Queensland Fuel Inquiry Submission (Full Verbal submission)

Firstly, I would like to thank the committee for the opportunity to make this submission.

I would like to offer an alternative view to the majority of previous interested stakeholders who have suggested that fuel should be cheaper!

The fact is world is running out of oil because it's a finite resource, we should not be investing in, or encouraging the use of oil through the Queensland Fuel Subsidy Scheme (QFSS). We have an intergenerational responsibility to future generations to act now before it's too late!

Generally people who propose a reduction in the cost of fuel do so for their own short-term financial or commercial interests. It is unfortunate that as a society we have become so dependant on the private motor vehicle and consequently fossil fuels.

I note and "empathise" with people who are burdened by higher fuel prices particularly low-income earners and the people of regional and rural Queensland who have no alternative transport options but the private motor vehicles for transport.

However, notwithstanding these concerns I would like to offer an alternative view in the context of your Terms of reference point (b)

> b) *Identify the economic and financial consequences of current fuel prices with a particular emphasis on regional Queensland and outer metropolitan areas;*

Rather than focus on the short term political considerations I urge the committee to take a long-term and strategic position, with regard to fuel pricing, transport infrastructure and services in Queensland and Australia. As a parliamentary committee you have an opportunity to look after the interests of all Queenslanders rather than your political

parties interests. Firstly, by ceasing to subsidise the cost of non-renewable resources such as oil through the (QFSS).

We need to "future proof" our economy, or "shock proof" our economy and transport systems to the impending risk of significantly higher oil prices when the impacts of the oil peak flows through to our economy as it eventually will!

Oil depletion will significantly impact on our society and economy and the current value of oil/fuel is distorted the real intergenerational costs. As we all know Oil is a finite resource, which will eventually be depleted! There is much debate about when we will reach the oil peak also known as "Hubbert's Peak" or in fact if we have already reached it! The committee members can find further details by going to the following sites.

http://www.hubbertpeak.com/ (distribute handouts)

I won't go into the details and implications of this situation other than to say it will have significant implications for the world economy and our society. It would be totally irresponsible to ignore these threats to our standards of living and way of life!

I refer the committee to – http://www.lifeaftertheoilcrash.net/ to find details of the impacts on our society. (Handouts)

We cannot continue to consume oil with total disregard to the fact it is a finite resource. As such oil and the fuel produced by oil needs to reflect its true intergenerational cost. We must not transfer this burden to future generations.

The economic and financial consequences of under valuing this finite resource on future generations, if not this generation in the not too distant future could be significant if not catastrophic!

As such I would like to offer an alternative view to the majority of interested stakeholders who have suggested that fuel should be cheaper! I propose that we should focus on

reducing the use of oil-based fuels. Furthermore I would suggest that the committee should consider phasing out the Queensland Fuel Subsidy Scheme (QFSS)

Alternatively why not transfer some of the Fuel Subsidy funding to a scheme, which pays for other renewable energy schemes?

There should be active encouragement of alternative mobility options in areas where it is practical, particularly in South East Queensland by significantly investing in public transport beyond what is already proposed in the South East Queensland Infrastructure Plan and what is proposed in the TransLink Network Plan.

Furthermore, much of the commendable initiatives in these plans need to be brought forward and fast tracked rather than wait for the impacts of serious traffic congestion in SEQ.

Seriously congested traffic also wastes fuel!

I would suggest removal of the Fuel Subsidy and diversion of this funding to increased investment in public transport infrastructure and services would be a better use of government funding.

The QFSS is one of the worst public policies that has ever been maintained in my opinion. It is immoral and unsustainable to subsidise a non-renewable resource, despite its popularity.

If the government is insistent because of political reasons, in maintaining the subsidy in some form, then at least change it, and use the funding to provide transport subsidies for regional and rural communities to provide fuel price parity with South East Queensland (SEQ) and in SEQ invest in transport infrastructure and services.

In SEQ another option would be to consider introducing a charge/levy of say 2-3 cents per litre in a SEQ zone to fund increased transport infrastructure and Public Transport infrastructure and services in SEQ so motorists have alternative mobility options.

Other policy options worth considering include implementing demand management strategies such as parking levies in the Brisbane CBD to fund increased PT Infrastructure and Services in SEQ. For example introduction of parking differential systems in the CBD or major shopping centres, where low fuel usage cars or hybrid cars get preferential pricing and charge high fuel use cars more for parking.

Further to these suggestions and this verbal submission I would like to table these documents as a part of my submission to the committee. I helped compile these policy submissions with Professor Phil Charles, Centre for Transport Strategy, University of Queensland on behalf of my Union, the Rail Tram and Bus Union (RTBU)

The first is a submission to the National Transport Commission (NTC) regarding the Third Heavy Vehicle Pricing Determination. - (Table)
That calls for greater contribution to the cost of providing roads by Heavy Vehicle operators.

It further proposes in the submission that transport policies must provide intergenerational equity, including the cost and risks passed on to future generations, considering such aspects as making optimum use of diminishing fossil fuel reserves through more fuel efficient transport of freight by rail. It is therefore appropriate to seize the opportunity to move towards charging for externalities, at least taking a step in that direction and not deferring consideration to a future time.

The submission points out that there is not modal neutrality in land transport funding in Australia. Alignments and gradients of rail corridors are substandard in many locations due to a legacy of under-investment. It is important that any changes to the pricing of heavy road vehicles should not detract from moving towards a level playing field.

The freight task in Australia is forecast to double in the next twenty years, in SEQ it is likely to increase four fold in this period, and this will result in increased congestion in SEQ as well as increased use of fuel if alternatives are not found. Rail and Public Transport use considerably less fuel per passenger moved and tonne of freight moved.

We must increase investment in Rail and Public Transport rather than encouraging greater use of fuel though subsidies that distort the real cost. We also need to reconsider the economic assessment of Public Transport and Rail transportation from the current narrow financial assessment criteria.

The viability of a number of regional rail lines are particularly susceptible to modal shift of freight from rail to road. Already many of these lines, such as the Mt Isa to Townsville line, would become non-viable with only a small shift of the freight task. This has considerable implications for communities in the region, for loss of employment and additional costs to state and local government for road upgrade and ongoing maintenance.

An improved road-pricing regime is required, not fuel subsidies. Possible options that are being discussed in Australia include mass-distance charges for heavy vehicles, road congestion charges, carbon and environmental taxes and removal of the Queensland fuel subsidy. All of these initiatives would mean an increasing role for rail, particularly for freight transport. Distance based mass-distance charges for heavy vehicles have been in use or being progressively introduced in New Zealand and many parts of Europe (Austria, Switzerland and Germany).

The use of transport infrastructure, and the pricing signals inherent in heavy vehicle pricing, should aim to achieve effective and efficient transport outcomes. To be able to address the transport task being faced, the most cost-effective and efficient balance of transport services (in terms of economic and sustainability criteria) should be pursued. This will ultimately be a balance of passenger and freight transport by car, truck, bus and train.

The growth in travel, in line with the growth in population, could result in a situation where road traffic becomes increasingly congested, the volume of heavy vehicle travel causes considerable road damage and safety, noise, energy and emission problems increase to alarming levels. As a result the potential for road user charging to address these issues also becomes necessary.

Options that need to be discussed include mass - distance charges for heavy vehicles, road congestion charges, carbon and environmental taxes and removal of the Queensland fuel subsidy. All of these initiatives would mean an increasing role for rail, particularly for freight transport.

I am concerned that failure to grasp the opportunity in more efficient heavy vehicle pricing will mean a greater proportion of the task by road, requiring additional government investment in road infrastructure and inefficient and unsustainable use of community resources. The cost of an increased modal shift of freight to road through a policy decision, which increases road's attractiveness, will impact all levels of government.

I am also concerned that transport services should aim to achieve sustainability outcomes, which is minimising impacts on the environment and providing for future generations. The primary sustainability criteria need to include energy, greenhouse gas and other emissions, road trauma costs, other externalities and impacts on the physical, built and social environment.

Rail is certainly more efficient than road in terms of energy or fuel use for both mass passenger transport and bulk, long distance freight transport. The ACIL (2001) study indicated that articulated trucks used between three and seven times the energy compared to rail freight and rail used 30% less energy for non-urban passenger transport.

Rail freight produces significantly lower levels of greenhouse gas emissions than road freight (large trucks produce over twice as much as trains on average; small trucks are worse: ACIL 2001). For non-urban passenger transport, rail produces lower emissions than cars.

In this submission we proposed there is a case for an environmental tax in proportion to external transport costs. These sustainability issues need to be carefully considered in any pricing review of fuel.

The second document is a submission to the Draft South East Queensland Regional Plan - (Table Document)

In which we call for a number of transport policy initiatives including

Transport corridors – undertaken urgent action to identify, protect and preserve strategic transport corridors.

Leading infrastructure and services – develop public transport infrastructure and services in advance of when it is required, in particular passenger rail, to serve developing urban areas identified in the plan, such as Beaudesert, Springfield and along the western corridor to Ipswich and the Sunshine Coast.

Travel demand management – look to moderate the growth in traffic by introducing a range of travel demand initiatives and encouraging public transport and rail freight, by considering measures such as parking pricing mechanisms and follow London's congestion charging lead.

Enhancement of rail freight capability – infrastructure needs to be upgraded, particularly interstate connections from Sydney and Melbourne, including the proposed inland standard gauge line, access to the Port of Brisbane, access through or around Brisbane City and freight to the north, noting that freight and passenger services share a common infrastructure

Capital investment – invest in priority transport infrastructure in key corridors to provide for future population and economic growth, noting that passenger and freight rail utilise shared infrastructure.

Integrated services – ensure passenger transport services have seamless transition connections at key nodes, eg integrated bus and rail timetables and ensure ease of physical access

The third is a submission to the Draft TransLink Network Plan for South East Queensland – (Table Document)

This third submission builds on the SEQ submission with greater emphasis on public transport infrastructure and services.

It takes a far reaching and visionary approach and builds on the current government initiatives and calls for a more ambitious approach to public transport infrastructure, services and programs in SEQ. Including a major expansion of the current public transport networks, particularly with new rail corridors.

Brisbane and South East Queensland have changed dramatically in the last 50 years. The only rail significant network extension in that time has been on the Gold Coast line, which has proved to be very popular service that is already reaching capacity in peak hours.

There needs to be diversity and broadening of the rail network in South East Queensland, complemented by connecting bus services, to ensure coverage of the established and developing population areas.

In this submission we proposed significant increased investment in Public Transport and Rail including:

Additional and accelerated investment is required to boost public transport patronage – including boosting the service quality;

Integrated services – ensure passenger transport services have seamless transition connections at key nodes, ie integrated bus and rail timetables and ease of physical access;

Quality service – encourage greater use of public transport through careful attention to improving the quality of service, ie comfort, ergonomic design, ride quality etc;

Capital investment – invest in priority transport infrastructure in key corridors to provide for future population and economic growth. In particular, there is a need to significantly increase rail capacity in inner Brisbane;

Travel demand management measures – consideration of pricing initiatives – parking, congestion etc; and a greater focus on travel demand management, especially further emphasis and expansion of TravelSmart initiatives; and

Quality planning data – one of the current constraints on good planning is the shortage of robust data on public transport demands and the true cost of transport. Early action is needed to improve the quality of data and analysis.

I commend these submissions and I hope the committee takes genuine consideration of these comprehensive transport policy documents in your deliberations. Further I would urge to Committee to take a longer-term strategic approach the assessing the impacts of fuel pricing on our economy and society.

Before concluding I would like to briefly comment on some of your terms of reference.

2. That the Committee will consult with the community, investigate, report on and make recommendations, in particular, as follows:

(a) Consider the extent to which current petrol price increases the competitiveness of alternative fuel sources such as E-10;

Comment

The Government should provide incentives for the development of alternative energy and fuel sources.

(b) Identify the economic and financial consequences of current fuel prices with a particular emphasis on regional Queensland and outer metropolitan areas;

Comment - Already covered by the body of this submission.

(c) Identify practical ways that consumers can reduce their petrol bills, including through considering whether existing information on the fuel efficiency of different makes of motor vehicles is sufficient;

Comment

The Government should conduct a major review of the Queensland Motor Vehicle Registration system that takes into account motor vehicle characteristics including wear

and tear, power and weight, energy efficiency, the risks and resources, and environmental impacts for various classes and types of motor vehicles.

(d) Consider the extent to which recent fuel increases could be moderated through enhanced domestic competition, including how the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission powers could be strengthened to deliver enhanced competition;

Comment

Introduce government direct control of fuel pricing.

(e) Examine whether Queensland receives its fair share of road funding;

Comment

It should be titled Land transport funding.

