Options Report 21st April 2017 P.23 <https://www.aph.gov.au/DocumentStore.ashx?id=25f67c9b-1c07-4fcf-972f-05184f789758&subId=674163>
2. Senate Inquiry into Management of Inland Rail Project by Australian Rail Track Corporation and the Commonwealth Government Submission 3,5,6, 13, 18,21,22,24,36,40,41,45.48S, 53,55,61,62,66,71,75,76,81,83,94,99,104,116,121,122,130,138,148,187,193,196
3. History Pittsworth Facebook Book post Feb23 , 2021
4. History Pittsworth Submission EIS Qld Coordinator General Border to Gowrie May2021
5. Inland Rail B2G Alternative Route Comparison Review GTA Consultants (VIC) Pty Ltd 04/09/2020
6. Senate Inquiry into Management of Inland Trail Project by Australian rail Track Corporation and the
7. High Country Herald 8thDecember2020 Miles Noller Commonwealth Government Submission 12 V.Battaglia
- 8, Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail Route History 30thJanuary2020 P13
- 9 Terms of Reference for an Independent International Panel of Experts for Flood Studies of Inland Rail in Queensland (June, 2020).