Clearly Queensland does not receive a fair share of road funding I am sure other contributors to this enquiry will address these issues. However I would like to suggest that Queensland has been significantly disadvantaged in terms of land transport funding through Auslink particularly for rail infrastructure. It appears that Queensland has been penalised for investing in its rail system. Queensland has been neglected for any serious rail funding for urban rail system and for other rail lines by the federal government.

In closing I pose this question of the committee members in your deliberation.

How will this generation be judged by future generations if we continue to dismiss the real cost of continuing to waste fossil fuels and what legacy will we leave to the future?

Noel Morris

Rail, Tram & Bus Union

Submission

Third Heavy Vehicle Pricing Determination

Narrowing the Options
Discussion Paper

National Transport Commission

January 2005

Executive Summary

The Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) has a special interest in transport and rail transport in particular, and on behalf of its members is seeking the right policy approach to facilitate efficient investment, operation and use of transport infrastructure for the future development of Australia.

The RTBU promotes the development of transport to achieve the desired transport outcomes of effective and efficient transport; viable transport services; safe transport; and sustainable transport.

Neutrality between transport modes is a key concept underlying the review of heavy vehicle charges. The new Auslink assessment methodology, which will be progressively introduced, aims to ensure neutrality between transport modes.

The RTBU concludes that:

- The current system of heavy vehicle charges is inadequate and has systematically undercharged the heaviest vehicles travelling the longest distances to the disadvantage of rail;
- Consequently, intermodal rail – road neutrality has not prevailed.

The RTBU strongly recommends that

- The structure of heavy vehicle charges (base and/or incremental) be reviewed to remove these distortions including an allowance for externalities; and
- A firm agenda and program for moving towards individual mass – distance charging using appropriate technologies be set in the Third Heavy Vehicle Pricing Determination.

As the study progresses, the RTBU, as a major stakeholder would be pleased for further opportunities to provide input.

Contents

1. Rail, Tram and Bus Union

The Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) was formed on 1 March 1993, through a historic amalgamation of three railway unions and one tram and bus union.

The RTBU has 35,000 members in the rail, tram and public sector bus industry across Australia. It is affiliated to the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) and the Australian Labor Party (ALP). The RTBU is the principal union in public transport and the rail industry generally.

The RTBU is also an Associate Member of the Australasian Railways Association, and a member of the international Union of Public Transport (UTIP).

The RTBU works to promote sustainable transport as an essential element in a fair and environmentally sustainable Australian society, and to promote the interests of rail and bus transport workers as a key element in achieving that goal.

The RTBU is clearly aligned with the environmental movement on the issues of urban planning, passenger transit, freight transport, energy use, reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions and social justice.

The RTBU promotes the development of transport to achieve the desired transport outcomes of effective and efficient transport; viable transport services; safe transport; and sustainable transport. These outcomes need to be carefully considered in the analysis of options for heavy vehicle pricing.

As the study progresses, the RTBU would be pleased for further opportunities to provide input.

2. The transport challenge

The total non-bulk freight task in seven inter-city freight corridors across Australia has been forecast to double in the 20 years to 2020 but that investment in road networks will not keep pace. While the greatest growth is expected in inter-capital freight (which is expected to triple), metropolitan freight is forecast to grow significantly, almost doubling over the twenty–year period.

> *If the relationship between freight flows and national income of the recent past holds, then there will be substantial future growth in total non-bulk freight in all of the corridors considered (2020 freight flows forecast to average twice their 2000 levels). If road continues to slowly increase mode share relative to rail, the growth in road freight will be even greater (2.2 times).* (BTRE 2003b)

It is therefore anticipated that after 2010 the key national road networks will become increasingly congested, to a greater extent than transport planners and decision makers have hitherto thought possible.

The trend for rail to lose mode share can only be reversed by a significant relative reduction in costs, compared to continually improving road service levels. (BTRE 2003b)

The trend for heavy freight vehicles to become larger has continued, as well as the mass of vehicles in each class. The growth of load carried and distance travelled (both in total and on average) by articulated trucks has been faster than that by rigid trucks (BTRE 2003c)

Alongside these significant changes in freight and passenger movements, community expectations about the responsibilities of the corporate sector to meet social obligations are growing.

The community is becoming less tolerant of the social impacts of noise, pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, safety and negative impacts of congestion. Community attitude surveys indicate that there is ongoing concern about the social impacts of transport activity, in particular freight transport, and activism and negative sentiments can be expected to grow.

> *Issues of cost recovery for road damage caused by heavy vehicles, safety, congestion, ambient air and noise pollution, and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are likely to assume greater importance in future.* (BTRE 2003c)

Heavy vehicle travel causes safety, noise, energy and emission problems and considerable road damage. Rail is much safer than road travel, and more efficient than road in terms of energy or fuel use for both passenger and freight transport. Articulated trucks used between three and seven times the energy compared to rail freight and rail used 30% less energy for non-urban passenger transport (ACIL 2001). Rail freight produces significantly lower levels of greenhouse gas emissions than road freight (large trucks produce over twice as much as trains on average; small trucks are worse: ACIL 2001). For non-urban passenger transport, rail produces lower emissions than cars. The ACIL (2001) study concludes that there is an in-principle case for an environmental tax in proportion to external costs.

The RTBU believe transport must provide intergenerational equity, including the cost and risks passed on to future generations, considering such aspects as making optimum use of diminishing fossil fuel reserves through more fuel efficient transport of freight by rail. It is therefore appropriate to seize the opportunity to move towards charging for externalities, at least taking a step in that direction and not deferring consideration to a future time.

Alignments and gradients of rail corridors are substandard in many locations due to a legacy of under-investment. It is important that any changes to the pricing of heavy road vehicles should not detract from moving towards a level playing field.

The viability of a number of regional rail lines are particularly susceptible to modal shift of freight from rail to road. Already many of these lines, such as the Mt Isa to Townsville line, would become non-viable with only a small shift of the freight task. This has considerable implications for communities in the region, for loss of employment and additional costs to state and local government for road upgrade and ongoing maintenance.

An improved pricing regime is required. Possible options that are being discussed in Australia include mass-distance charges for heavy vehicles, road congestion charges, carbon and environmental taxes and removal of the Queensland fuel subsidy. All of these initiatives would mean an increasing role for rail, particularly for freight transport. Distance based mass-distance charges for heavy vehicles have been in use or being progressively introduced in New Zealand and many parts of Europe (Austria, Switzerland and Germany).

3. Desired transport outcomes

The RTBU promotes the development of sustainable transport to achieve the following desired transport outcomes:

- Effective and efficient transport;
- Viable transport services;
- Safe and secure transport; and
- Sustainable transport.

Effective and efficient

The use of transport infrastructure, and the pricing signals inherent in heavy vehicle pricing, should aim to achieve effective and efficient transport outcomes. To be able to address the transport task being faced, the most cost-effective and efficient balance of transport services (in terms of economic and sustainability criteria) should be pursued. This will ultimately be a balance of passenger and freight transport by car, truck, bus and train.

The growth in travel, in line with the growth in population, could result in a situation where road traffic becomes increasingly congested, the volume of heavy vehicle travel causes considerable road damage and safety, noise, energy and emission problems increase to alarming levels. As a result the potential for road user charging to address these issues also becomes necessary.

Options that need to be discussed include mass - distance charges for heavy vehicles, road congestion charges, carbon and environmental taxes and removal of the Queensland fuel subsidy. All of these initiatives would mean an increasing role for rail, particularly for freight transport.

The RTBU is concerned that failure to grasp the opportunity in more efficient heavy vehicle pricing, will mean a greater proportion of the task by road, requiring additional government investment in road infrastructure and inefficient and unsustainable use of community resources. The cost of an increased modal shift of freight to road through a policy decision which increases road's attractiveness, will impact all levels of government.

Viable

Appropriate use of transport infrastructure should promote the desired outcome of viable transport services into the future.

Positive economic performance is the best outcome for transport users, industry, and the community as a whole. The RTBU asserts that for rail to remain viable and to be competitive with road transport, appropriate heavy vehicle pricing regimes are required which provide pricing signals so that vehicle operators and their customers make appropriate modal choice decisions.

Neutrality between transport modes is a key concept underlying the review of heavy vehicle charges. The new AusLink assessment methodology, which will be progressively introduced, aims to ensure neutrality between transport modes. It is also important to note that AusLink provides for an integrated corridor approach to planning, which focuses on meeting future freight needs in the best way, irrespective of the transport mode rather than focusing on separate rail and road transport modes.

Modal neutrality also is of concern in urban areas where rail freight is constrained to off peak transit times, to provide priority for passenger rail demands in peak periods. Similar requirements, such as congestion pricing for heavy vehicles, should be considered for urban freight routes to ensure competitive neutrality. In the same way that freight routes and bypasses are provided for trucks in some urban areas, the same should approach should be used for freight rail.

Safe and secure

Promoting a balanced use of transport infrastructure should aim to ensure the safety and security for operators, users and the community. The ACIL (2001) study indicated that rail is far superior to road in terms of safety, in relation to human trauma. The Queensland Rail Network Strategy states "*rail urban transport is seven times safer than road per passenger kilometre"* and Laird (2002) estimated rail to be 29 times safer than road.

In addition, movement of bulk dangerous good commodities by rail enables a much better overall risk management environment. This is particularly important, for example in relation to the transport of Class 5 fertilisers which need to be carefully controlled for safety and national security reasons. Rail has the advantage over road transport by having specific, defined routes and a limited number of accredited operators, who operate under required safety procedures. Transport of dangerous

goods is much more difficult to control and enforce for road transport, with multiple operators, and diverse potential routes.

The RTBU feels that safety and security must be a key consideration in any transport policy review.

Sustainable

The RTBU is concerned that transport services should aim to achieve sustainability outcomes, that is minimising impacts on the environment and providing for future generations. The primary criteria include energy, greenhouse gas and other emissions and impacts on the physical, built and social environment.

Rail is certainly more efficient than road in terms of energy or fuel use for both mass passenger transport and bulk, long distance freight transport. The ACIL (2001) study indicated that articulated trucks used between three and seven times the energy compared to rail freight and rail used 30% less energy for non-urban passenger transport.

Rail freight produces significantly lower levels of greenhouse gas emissions than road freight (large trucks produce over twice as much as trains on average; small trucks are worse: ACIL 2001). For non-urban passenger transport, rail produces lower emissions than cars.

The ACIL (2001) study concludes that there is an in-principle case for an environmental tax in proportion to external costs. These sustainability issues need to be carefully considered in any heavy vehicle pricing review. In relation to heavy vehicle pricing NRTC (2003) identified the following set of objectives:

1. *Heavy vehicle operators take account of infrastructure costs in their choice of vehicle and vehicle use decisions.*
2. *Revenue obtained from heavy vehicles meets costs of providing and maintaining infrastructure for their use.*
3. *The pricing system avoids operators shopping around for lower prices for the same access to the road network.*
4. *By ensuring that prices for use of the road system reflect the costs of providing and maintaining that system, providing a more neutral environment in which decisions about modal choice are made.*

The RTBU strongly supports objective 4 as a key consideration in the broader transport context.

NTC (2004a) aims for a much more limited set of outcomes:

The outcomes expected from this report and the accompanying national consultation program are:

- *productivity improvements for heavy vehicles able to participate in the proposed incremental pricing system;*
- *charges that closely reflect the cost of road wear;*
- *a nationally consistent framework and pricing mechanism for existing systems of this nature;*
- *an effective compliance mechanism; and*
- *enhanced fairness in the application of heavy vehicle charges.*

These do not address broader transport issues, and in particular the question of competitive neutrality between road and rail, in an appropriate way. The need to move to an appropriate individual mass-distance charging scheme is acknowledged by NTC.

RTBU is very concerned to note that the Third Heavy Vehicle Road Pricing Determination's proposals for incremental pricing, even if taken up on a large scale, appear not to fully overcome acknowledged deficiencies in the structure and scope of current heavy vehicle charges.

4. Current Heavy Vehicle Pricing

The current system of heavy vehicle charges is designed only to recover heavy vehicles' share of costs of providing and maintaining roads (NTC 2004a). It consists of a fixed annual charge (paid at first time registration or registration renewal) and a road use charge imposed on fuel.

Other costs of road use noted below are excluded:

- Congestion costs – delays imposed by each vehicle on all others;
- Crashes, the portion of the total cost unfunded by insurance premiums;
- Environmental externalities: noise and tailpipe emissions – local and global; and
- Costs of enforcing heavy vehicle regulations.

The method for calculating charges is defined and is described by NRTC (2003). It appears to have been used largely unchanged since the first determination in 1992.

According to the NTC's *Issues, Options and International Developments* Paper (NTC 2004b) the charges were structured so that there would be over-recovery from smaller vehicles and under-recovery from larger vehicles while recovering costs.

The second determination adjusted the charges to reduce the cross-subsidy from smaller heavy vehicles to larger heavy vehicles but the over-recovery from the smaller heavy vehicles continued.

NTC (2004b) states that the "*annual adjustment procedure only provides a rough indication of the likely changes in charges needed to maintain accuracy*. The Paper also states that "*over time the heavy vehicle charges for some heavy vehicles no longer reflect their share of costs*."

Changing patterns of use of heavy trucks (greater proportion of larger, heavier vehicles, greater distance, different loading patterns), changes in vehicle technology (fuel efficiency), imprecise knowledge of local road costs, a better appreciation of relationships between axle load and pavement deterioration (possible application of a 12^{th} power rule rather than a 4^{th} power rule), the method in which the cost allocation formula are applied (to averages of groups by mass and distance) and so on, appear to lead to a situation in which the distortions leading to an

under recovery of pavement costs from the largest vehicles have continued. These issues are discussed by BTRE (2003a) as reported in NTC (2004b), Laird and Lander (1997), NRTC (2003) and others.

Problems with the now current NRTC charges were noted by the Industry Commission (1991-92 Annual Report, p197-198): *"The result is that some vehicles – the heaviest travelling long annual distances – will meet less than 20 per cent of their attributed costs.* [emphasis added] *... Differences between the recommended charges and road-related costs are greatest for vehicles competing with rail. The charges, as recommended, will therefore potentially distort the long-haul freight market as rail reforms take effect...."*(Laird and Lander 1997).

Some experts believe that fuel charges discourage the use of multi-axle vehicles as fuel use is increased with greater tyre-road contact as greater rolling resistance must be overcome. Many toll roads also charge heavy vehicles on the basis of the number of axles, not axle load.

To assist in overcoming these deficiencies mass – distance charging has been proposed by NTC, either on an incremental basis or individual basis, to more selectively apply appropriate charges that reflect the costs of road provision and maintenance for each class of vehicle. Whether all vehicles are targeted for incremental basis or individual charging, removal of the distortion that favours heavy vehicles is important.

While inclusion of externalities is desirable (ie to attempt to recover the full social costs of heavy vehicle transport) it is recognised that it is more important where roads are congested, where population is dense and health damage from local vehicle emissions would be highest, although global emissions, as they are roughly proportional to fuel use, would be relevant at any location, rural or urban.

The use of congestion charging is considered a way of addressing this issue in the future, together with designated road freight routes to ensure heavy vehicles keep off local streets.

NTC's Discussion Paper (NTC 2004b) sets out reasons why it is currently not proposed to pursue individual pricing nor to include externality charges. It does suggest that one feasible form of incremental pricing could be for heavy vehicles. A voluntary form of incremental charging is proposed.

RTBU does not consider that voluntary incremental pricing will achieve the desired outcome. In a voluntary incremental charging scheme, too little take-up, for any reason, would prejudice its cost-effectiveness, integrity and sustainability. Additional enforcement may be required – those that do not participate for any reason, may be encouraged to overload to compete with those that do.

The Discussion Paper does highlight that operating and technological characteristics of such a scheme largely depend on the level of take-up. NTC recognises that a more selective, user friendly and enforceable scheme would arise if 100% take-up can be achieved. (NTC 2004b).

International developments in electronic mass – distance charging for heavy vehicles in the UK, Germany, Austria and Switzerland show what is achievable and provide valuable lessons in choice of technology, a realistic level of complexity to achieve appropriate charging selectivity, and the need for appropriate types of payment channels.

New Zealand's existing heavy vehicle charging scheme has been operating since 1977 and while early attempts to convert it to a fully electronic system have not been successful, the recent European experience gives more confidence of what can be achieved.

The impact of heavy vehicles in the traffic stream also needs to be considered, particularly the safety impacts resulting from vehicle characteristics of width, length and height, for example overtaking long vehicles, obscured vision and sight distance restrictions, wind buffeting etc. These result in increased safety risk and require additional infrastructure investment, such as overtaking lanes, wider pavement, intersection treatment etc, to offset these risks. These additional costs need to be included in heavy vehicle pricing.

Rail involves a much higher level of safety risk management and enforcement than exists for road vehicles and the cost is transparent for rail, but is less so for heavy vehicles. The level of enforcement is not consistent across modes. Enforcement costs should include the full cost of overheads and administration of government transport agencies at all levels, for vehicle licensing, inspections, enforcement etc.

Hence, it is concluded that:

- The current system of heavy vehicle charges is inadequate and has systematically undercharged the heaviest vehicles travelling the longest distances to the disadvantage of rail;
- The structure of heavy vehicle charges (base and/or incremental) be reviewed to remove these distortions including an allowance for externalities; and
- A firm agenda and program for moving towards individual mass – distance charging using appropriate technologies be set in the Third Heavy Vehicle Pricing Determination.

5. Options for Heavy Vehicle Pricing

The NTC raised a number of questions in their discussion paper titled *Third Heavy Vehicle Pricing Determination: Narrowing the Options* (NTC 2004b) and the RTBU's response to these questions are outlined below.

1. The NTC decision to not pursue individual road user pricing in the 3rd Determination

NTC's Discussion Paper stated that ".. there are significant policy and institutional issues to overcome before individual user pricing for heavy vehicles could be introduced" and that ".. therefore individual user pricing does not appear to be realistically achievable within the time period."

RTBU agrees with these statements but recognises that unless the Third Heavy Vehicle Pricing Determination sets out practical steps (ie agenda, timetable, program) to advance the policy and institutional issues to achieve individual mass – distance charging, the next review may well find that it too is time constrained and that individual user charging will be again not achievable within the time period.

The current ATC decision to pursue voluntary incremental charging is not an adequate alternative to individual mass – distance charging.

RTBU agree that current heavy vehicle charging systems and proposals in Europe are difficult to justify in Australia and that the effort involved in developing a manual system as in New Zealand would also not be justifiable. However, **RTBU does not agree** that an appropriate electronic heavy vehicle charging scheme could not be developed within Australia within five to six years if there is the political will to do so.

NTC's Discussion Paper stated that the issue of externality costs *"..is to be addressed at a later date*" and that it was *".. earlier intended that pricing for environmental externalities would be considered … now unlikely to occur*" and further that it is *".. still proposed to review the current availability of information on externalities.*" There is insufficient justification made for these conclusions.

RTBU considers that it is essential that some average allowance for externality costs are included in heavy road vehicle charges to facilitate the most efficient use of transport infrastructure while still reviewing

the availability of information on externalities in terms of activity and location to achieve improved estimates in the short to medium term.

NTC's Discussion Paper stated that it ".. proposes to undertake a review of the available information to determine whether an environmental surcharge is achievable and warranted."

RTBU considers that as emission standards for new trucks (the Euro standards) can be readily identified and related to a year of introduction into Australia it would be possible to devise a set of charges to apply to pre-Euro and more recent trucks to achieve a desired improvement in emissions performance over time. At the same time, the random checks to ensure that in-use trucks are not polluting excessively would at least maintain the status quo. It is critical that a move be made in the direction of individual road user pricing.

2. The seven suggestions for objectives that should underlie an incremental pricing system

NTC's Discussion Paper sets out seven objectives. The first states that "ensures that charges for use of the road system utilising incremental applications accurately reflects the cost of providing and maintaining the road system, including bridge and pavement wear (Our emphasis))."

The second objective seeks to improve "…heavy vehicle productivity."

RTBU considers that:

- The objectives should refer to the 'transport' system, not just road system and improving 'freight' productivity, not just heavy vehicle productivity. RTBU recommends that the first objective should be rewritten so that heavy vehicle charges refer to costs of providing and maintaining roads and bridges and external costs.
- As the current system of heavy vehicle charging has systematically undercharged the heaviest vehicles travelling the longest distances to the disadvantage of rail, that a new objective be formulated by NTC to deal with this and truly address the issue of inter-modal neutrality.
- Without fundamental reform to the current system of heavy vehicle charges a blunt form of incremental pricing may actually increase the inequity between road and rail in certain corridors and reduce the competitiveness of rail. This will result in a greater burden on governments to provide transport infrastructure, while under-utilising existing rail infrastructure.

3. The operational applications that incremental pricing should apply to

Depending on how suitable operational applications are defined, and the willingness of State authorities to permit these applications, the number of eligible vehicles may be severely restricted. A likely outcome of incremental pricing without reasonably wide mandatory application would be a potential miniscule impact.

4. The expected level of industry participation in an incremental pricing scheme

Extensive industry participation depends on the scope of application (see response to Question 3 above) and whether participation is voluntary, the cost of complying with the requirements and the benefits, and perception of benefits, that can be realised, and the level of enforcement and resultant compliance. Need to note the full cost of enforcement should include the overhead and administration of state and local transport agencies. It is essential that these matters be balanced in any appropriate scheme.

RTBU strongly believes that once a suitable charging approach is formulated it should be mandatory.

5. Who should operate the system

The RBTU considers that NTC's discussion of options suggest all are viable.

6. What should the rate of incremental charge cover

RTBU believes the appropriate charge, and method of application, should include externality costs and should remove any current distortion whereby base charges are inadequate for the heaviest most intensively used vehicles, as outlined in Section 4 above. Otherwise there is a risk of increasing the pricing distortions and adverse impacts.

7. How should mass be measured

RTBU considers that NTC's discussion of technology/systems suggest ready availability of suitable approaches for Australia. Considerations should also be given to including other vehicle characteristics (width, height, length) in the pricing formula. Averaging of loads, considering the implications of a 4^{th} power rule, results in under-recovery from heavy loaded vehicles, so actual, rather than average loads should be used in measuring mass.

8. How should distance and location be measured

RTBU considers that NTC's discussion of technology/systems suggest ready availability of suitable approaches for Australia.

9. Who should receive the revenue

RTBU considers that revenue should be hypothecated to state transport authorities for use in multi-modal transport infrastructure provision and enforcement.

10. How should compliance and audit be addressed

Compliance is critical to the success of any system. RTBU believes that more robust enforcement of heavy vehicles is required to ensure appropriate standards of safety and loading are achieved.

6. Conclusions

The rapid forecast growth in the freight task over the next 20 years and major changes in the structure of the freight industry (consolidation, vehicle choice with both the very light and very heavy segments of the fleet growing), and resultant methods of operation predicate urgent and a fundamental review of the structure, level and scope of heavy vehicle charges in Australia.

The current system of setting of heavy vehicle charges has prevailed for more than 12 years and requires a fundamental review and action to make change. There are potential benefits to all Australians by addressing the issues raised in this submission.

The RTBU concludes that:

- The current system of heavy vehicle charges is inadequate and has systematically undercharged the heaviest vehicles travelling the longest distances to the disadvantage of rail;
- Consequently, intermodal rail – road neutrality has not prevailed;
- The structure of heavy vehicle charges (base and/or incremental) be reviewed to remove these distortions including an allowance for externalities; and
- A firm agenda and program for moving towards individual mass – distance charging using appropriate technologies be set in the Third Heavy Vehicle Pricing Determination.

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Glossary

ACTU	Australian Council of Trade Unions
ALP	Australian Labor Party
ITF	International Transport Workers Federation
NRTC	National Road Transport Commission
NTC	National Transport Commission
RTBU	Rail, Tram and Bus Union
UTIP	International Union of Public Transport

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Rail, Tram & Bus Union

Submission to
Office of Urban Management

Draft South East Queensland Regional Plan

February 2005

Executive Summary

The Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) has a special interest in transport and rail transport in particular, and on behalf of its members is seeking the right policy approach to facilitate efficient investment, operation and use of transport infrastructure for the future development of South East Queensland.

The RTBU promotes the development of transport to achieve the desired transport outcomes of effective and efficient transport; viable transport services; safe transport; and sustainable transport.

The RTBU commends the Queensland Government and the Office of Urban Management on undertaking the challenging task of developing a regional plan for South East Queensland.

The RTBU strongly supports integrating land use and transport as a strategic direction to achieve the desired future urban form.

The RTBU strongly recommends the following key principles in finalising the regional Plan and developing the infrastructure plan:

- **Transport corridors** – undertaken urgent action to identify and protect strategic transport corridors
- **Leading infrastructure and services** – develop public transport infrastructure and services in advance of when it is required, in particular passenger rail, to serve developing urban areas identified in the plan, such as Beaudesert, Springfield and along the western corridor to Ipswich and Sunshine Coast.
- **Travel demand management** – look to moderate the growth in traffic by introducing a range of travel demand initiatives and encouraging public transport and rail freight, by considering measures such as parking pricing mechanisms and follow London's congestion charging lead
- **Enhancement of rail freight capability** – infrastructure needs to be upgraded, particularly interstate connections from Sydney and Melbourne, including the proposed inland standard gauge line, access to the Port of Brisbane, access through or around Brisbane City and freight to the north, noting that freight and passenger services share a common infrastructure

- **Capital investment** – invest in priority transport infrastructure in key corridors to provide for future population and economic growth, noting that passenger and freight rail utilise shared infrastructure
- **Integrated services** – ensure passenger transport services seamless transition connections at key nodes, eg integrated bus and rail timetables and ease of physical access

Given the lead times involved in developing major rail and road infrastructure and their role in leading desired development, the **RTBU recommends** that feasibility, planning and design of priority projects set out in the Regional Plan should be commenced promptly.

The RTBU, as a major stakeholder, would welcome the opportunity to provide further input to the process of finalisation of the Draft South East Queensland Regional Plan, if this is feasible. The RTBU would appreciate an opportunity to be involved in a formal dialogue mechanism to be able to provide ongoing advice on planning, implementation, service quality and monitoring of transport in South East Queensland.

Contents

1. Rail, Tram and Bus Union

The Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) was formed on 1 March 1993, through a historic amalgamation of three railway unions and one tram and bus union.

The RTBU has 35,000 members in the rail, tram and public sector bus areas across Australia, of which 4,000 are in South East Queensland. The Regional Plan will impact on the quality of life for RTBU members and their families. It is affiliated to the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) and the Australian Labor Party (ALP). The RTBU is the principal union in public transport and the rail industry generally.

The RTBU is also an Associate Member of the Australasian Railways Association, and a member of the international Union of Public Transport (UTIP).

The RTBU works to promote sustainable transport as an essential element in a fair and environmentally sustainable Australian society, and to promote the interests of rail and bus transport workers as a key element in achieving that goal.

The RTBU is clearly aligned with the environmental movement on the issues of urban planning, passenger transit, freight transport, energy use, reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions and social justice.

The RTBU promotes the development of transport to achieve the desired transport outcomes of effective and efficient transport; viable transport services; safe transport; and sustainable transport. These outcomes need to be carefully considered in the analysis of options for heavy vehicle pricing.

As the revisions to the draft plan and preparation of the infrastructure plan progress, the RTBU would be pleased for further opportunities to provide input.

The RTBU would appreciate an opportunity to be involved in a formal dialogue mechanism to be able to provide ongoing advice on planning, implementation, service quality and monitoring of transport in South East Queensland.

2. The regional transport challenge

South East Queensland (SEQ) has experienced high and sustained population growth and is projected to grow by 50,000 people per year for the next 20 years.

This growth is expected to lead to increased traffic congestion, with vehicle kilometres travelled increasing at a greater rate than population growth. Freight travel is expected to increase at similar or greater rates. Travel times will grow even faster than trip times due to forecast reductions in average travel speeds:

- Brisbane City Council's "Transport Plan for Brisbane 2002-2016" predicts that Brisbane's population will increase to 1.05 million by 2016, an increase of 17%. But the Transport Plan forecasts that motorised travel, measured in vehicle kilometres, would increase by over 40% by 2016, thus outstripping population growth;
- The Integrated Regional Transport Plan (IRTP) for South East Queensland predicted that in SEQ by 2016 the population would increase by 60%, and motorised travel, measured in vehicle kilometres, would increase by nearly 100% by 2016. Freight travel over the same period was forecast to increase by between 80% and 120%.

The Federal Department of Transport and Regional Development forecasts that the road freight task in Eastern Australia will double by 2020 but that investment in road networks will not keep pace. It is therefore anticipated that after 2010 the key national road networks will become increasingly congested, to a greater extent than transport planners and decision makers have previously thought possible.

Undue traffic congestion will degrade the liveability of SEQ through:

- Increased personal time delays for occupants of freight and public transport vehicles – characterised by congestion, jammed traffic and unpredictable travel times;
- Increased vehicle operating costs for these vehicles due to increased fuel consumption in stop-start traffic and vehicle wear and tear;
- More vehicular exhaust emissions such as carbon monoxide, lead and particulate matter pollution that is detrimental to human health;
- More green house gas emissions that are responsible for global warming;

- Reduced accessibility to jobs, schools, shops and other community services due to longer commuting times, with a disproportionate impact on those with constrained choices of activity locations;
- Increased risk of crashes and associated fatalities and property damage;
- Accessibility requirements for the significant and increasing proportions of the population either disabled or elderly, with specific mobility and access requirements and reduced driving capacity;
- Increased heavy vehicle use, where associated with increased vehicular activity, would increase road damage; and
- Adverse impact on the man-made and natural environment.

3. Desired regional transport outcomes

The RTBU promotes the development of sustainable transport to achieve the following desired transport outcomes:

- Effective and efficient transport;
- Viable transport services;
- Safe and secure transport; and
- Sustainable transport.

3.1 Effective and efficient

Efficient and effective personal and freight travel within the region, would be characterised by reductions in numbers and lengths of person and freight trips, an increased percentage of long distance freight by rail, and an increased relative shift to high occupancy, public transport and walk and cycle modes.

Undue congestion may result from inefficient land use development patterns that are difficult to service appropriately with adequate transport infrastructure including appropriate rail and public transport. Combined with inadequate pricing of transport, which leads to the external costs created by each mode not being correctly perceived, may give rise to longer commuting distances, imbalances between supply and demand, and excessive car use.

Inappropriate transport infrastructure, either too much or too little, may exacerbate imbalances between transport supply and demand and increase congestion that degrades the mobility of people and goods. Reductions in travel are needed as well as increased efficiency of travel.

The use of transport infrastructure, and the pricing signals inherent in heavy and other vehicle pricing, should aim to achieve effective and efficient transport outcomes. To be able to address the transport task being faced, the most cost-effective and efficient balance of transport services (in terms of economic and sustainability criteria) should be pursued. This will ultimately be a balance of passenger and freight transport by car, truck, bus and train.

The growth in travel, in line with the growth in population, could result in a situation where road traffic becomes increasingly congested, the volume of heavy vehicle travel causes considerable road damage and

safety, noise, energy and emission problems increase to alarming levels. As a result the potential for road user charging to address these issues also becomes more likely.

3.2 Viable

Transport services must be viable in an economic and financial sense to ensure their sustainability into the future for the benefit of transport users, industry, and the community as a whole.

Transport costs are a major component of the cost of doing business. Access to jobs must also be convenient to link employees and employers efficiently.

Viable transport services also promote economic development by reducing commuting costs and lowers costs of linking services and goods to customers and markets and between seaports, airports, terminals and the regional and national transport system.

Where transport services provide positive economic benefits for transport users, industry, and the community as a whole, then there is a strong case for Government financial support. Consideration must also be given to infrastructure whole-of-life considerations, as rail corridors and infrastructure generally have a much longer life than road.

The RTBU believes that a 'level playing field' between rail and road transport is needed for investment to ensure efficient choices are made between the transport modes and to enable the investments to be made with certainty. This will require mechanisms to be established to allow consistent road and rail funding decisions to be made, recognising the substitutable nature of road and rail freight. The projected increasing cost of fossil fuel will have considerable impact on the economy and quality of life and energy efficient transport modes become more critical.

3.3 Safe and secure

A safe and secure transport system would be characterised by: reduced crashes, personal injuries, property damage and fatalities; reduced personal security events; infrastructure adequately protected against terrorism with adequate redundancy; and quick response systems for natural disaster and other emergency events.

Promoting a balanced use of transport infrastructure should aim to ensure the safety and security for operators, users and the community.

The ACIL (2001) study indicated that rail is far superior to road in terms of safety, in relation to human trauma. The Queensland Rail Network Strategy states "*rail urban transport is seven times safer than road per passenger kilometre"* and Laird (2002) estimated rail to be 29 times safer than road.

The RTBU feels that safety must be a key consideration in any transport policy review and hence new rail infrastructure and services would necessarily have a prominent role.

Heavy trucks also impact on vehicular traffic because of their imposing size, creating safety hazards.

3.4 Sustainable

The RTBU is concerned that investment in transport infrastructure and services should aim to be sustainable, that is minimising impacts on the environment and providing equitably for future generations. The primary criteria include energy, greenhouse gas and other emissions and impacts on the physical, built and social environment.

There are at least three aspects of sustainability of interest:

- Efficient use of energy – more fuel efficient vehicles, great use of rail, efficient use of fossil fuel use by transport to reduce energy and global (GHG) emissions and increased use of renewable energy.
- Cleaner air, and quieter environment: through reductions in emissions from mobile sources, and more efficient transport (higher occupancy), such as enhanced public transport and rail, walking and cycling.
- A transport system integrated into the built and natural environment with minimal associated impact including on water quality and open space through sound planning, design, construction and operations.

Rail is certainly more efficient than road in terms of energy or fuel use for both mass passenger transport and bulk, long distance freight transport. The ACIL (2001) study indicated that articulated trucks used between three and seven times the energy compared to rail freight and rail used 30% less energy for non-urban passenger transport.

Rail freight produces significantly lower levels of greenhouse gas emissions than road freight (large trucks produce over twice as much as trains on average; small trucks are worse: ACIL 2001). For non-urban passenger transport, rail produces lower emissions than cars.

The ACIL (2001) study concludes that there is an in-principle case for an environmental tax in proportion to external costs.

The RTBU supports the implications for transport included in the strategic directions of the Draft SEQ Regional Plan, viz:

- Integrating land use and transport
- Encouraging growth in the Western Corridor, and
- Building more compact urban areas.

4. Transport Issues for SEQ: detailed comments

In this section, we address the transport aspects of the desired regional outcomes outlined in the draft SEQ Regional Plan.

4.1 Environment (see SEQ Plan p17)

Due to underpricing of vehicular travel, drivers do not take into account the full costs of their transport decisions leading to a situation whereby the road system is used excessively, compared to a situation where they perceive all costs including externalities. That is, the fuel and delay costs that motorists are normally assumed to perceive are far less than full social costs of travel – in Melbourne in 1992 these perceived costs were shown to be 30% of the full social costs of travel over a day, and even less in peak periods (Luk et al, 1994).

Luk et al (1994) estimated the delay cost (alone) in Brisbane in 1992 due to excessive traffic congestion as approximately $0.4B (1992 prices). The Bureau of Transport Economics in 1999 estimated that the full social costs of excessive traffic congestion in Brisbane was $2.6B in 1995. BTE forecast that the full social costs of congestion in Brisbane would rise to $9.3B or slightly greater than that for Sydney in 2015 although Sydney would have twice the population of Brisbane in 2015. This result seems improbable although it is likely that congestion and externalities will rise faster than they have in the past, even with appropriate intervention.

Global emissions, particularly Greenhouse Gas Emissions, are a function of fuel and energy use, hence actions to increase fuel efficiency and reduce distance travelled will reduce global emissions also. Rail is far more fuel efficient than car passenger and truck freight transport and should be actively promoted.

The community needs to be made aware of the real cost of car travel. Further amplification of the real cost of car travel is contained in Exhibit 4.1. The missed opportunity with the non-agreement to the Kyoto Protocol will have inter-generational impacts, imposing costs and risks on future generations.

Exhibit 4.1 – Real Cost of the Car

A report from the respected Environment and Forecasting Institute in Heidelberg, Germany puts the car right raises fundamental questions about a society increasingly adapting itself to the car. The German analysts take a medium-sized car, assume that it is driven 13,000 km a year for 10 years. They then compute its financial, environmental and health impacts "from cradle to grave".

Long before the car has got to the showroom, they find it has produced significant amounts of damage to air, water and ecosystems. Each car produced in Germany produces 25t of waste and 422 million cubic metres of polluted air in the extraction of raw materials alone.

The transport of these raw materials to Germany and around the country to factories produces a further 425 million cubic metres of polluted air and 12 litres of crude oil in the oceans of the world (for each car). The production of the car itself adds a further 1,5t of waste and 75 million cubic metres of polluted air.

Calculations of the impact of a car in use make the generous assumption that the car has a three-way catalytic converter and uses 10 litres of lead-free petrol for every 100 km. Over 10 years, the Heidelberg researchers believe that one car will produce:

- 44.3 tonnes of carbon dioxide;
- 4.8 kg of sulphur dioxide;
- 46.8 kg of nitrogen dioxide;
- 325 kg of carbon monoxide;
- 36 kg of hydrocarbons.

Each car is moreover responsible for 1,016 million cubic metres of polluted air and a number of abrasion products from tyres, brakes and road surfaces; 17,500 grams of road surface abrasion products; 750 grams of tyre abrasion products; 150 grams of brake abrasion products.

Each car also pollutes soils and groundwater and this calculated for oil, cadmium, chrome, lead, copper and zinc. The environmental impact continues beyond the end of the car's useful life. Disposal of the vehicle produces a further 102 million cubic metres of polluted air and quantities of PCBs and hydrocarbons.

The sum of these different life cycle stages produces some insights into the penalties societies must face if they become car dependent. In total, each car produces 59.7 tonnes of carbon dioxide and 2,040 million cubic metres of polluted air. Each car, say the Germans, produces 26.5 tonnes of rubbish to add to the enormous problems of disposal and landfill management faced by most local authorities.

While this detail is impressive, it is still not complete. Some of the more startling revelations are in the researchers' wider analysis of social and environmental costs. The Heidelberg researchers calculate that each car in its lifetime is responsible for three dead trees and 30 "sick" trees. Over its lifetime, each car is responsible for 820 hours of life lost through a road traffic accident fatality and 2,800 hours of life damaged by a road traffic accident. Statistically, one individual in every 100 will be killed in a road traffic accident and two out of every three injured. Translated into vehicle numbers, this means:

- Every 450 cars are responsible for one fatality;
- Every 100 cars are responsible for one handicapped person;
- Every 7 cars are responsible for one injured person;

And into production data:

- Every 50 minutes a new car is produced that will kill someone;
- Every 50 seconds a new car is produced that will injure someone.

The total impact of the car over all the stages of its life cycle also produces a quantifiable financial cost – an estimated A$5,000 per annum per car (covers the external costs of all forms of pollution, crashes and noise after income taxation are taken into account).

This is a state subsidy equivalent to giving each car user a free pass for the whole year for all public transport, a new bike every five years and 15,000 km of first class rail travel.

Reference: Oeko-bilanz eines autolebens. Umwelt-und Prognose- Institut Heidelberg. Landstrasse 118a, D69121, Heidelberg, Germany. (Oct 93)

The RTBU also believes that any transport policy considerations must take into account the fact that fossil fuel is a non-renewable resource and there are real concerns about diminishing oil reserves. Unless given adequate consideration we will impose grave restrictions on future choices and impose costs and risks on future generations. This is identified in the discussions on future global oil production and demand as described by the Hubbert Curves (see: http://hubbertpeak.com).

4.2 Urban Form (see SEQ Plan p28)

The Draft SEQ Regional Plan's desired outcome of a more "compact and sustainable urban pattern of well planned communities, supported by a network of accessible centres" is **supported by the RTBU**.

There has been concern from some commentators such as Matusik that the target of new dwellings to be created by infill (within Brisbane) of 40% of all new dwellings over 2004 and 2016 and 50% between 2016 to 2026 may be unrealistic. Even if these targets are achievable reliance on car will still likely increase in the inner and middle rings of Brisbane putting pressure on the road and bus transport networks.

Rail systems while offering the greatest benefits for longer distance travel within the region may not be able to greatly assist in alleviating this anticipated demand for car travel unless residential infill is targeted at particular corridors which rail can offer competitive advantage.

Improved bus services are needed in established and infill areas offering fast and frequent services (ie no need for timetables), eg along the lines of Brisbane City Bus Upgrade Zones (BUZ) where new services have been very successful.

In key growth corridors, there is a need for provision of new and upgraded rail infrastructure to lead development to ensure that use of rail and public transport becomes a way of life for commuters, rather than the converse of establishing a reliance on car based travel.

In new and developing areas, bus services should be planned and provided along with housing releases and where rail services are not available connected to the major transit networks by express bus services and where feasible, Bus Rapid Transit (BRT).

Principle 2.3 on page 29 of the draft regional plan, is extremely important ie "*Employment and services will be focused on a network of well-planned vibrant and accessible Regional Activity Centres*."

But the current statement is not strong enough. Developing a network of centres of critical size is fundamental to improving strengthening the attractiveness of rail and public transport. Such a network of centres can provide good opportunities to enhance seamless transition and connectivity between modes and improve, in terms of physical access and timetabling of connecting services, and improve late night and weekend services.

4.3 Diverse economy (see SEQ Plan p46)

Underpinning a diverse and strong economy is a good quality strategic freight network. With the significant projected increase in freight the **RTBU strongly recommends** a greater emphasis on rail infrastructure and services, which are central to achieving an appropriate strategic freight network for SEQ.

The RTBU identifies the following key issues:

- **Rail freight connections** – especially north south around Brisbane and from the west to the port. With the likely progression of the inland rail line from Melbourne to Brisbane the connection from Toowoomba to Brisbane is a critical link (see the RTBU's recommended rail infrastructure recommendations below.)
- **Rail freight logistics** is currently focussed on Acacia Ridge – there is need for north side terminal but early planning would be needed to secure and retain such a strategic site, most likely in the Caboolture area, and for a western terminal, in the Ipswich area, to provide the road-rail interface outside of congested areas. This is an issue of regional significance and should be addressed in the Final SEQ Regional Plan.
- Current **restrictions on rail freight** transport through Brisbane City for four hours per day due to passenger rail requirements – the expected growth of the freight task will exacerbate these capacity constraints.
- **Lack of quality data** on freight transport demand in SEQ – necessary to ensure good planning and maintaining healthy economic activity.
- It would appear desirable to develop as many knowledge hubs (page 48, map 10 in the draft plan) as TODs. Well located TODs with good transport would enhance the output of the knowledge hubs. A good example is Boggo Rd precinct (page 50) which is not marked as a TOD now although it is close to the Buranda TOD (see Map 9, p38) . However, Boggo Rd will be on the imminent transit connection to the University of Queensland campus via the new Green Bridge.

- There is a need for effective **rail access to major industrial** developments and the identification and protection of rail corridors.
- Rail corridors require consideration of rail geometric design requirements.

The RTBU strongly supports Principle 4.2 Land and Infrastructure for Economic Development (Page 47) concerning:

- the desirability to maintain and enhance existing infrastructure…in a timely and cost effective manner (Strategy S4.7); and
- "Integrate land use and transport planning…" (Strategy S4.8).

The RTBU specifically recommends, in support of the development of the Draft Plan's Strategic Freight Network (p51):

- **Rail infrastructure** should be a focus of the Strategic Freight Network – the Strategic Rail Freight Network would have both rail alignments and terminals to cater for long term needs. Adequate land will need to be set aside now as part of the regional planning process
- **QR has the expertise and capability** and should be a key party involved in identifying the requirements for this Strategic Rail Freight Network
- Key infrastructure links in the Strategic Rail Freight Network need to be developed, as outline below.

Strategic Rail Infrastructure Links

The RTBU recommends that priority be given to develop new, or upgrade existing, key rail network links, for passenger and freight rail – priority in terms of accelerating rail corridor studies, determining preferred route, corridor preservation and commencement of infrastructure construction – before current routes reach capacity (where they haven't already), for the following:

1. **Beenleigh to Beaudesert** (passenger) – lead infrastructure to potential new urban development to ensure public transport services are available early in the development
2. **Springfield** (passenger) – lead infrastructure to current and future urban development on the western corridor
3. **Brisbane CBD to Caboolture** (passenger & freight) – upgrade the rail line along an improved alignment to provide additional capacity and more efficient services to and from the north,

including a key station at Mango Hill to serve urban development (see Map 1)

4. **Caboolture to Landsborough** (freight & passenger) – upgrade alignment on critical link on northern line & for Maroochydore link

5. **Caboolture to Maroochydore** (passenger) – connect long commute from Sunshine Coast, however this link should be progressed as a rail link and not staged with bus priority

6. **Brisbane CBD to Yeronga** (passenger) – underground beneath the CBD with new central city station & providing additional capacity south, allowing freight to use existing South Brisbane line (see Map 1)

7. **Fortitude Valley to Morningside** (passenger) – provide alternative route from east to city underground and also connect the circle line around the CBD (see Map 1)

8. **Gowrie to Grandchester** (freight) – critical linkage for freight and passenger from west to Brisbane and connection to anticipated Inland Freight line from Melbourne

9. **Boondall to Redcliffe** (passenger) – to provide services for commuters from the northern beaches to the City (see Map 1)

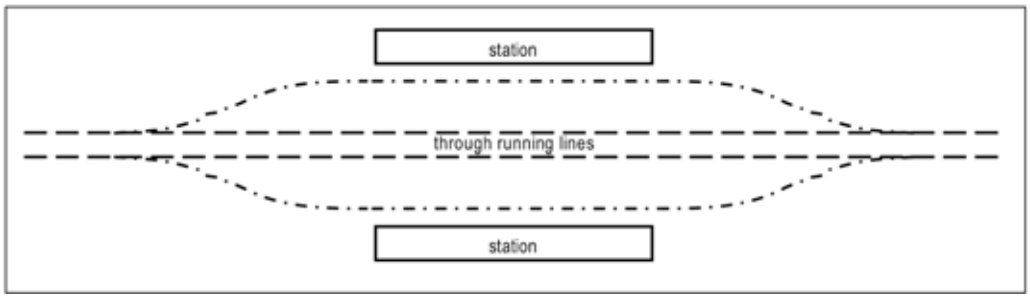
10. **Port of Brisbane to Gowrie** (freight) – upgrade rail freight capacity from west of Brisbane, via Ebenezer and Greenbank to the Port. An alternative dedicated rail freight corridor is required to the Port, possibly parallel to the Gateway Motorway corridor, otherwise future growth at the port may be constrained

11. **Landsborough to Nambour** (freight and passenger) – upgrade alignment on critical northern link. Identify preferred alignment and preserve corridor before land and property developments preclude the optimal alignment.

Map 1: *Strategic Rail Infrastructure Links*

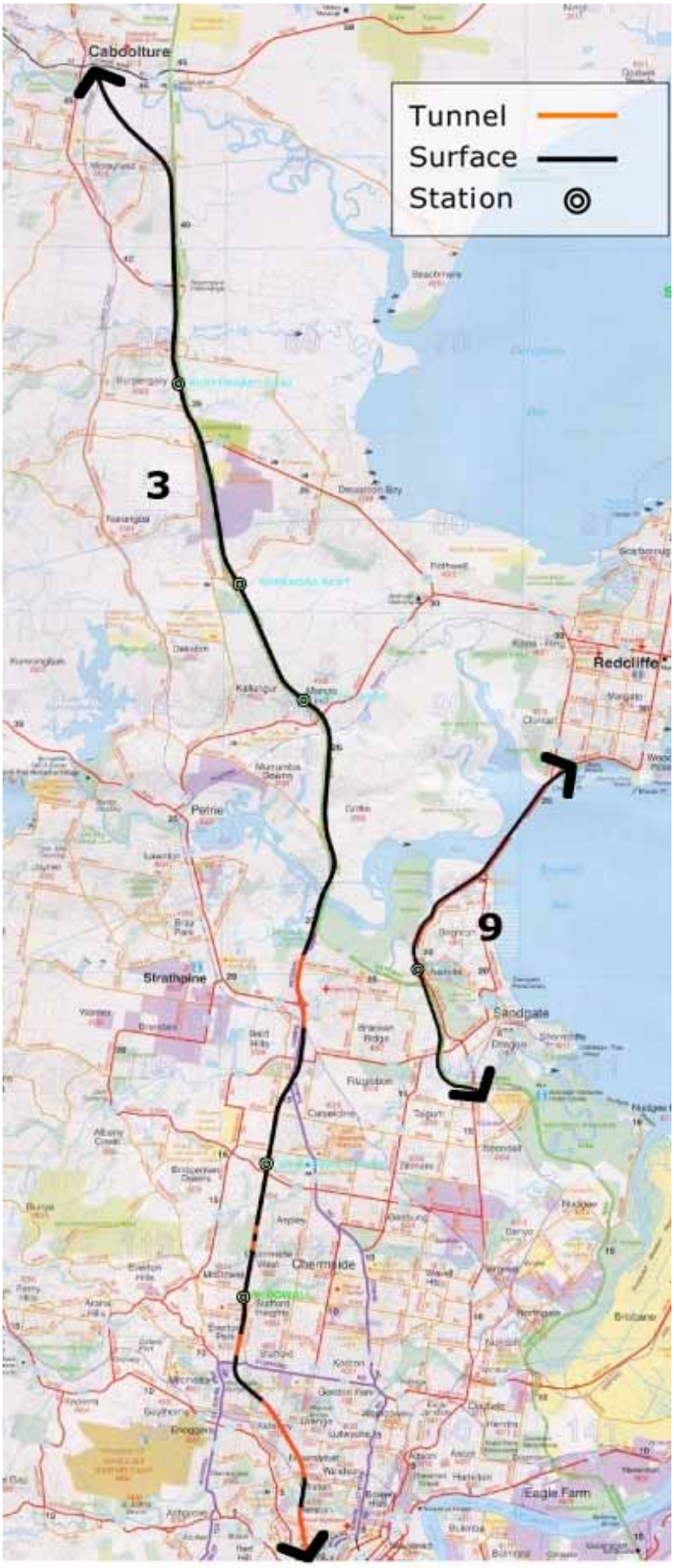
Whenever there is an opportunity to identify preferred new alignments and preserve them , allowance should be made for sufficient width of rail corridor to allow for future capacity, such as 4 track, 2 stack configurations, especially when grade separating railway level crossings. Also allowance for best practice through running design (see Fig 1) should be incorporated for all new stations, allowing for more efficient, high speed services.

Figure 1: *Best practice through running line design through station*



Map 1: *Strategic Rail Infrastructure Links (cont'd)*

4.4



Integrated transport (see SEQ Plan p52)

The RTBU agrees that achievement of a more integrated transport system is a necessity. A consistent and sustained approach is needed that combines an appropriate policy framework including measures to restrain private car use, the development of an integrated freight and passenger transport network and services, and the provision of adequate resources.

The RTBU recommends that specific policy issues should be addressed and if not able to be resolved now, should be identified as being of long term significance. These issues include:

- Appropriate means of restraining private car travel through **travel demand measures** (TDM) or congestion charging – further discussion of this issue is made in the next section. The Plan needs to keep the door open on measures, both incentives and penalties, to encourage more sustainable forms of transport, such as parking levies, congestion charging, public transport components in employment packages;
- Appropriate **funding** for public transport including rail versus road improvements;
- SEQ is a widespread region – **adequate and equitable accessibility** is a growing issue as an increasing proportion of the population does not have a car available for most trips. Along with the aging of our community, there is also an increasing proportion of the population with disabilities who rely on rail and other public transport services, including providing access to health services;
- If rail infrastructure is not adequately provided or maintained then maintaining the road network and the level of traffic and congestion will become a major issue, particularly with the inter-modal market doubling over the next 15 years. A large number of trucks will be put onto SEQ roads if a small percentage of the rail freight moves to road.

The RTBU reinforces the point that rail has a very important role within the integrated transport network. Rail's reliability and advantages for longer distance passenger travel within the region are already evident by recent trends in growth in rail patronage. But further timely upgrading and expansion of some existing rail links is needed as discussed above. This is particularly important due to the existing rail network capacity constraints now appearing, eg constraints in inner City, North Coast and Gold Coast rail line capacity.

In addition increased utilisation of public transport depends on the attractiveness and quality of service provided, in terms of comfort, design, access, facilities, timeliness and frequency of service.

The development of an effective integrated transport system will not result from transport investments alone.

The RTBU supports the Draft Regional Plan's aim to redirect growth to suitable corridors and achieve a more compact urban form. Rail infrastructure and services along with other strategic transport infrastructure (such as busways) can lead development to appropriate areas.

The RTBU recognises that the integration of transport and land use at a local scale or corridor scale through the development of TODs is a key strategy to leverage more integrated transport. Consequently, the **RTBU strongly supports** the Draft Regional Plan's priority for rail-based TODs.

While the RTBU supports the thrust of the Draft Regional Plan, the document could be strengthened by tackling the issue of unrestrained car travel more directly. For example, Principle 5.3 dealing with "Sustainable Travel and Equitable Access" makes no reference to the issue of about travel demand management or road user charging, which the **RTBU believes** must be considered to encourage greater use of public transport.

In outlying areas of SEQ eg Sunshine Coast (page 57) - land use and traffic are out of control. Weekday traffic is more congested here than much of Brisbane. Sunshine Coast and Gold Coast land use is very low density and dispersed. Public transport use will never compete without a sound centres strategy, and considerable investment will be required to reverse current trends.

Delivering Integrated Transport

The Plan could usefully expand its sections on implementation. Principle 5.2 (Page 53), Strategy S5.6 "strengthening the delivery of regional transport infrastructure and services by aligning transport plans and implementation programs at the regional and local level" is a very important statement and does not just apply to transport.

Similarly, in the past there has been poor implementation of suitable policies to restrain car travel and integrate land use at a local government level. The last strategy S5.13 within Principle 5.3 aims to "develop a regional approach to managing parking …" but provides no

detail on how to influence local governments to implement appropriate changes.

The RTBU supports local government involvement in planning and delivery of integrated transport infrastructure and services, to allow synergy impacts across jurisdictions, eg without rail, local government need to provide and maintain road network serving a much greater traffic requirement.

Grade Separation of Road-Railway Crossings

The RTBU recommends that grade separation of critical railway levels crossings is imperative to improve transport safety at the following priority locations:

- Acacia Ridge – Beaudesert Road, near Elizabeth Street
- Coopers Plains – Boundary Road, near Beenleigh Road
- Geebung – Newman Road, near Railway Parade
- Carseldine – Beams Road, near QUT
- Lawnton – Todds Road, near Gympie Road
- Banyo – St Vincent's Road, near Royal Parade
- Wacol – Wacol Station Road, near Ipswich Road
- Runcorn – Nathan Road, near Beenleigh Road
- Fruitgrove – Warrigal Road, near Beenleigh Road
- Kuraby – Beenleigh Road, near St Andrew Street.
- Sunnybank – Stones Road, near Breton Street
- Coorparoo – Cavendish Road, near Clarence Street

The RTBU supports bus services provided by government agencies, such as Brisbane Transport, which can provide a very cost-effective services and due to economies of scale with the fleet size and scope of services, is very flexible, responsive and responsible in responding to day to day circumstances.

The RTBU also supports employers, particularly government agencies, providing incentives to use public transport, by providing consideration in employment packages.

4.5 Infrastructure & services (see SEQ Plan p62)

The RBTU strongly supports a strong sustained regional implementation process, involving key delivery stakeholders at state and local level, with appropriate advisory arrangements with other interested stakeholders.

Travel Demand Management

Managing demand must be a key element (principle 6.5, p63) and in relation to transport, **the RTBU believes** that the TravelSmart program can be enhanced by providing better information to non-users, and better understanding what motivates people to use public transport.

Financing

The RBTU agrees that infrastructure funding needs to consider all available options (strategy S6.9, p63) and the following should be on the list for transport:

- Removal of the Queensland fuel subsidy and direct the funds to transport infrastructure
- Consideration of access and/or congestion pricing, especially since the success of congestion pricing London in reducing travel demand and providing finance for public transport infrastructure and services. The exhibit on Demand management (p64) needs to make reference of user pays or charging.
- Value capture of transport infrastructure – investigate options to capture some of the property and development value created by investing in transport infrastructure such as new rail lines, interchanges and busways.
- Including externalities and sustainability assessments in infrastructure investment evaluation (Principle 6.4, p63)

4.6 Implementation and monitoring (see SEQ Plan p70)

The RTBU supports an appropriate ongoing planning, evaluation and monitoring institutional framework being established, including a governance structure and agreed processes and actions.

In relation to the projected increases in the passenger and freight task there is a compelling need to integrate rail solutions due to the shared infrastructure in south east Queensland.

Because of the long life of rail infrastructure it is important to ensure a long term outlook in developing the strategic rail network.

Queensland Rail has considerable expertise in planning, concept and design of rail infrastructure and services, for both passenger and freight transport.

Appropriate investigation and analysis is required to fill the gaps in information and knowledge required to effectively plan, implement and monitor the Regional Plan requirements.

This includes establishing and formally reporting appropriate performance information.

The RTBU recommends that:

- the governance structure needs to be a formal group including Queensland Rail, Local Government and the RTBU
- QR's expertise and capability be utilised in developing and implementing strategic rail infrastructure and services.

5. Conclusions

The RTBU commends the Queensland Government and the Office of Urban Management on undertaking the challenging task of developing a regional plan for South East Queensland.

The RTBU strongly supports integrating land use and transport as a strategic direction to achieve the desired future urban form.

The RTBU strongly recommends the following key principles in finalising the regional Plan and developing the infrastructure plan:

- **Travel demand management** – look to moderate the growth in traffic by introducing a range of travel demand initiatives and encouraging public transport and rail freight, by considering measures such as parking pricing mechanisms and follow London's congestion charging lead
- **Transport corridors** – undertaken urgent action to identify and protect strategic transport corridors
- **Enhancement of rail freight capability** – infrastructure needs to be upgraded, particularly interstate connections from Sydney and Melbourne, including the proposed inland standard gauge line, access to the Port of Brisbane, access through or around Brisbane City and freight to the north, noting that freight and passenger services share a common infrastructure
- **Capital investment** – invest in priority transport infrastructure in key corridors to provide for future population and economic growth, noting that passenger and freight rail utilise shared infrastructure
- **Leading infrastructure and services** – develop public transport infrastructure and services in advance of when it is required, in particular passenger rail, to serve developing urban areas identified in the plan, such as Beaudesert, Springfield and along the western corridor to Ipswich and Sunshine Coast.
- **Integrated services** – ensure passenger transport services seamless transition connections at key nodes, eg integrated bus and rail timetables and ease of physical access

Given the lead times involved in developing major rail and road infrastructure and their role in leading desired development, the **RTBU recommends** that feasibility, planning and design of priority projects set out in the Regional Plan should be commenced promptly.

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Glossary

ACTU	Australian Council of Trade Unions
ALP	Australian Labor Party
ITF	International Transport Workers Federation
NRTC	National Road Transport Commission
NTC	National Transport Commission
RTBU	Rail, Tram and Bus Union
UTIP	International Union of Public Transport

This submission was prepared with the assistance of Prof Phil Charles, Centre for Transport Strategy, the University of Queensland and Philip Sayeg, Policy Appraisal Services.

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Submission on:

Draft
TransLink Network Plan
for South East Queensland

May 2005

Executive Summary

The Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) has a special interest in transport — bus and rail transport in particular — and on behalf of its members is seeking to encourage efficient investment, operation and use of transport infrastructure and services for the future development of South East Queensland.

The RTBU promotes the development of transport to achieve the desired transport outcomes of effective and efficient transport; viable transport services; safe transport; and sustainable transport.

The RTBU congratulates the Queensland Government and TransLink on undertaking the challenging task of developing a network plan for public transport in South East Queensland.

Brisbane and South East Queensland have changed dramatically in the last 50 years. The only rail network extension in that time has been on the Gold Coast line, which has proved to be very popular service that is already reaching capacity in peak hours.

There needs to be diversity and broadening of the rail network in South East Queensland, complemented by connecting bus services, to ensure coverage of the established and developing population areas.

The RTBU strongly recommends the following key principles in finalising the Network Plan:

- **Additional and accelerated investment** is required to boost public transport patronage – including boosting the service quality;
- **Integrated services** – ensure passenger transport services have seamless transition connections at key nodes, ie integrated bus and rail timetables and ease of physical access;
- **Quality service** – encourage greater use of public transport through careful attention to improving the quality of service, ie comfort, ergonomic design, ride quality etc;
- **Leading infrastructure and services** – develop public transport infrastructure and services in advance of when it is required, in particular passenger rail to serve developing urban areas such as Beaudesert, Springfield and along the western corridor to Ipswich, and to the Sunshine Coast;

- **Capital investment** – invest in priority transport infrastructure in key corridors to provide for future population and economic growth. In particular, there is a need to significantly increase rail capacity in inner Brisbane;
- **Transport corridors** – urgently undertake actions to identify and protect strategic transport corridors;
- **Travel demand management measures** – consideration of pricing initiatives – parking, congestion etc; and a greater focus on travel demand management, especially further emphasis on the TravelSmart initiative; and
- **Quality planning data** – one of the current constraints on good planning is the shortage of robust data on public transport demands and the true cost of transport. Early action is needed to improve the quality of data and analysis.

Given the long lead time involved in planning, designing and developing major transport infrastructure and their role in leading desired development, the **RTBU recommends** that feasibility, planning and design of priority projects set out in the Network Plan should be commenced promptly. Adequate funds need to be budgeted to carry out this work.

As a major stakeholder, the **RTBU requests** a significant role in providing input to the process of finalisation of the TransLink Network Plan and providing ongoing advice on planning, implementation and monitoring of public transport in South East Queensland.

Contents

Glossary

ACTU	Australian Council of Trade Unions
ALP	Australian Labor Party
IRTP	Integrated Regional Transport Plan for South East Queensland
ITF	International Transport Workers Federation
RTBU	Rail, Tram and Bus Union
UTIP	International Union of Public Transport

1. Rail, Tram and Bus Union

The Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU) was formed on 1 March 1993, through a historic amalgamation of three railway unions and one tram and bus union.

The RTBU has 35,000 members in the rail, tram and bus industry across Australia, of which 4,000 are in South East Queensland. It is affiliated to the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) and the Australian Labor Party (ALP). The RTBU is the principal union in the public transport and the rail industry generally.

The RTBU is also an Associate Member of the Australasian Railways Association, and a member of the international Union of Public Transport (UTIP).

The TransLink Network Plan will impact on the quality of life for RTBU members and their families.

The RTBU works to promote sustainable transport as an essential element in a fair and environmentally sustainable Australian society, and to promote the interests of rail and bus transport workers as a key element in achieving that goal. The RTBU is clearly aligned with the environmental movement on the issues of urban planning, passenger transit, freight transport, energy use, reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions and social justice.

The RTBU promotes the development of transport to achieve the desired transport outcomes of effective and efficient transport; viable transport services; safe transport; and sustainable transport.

The RTBU provides a unique perspective as a major stakeholder, due to its members being from the bus and rail industry, being able to provide a practical experience to public transport issues. Best practice in delivering customer service, safety and security requires active involvement of staff.

The RTBU requests a significant role in providing input to the process of finalisation of the TransLink Network Plan and providing ongoing advice on planning, implementation and monitoring of public transport in South East Queensland.

2. The regional transport challenge

South East Queensland (SEQ) has experienced high and sustained population growth and is projected to grow by 515,000 people (up more than 20%) over the next 10 years. The number of households is growing faster than population growth, due to declining household size. A majority of new housing will be in lower-density areas on the urban fringe. More people are willing to trade-off lifestyle for longer commuting distances. More flexible work practices and more dispersed work locations are creating complex travel patterns.

An ageing population is also creating different demands, increasingly dependent on public transport. One-third of Queensland's population does not have a car driver's licence. The modal shift could potentially be much greater than anticipated.

Much of current transport planning and investment is predicated on the availability and use of private motor vehicle. Unrestrained car use is a significant contributor to global warming and dimming. There is the potential for a dramatic reduction in the availability of oil supplies, and the possibility of rapid increases in the cost of operating motor vehicles (due to dramatically rising oil prices). In addition, there is the potential impact of the Kyoto protocol and carbon trading. Hence, there is a need to build flexibility into the public transport system to enable a fast response to a potential rapid escalation in demand.

Building road infrastructure often results in short term solutions, with induced demand rapidly filling up available road space.

The projected demographic changes will lead to increased traffic congestion, with vehicle kilometres travelled increasing at a greater rate than population growth and infrastructure provision, and increasing demand for a greatly improved public transport network.

Current patronage on the public transport network, while reversing the downward trend, is still well below the challenging IRTP targets.

One of the current constraints on good planning is the shortage of robust data on public transport demands and the true cost of transport. The **RBTU recommends** that early action be taken to improve the quality of data and analysis.

3. Desired regional transport outcomes

The RTBU promotes the development of sustainable transport to achieve the following desired transport outcomes:

- Effective and efficient transport;
- Viable transport services;
- Safe and secure transport; and
- Sustainable transport.

3.1 Effective and efficient

Efficient and effective travel within the region, would be characterised by reductions in numbers and lengths trips, an increased relative shift to high occupancy, public transport and walk and cycle modes.

Undue congestion may result from inefficient land use development patterns, that are difficult to service appropriately with adequate public transport infrastructure and services (bus and rail). Together with inadequate pricing of transport, which leads to the external costs created by each mode not being correctly perceived, the result will be longer commuting distances, imbalances between supply and demand, and excessive car use.

Inappropriate transport infrastructure, either too much or too little, may exacerbate imbalances between transport supply and demand and increase congestion that degrades the mobility of people and goods. Reductions in travel are needed as well as increased efficiency of travel.

The use of transport infrastructure, and pricing signals, should aim to achieve effective and efficient transport outcomes. To be able to address the transport task being faced, the most cost-effective and efficient balance of transport services (in terms of economic and sustainability criteria) should be pursued. This will ultimately be a balance of passenger and freight transport by car, truck, bus and train.

3.2 Viable

Transport services must be viable in an economic and financial sense to ensure their sustainability into the future for the benefit of transport users, industry, and the community as a whole. These considerations need to incorporate the full costs to the community.

Transport costs are a major component of the cost of doing business. Access to jobs must also be convenient to link employees and employers efficiently. Viable transport services also promote economic development by reducing commuting costs.

Where transport services provide positive economic benefits for transport users, industry, and the community as a whole, then there is a strong case for Government financial support. Consideration must also be given to infrastructure whole-of-life considerations, as rail corridors and infrastructure generally have a much longer life than roads, particularly for rail lines on optimum gradient and alignments.

The projected increasing cost of fossil fuel will have considerable impact on the economy and quality of life and energy efficient transport modes become more critical.

3.3 Safe and secure

A safe and secure transport system would be characterised by: reduced crashes, personal injuries, property damage and fatalities; reduced personal security events; infrastructure adequately protected against terrorism with adequate redundancy; and quick response systems for natural disaster and other emergency events.

Promoting a balanced use of transport infrastructure should aim to ensure the safety and security for operators, users and the community.

The ACIL (2001) study indicated that rail is far superior to road in terms of safety, in relation to human trauma. The Queensland Rail Network Strategy states "*rail urban transport is seven times safer than road per passenger kilometre"* and Laird (2002) estimated rail to be 29 times safer than road.

3.4 Sustainable

The RTBU is concerned that investment in transport infrastructure and services should aim to be sustainable, that is minimising impacts on the environment and providing equitably for future generations. The primary criteria include energy, greenhouse gas and other emissions and impacts on the physical, built and social environment.

There are at least three aspects of sustainability of interest:

- Efficient use of energy – more fuel efficient vehicles, great use of rail, efficient use of fossil fuel use by transport to reduce energy and global (GHG) emissions and increased use of renewable energy;

- Cleaner air, and quieter environment: through reductions in emissions from mobile sources, and more efficient transport (higher occupancy), such as enhanced public transport and rail, walking and cycling; and
- A transport system integrated into the built and natural environment with minimal associated impact including on water quality and open space through sound planning, design, construction and operations.

Rail is certainly more efficient than road in terms of energy or fuel use for mass passenger transport. The ACIL (2001) study indicated that rail used 30% less energy for non-urban passenger transport.

4. Strategic priorities and policies: detailed comments

The RTBU recommends that specific policy issues should be addressed and if not able to be resolved now, should be identified as being of longer term significance. These issues include:

- Appropriate **investment** for public transport infrastructure and services, including rail versus road improvements. The **RTBU endorses** the recently announced initiatives, but considers that considerable further investment is required;
- Appropriate means of restraining private car travel through **travel demand measures** (TDM), building on and expanding TravelSmart programs and pricing measures, both incentives and penalties, to encourage more sustainable forms of transport, such as parking levies, congestion charging and public transport components in employment packages;
- SEQ is a widespread region – **adequate and equitable accessibility** is a growing issue, as an increasing proportion of the population does not have a car available for most trips. Along with the aging of our community, there is also an increasing proportion of the population with disabilities who rely on public transport services and have a strong need for seamless access to health services;
- If public transport **infrastructure** is not adequately provided and maintained then maintaining the road network and the level of traffic and congestion will become a major issue; and
- Increased **utilisation** of public transport depends on the attractiveness and quality of service provided, in terms of comfort, design, access, facilities, timeliness and frequency of service. The development of an effective integrated transport system will not result from transport investments alone.

The RTBU reinforces the point that rail has a very important role within the integrated transport network. Rail's reliability and advantages for longer distance passenger travel within the region are already evident by recent trends in growth in rail patronage. But further timely upgrading and expansion of some existing rail links is needed. This is particularly important due to the existing rail network capacity constraints now appearing, eg constraints in inner City, and North Coast and Gold Coast rail line capacity.

The RTBU supports the Draft Regional Plan's (OUM 2004) aim to redirect growth to suitable corridors and achieve a more compact urban form. Public transport infrastructure and services is key to leading development in appropriate areas.

The **RTBU recognises** that the integration of transport and land use at a local scale or corridor scale through the development of transit oriented development (TOD) for bus and rail stations, is a key strategy to leverage more integrated transport. Consequently, the **RTBU strongly supports** priority for TODs.

The **RTBU believes** that the issue of unrestrained car travel must be tackled more directly to encourage greater use of public transport.

A consistent and sustained approach is needed that combines an appropriate policy framework including the development of an integrated passenger transport network and services and the provision of adequate resources.

TransLink's vision (page 25) is stated as '*Making it easy to travel in SEQ'*, however the RTBU believes that the words … '*and more attractive'*, or something similar should be added to the vision statement.

Under the 'guiding strategy' (page 25), 'to deliver cost-effective solutions' – the **RTBU recommends** that *cost* needs to include the full community cost, including externalities.

4.1 Strategic priority 1: making services connect

Integrate the network

The **RTBU supports** the change to centrally planning public transport in South East Queensland. The RTBU agrees that achievement of a more integrated transport system, where services are connected, is a necessity.

The Key Transfer locations (page 27) should also include employment centres, eg Rocklea, Acacia Ridge etc.

A key constraint on effective planning is the shortage of comprehensive and robust data on public transport demands and the drivers of those demands and the true cost of transport. This information is critical to be able to effectively plan and design integrated services and undertake evaluation of cost-effective solutions and value for money. The **RBTU recommends** that early action be taken to improve the quality of data and analysis.

4.2 **Strategic priority 2:** making services fast, frequent & reliable

Deliver fast and frequent services

The Network Plan states: *".. needs to generate and stimulate patronage growth, as well as cater for the increased demand .."* (page 32). The **RTBU supports** this thrust, which can only be achieved by a combination of additional infrastructure, vehicles and services, particularly as parts of the Brisbane network are already operate at capacity in peak periods.

This is particularly important in view of the concern that the Network Plan initiatives will be unable to reach the IRTP targets (see page 17 – the current annual patronage growth is 2%, which is low when compared to the annual growth rate of 11% needed to reach the IRTP target by 2011 and or the target of a 6% patronage increase stated on page 230).

As outlined in the Network Plan and comments below, to achieve patronage growth the **RTBU believes** this needs to be stimulated by providing leading infrastructure to encourage future demand, focus on growing travel markets (as outlined on page 33) and building the competitive edge of public transport through providing quality services, in terms of speed, comfort, safety, security etc.

The **RTBU agrees** that public transport needs a 'competitive edge' (page 32) and a critical element of this is the quality of the travel experience. Vehicle design (rail and bus) needs to consider changing human behaviour and ergonomics (eg population getting taller and heavier), together with changing demographics (eg ageing). Design of rail carriages and buses needs to carefully consider issues such as the size of seats, seat spacing, interior layouts, and provision for ingress and egress. This is also a relevant comment on the 'larger vehicles' policy statement (page 33). The **RTBU recommends** that the Service Characteristics (page 15) emphasise ergonomics and vehicle design requirements.

Current overcrowding during peak travel periods detracts from a quality service and experience and the **RTBU recommends** this should be addressed as a matter of urgency.

In developing the Melbourne 2030 strategy, consultation with potential public transport users identified the following concerns, in order of priority (Currie 2004):

- Improvement in service frequency; and
- Lack of services at night and weekends.

The **RTBU endorses** the need to boost off-peak services (page 32) to generate demand, however recent experience with metropolitan rail services has been to reduce hours of operation of stations and cut staff. This needs to be addressed if the Plan's objectives are to be met.

Responding to increases in demand (page 34) by implementing TravelSmart initiatives is **strongly supported** by the **RTBU**. This cost-effective initiative has considerable potential in shifting travel from cars to public transport and should be further emphasised.

Making services run on time

The **RTBU believes** that factors that can cause trains to run late (page 35), such as (a) train breakdowns and signal or overhead problems – require appropriate investment in maintenance; (b) capacity constraints – requires increased frequency of services and additional infrastructure and vehicles; and (c) workforce management issues – requires consideration of increased operating hours for stations, etc and adequate staffing levels.

The **RTBU supports** 'investing in the rail network and developing priority bus corridors' (page 35), particularly feeding bus services to key rail interchanges – consideration needs to be given to improving the physical infrastructure at interchanges to improve the quality of transfer and access.

Invest in the rail network

The **RTBU strongly supports** the need to invest in the rail network, especially planning, preserving and constructing new rail corridors (page 37). These corridors need to also consider future growth capacity (additional tracks, station expansion, park and ride areas and also ensure the corridor preservation considers potential land use to maximise potential patronage and provides land buffers to avoid development in close proximity.

In particular consideration needs to be given to improving the alignment and grading of rail tracks to improve the speed and comfort.

The **RTBU supports** the need for increased enforcement of bus priority measures (page 39).

4.3 Strategic priority 3: filling the gaps

Extending the network into developing areas

The **RTBU supports** the concept of transport led development, by providing lead infrastructure to new & developing areas like North Lakes and Springfield to encourage residents to make sustainable transport choices (page 43 & 44). This would involve providing rail services complemented with bus feeder services.

The **RTBU strongly supports** the need to protect existing and future corridors (see above) (page 44).

Ensure services are well patronised

The **RBTU recommends** that early action be taken to improve the quality of data and analysis (page 46).

4.4 Strategic priority 4: making it easy, comfortable & safe

Making it easy to access

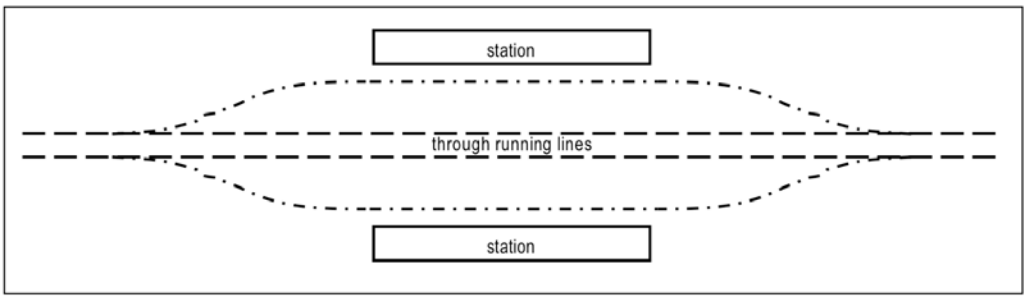
The **RTBU supports** improving access to public transport through the walking and cycling proposals outlined (page 52 & 53).

Provide quality buses and trains

The **RTBU supports** the need to ensure public transport vehicles have improved comfort (page 58). The quality of the service is directly related to comfort, ergonomic design, ride quality etc.

Consideration of increasing the size of trains is **supported by the RTBU** (page 59). Whenever there is an opportunity to identify preferred new alignments and preserve them, allowance should be made for sufficient width of a rail corridor to allow for future capacity, such as 9 car, 4 track, especially when grade separating railway level crossings. Also allowance for best practice through running design (see Fig 1) should be incorporated for all new stations, allowing for more efficient, safe, high speed services, together with best practice design for disability access.

Figure 1: *Best practice through running line design through station*



Enhance safety and security

Public transport safety and personal security needs to be improved by targeted enforcement of appropriate behaviour. The **RTBU suggests** that the Queensland Police Service should consider targetting public transport behaviour as part of over policing of undesirable behaviours (page 62).

The RBTU has a vested interest in the safety and security of its members and has a deep understanding of the associated issues and problems. RTBU members can assist with intelligence gathering and are a key component in delivering safe and secure travel. Staffing levels need to be maintained. The RTBU recommends consideration of engaging additional transit safety and security staff, building on the successful concept of the busway safety officers (page 62).

5. 10 year plan and 3 year program

5.1 Greater Brisbane

Strategic Rail Infrastructure

The RTBU recommends that priority be given to develop new, or upgrade existing, key rail network links, for passenger rail – priority in terms of accelerating rail corridor studies, determining preferred route, corridor preservation and commencement of infrastructure construction – before current routes reach capacity (where they have not already), for the following:

1. **Salisbury to Beaudesert** – initially to Flagstaff – lead infrastructure to potential new urban development to ensure public transport services are available early in the development. Should use an alignment and corridor broadly based on the interstate standard gauge line, but designed to maximise potential patronage;

2. **Springfield** – lead infrastructure to current and future urban development on the western corridor, with provision for extension to Ripley and Ebenezer (servicing new employment areas);

3. **Brisbane CBD to Caboolture** – upgrade the rail line along an improved alignment to provide additional capacity and more efficient services to and from the north, including a key station at Mango Hill to serve urban development (see Map 2) and enhance the attractiveness of rail to the Sunshine Coast;

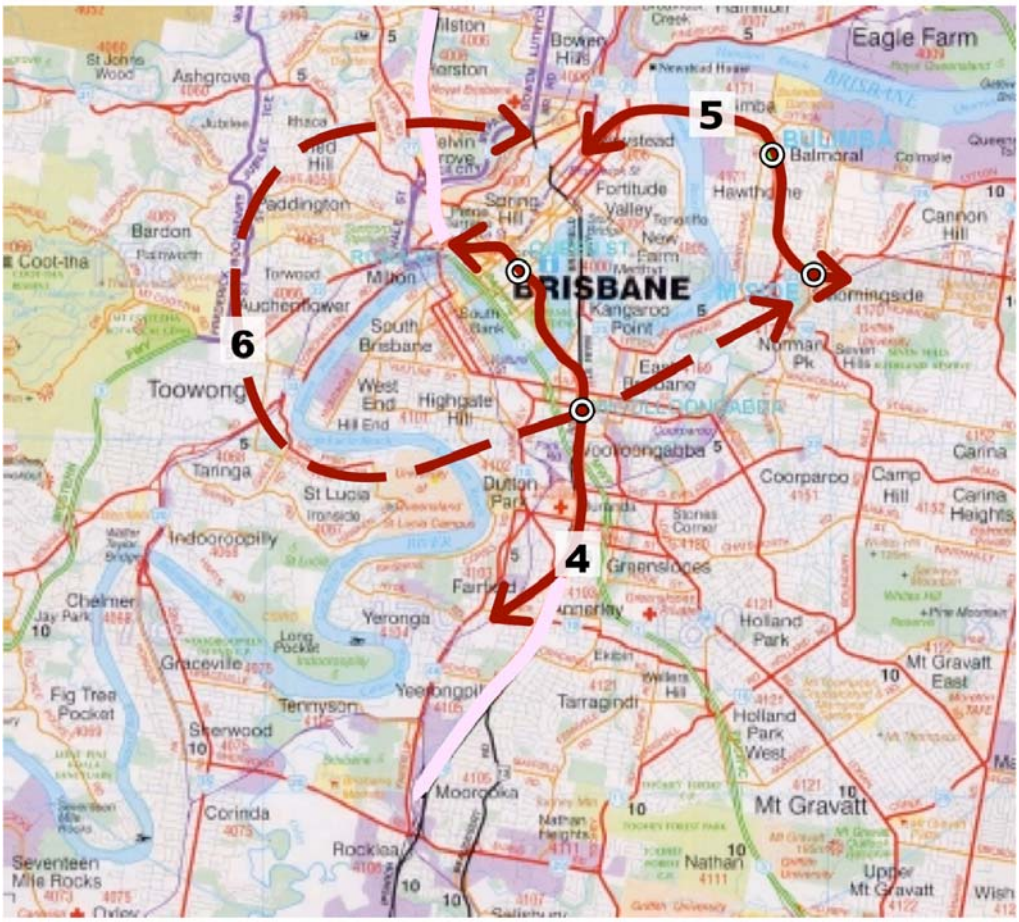
4. **Brisbane CBD to Yeronga** – underground beneath the CBD with new central city station and providing additional capacity south, allowing freight to use existing South Brisbane line (see Map 1);

5. **Fortitude Valley to Morningside** – provide alternative route from east to city underground and also connect the circle line around the CBD (see Map 1);

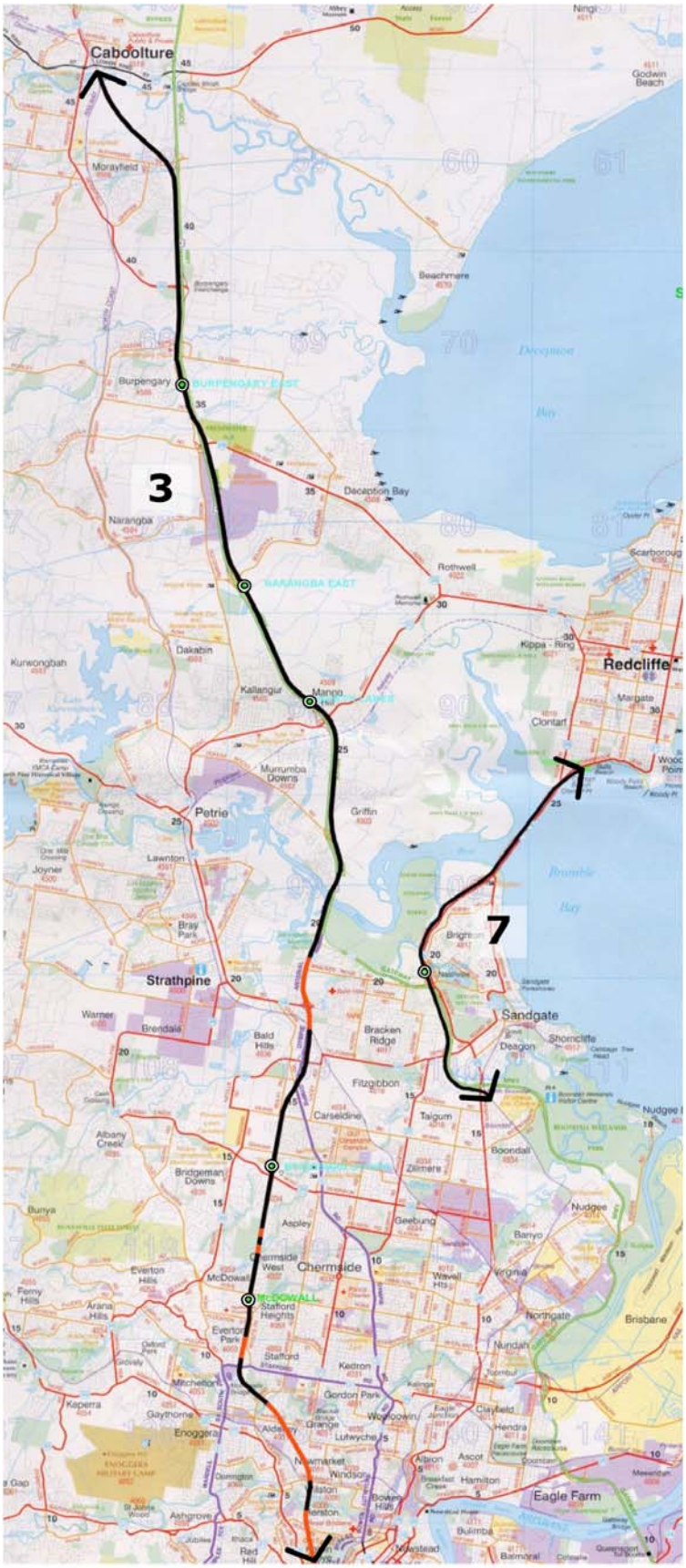
6. **Brisbane City Loop** – investigate the potential for an underground connection to serve the high density population in the inner city areas (eg within Brisbane City's 2 hour parking limit), eg from PA Hospital – University of Queensland – Paddington – Fortitude Valley – Morningside – PA Hospital (see Map 1); and

7. **Boondall to Redcliffe** – to provide services for commuters from the northern beaches to Toombul, the Airport and the City (see Map 2) (rather than just road based public transport).

Map 1: *Strategic Rail Infrastructure Links – central Brisbane*



Map 2: *Strategic Rail Infrastructure Links – northern Brisbane*



Grade Separation of Road-Railway Crossings

The RTBU recommends that grade separation of critical railway levels crossings is imperative to improve transport safety at the following priority locations:

- Acacia Ridge – Beaudesert Road, near Elizabeth Street;
- Coopers Plains – Boundary Road, near Beenleigh Road;
- Geebung – Newman Road, near Railway Parade;
- Carseldine – Beams Road, near QUT;
- Lawnton – Todds Road, near Gympie Road;
- Banyo – St Vincent's Road, near Royal Parade;
- Wacol – Wacol Station Road, near Ipswich Road;
- Runcorn – Nathan Road, near Beenleigh Road;
- Fruitgrove – Warrigal Road, near Beenleigh Road;
- Kuraby – Beenleigh Road, near St Andrew Street;
- Sunnybank – Stones Road, near Breton Street; and
- Coorparoo – Cavendish Road, near Clarence Street.

5.2 Gold Coast

The **RTBU supports** the provision of a light rail spine from Griffith University to Coolangatta, with connections to the Gold Coast heavy rail line (page 188-190).

The **RTBU recommends** that the extension of the Gold Coast rail line south of Tugun be on a direct route to Coolangatta, with provision to extend south to northern NSW to pick up the population growth areas (rather than the "reverse J" configuration indicated on page 190).

5.3 Sunshine Coast

Strategic Rail Infrastructure

The RTBU recommends that priority be given to develop new, or upgrade existing, key rail network links, for passenger rail – priority in terms of accelerating rail corridor studies, determining preferred route, corridor preservation and commencement of infrastructure construction – before current routes reach capacity (where they have not already)

The priority rail network links areas follows:

1. **Caboolture to Landsborough** – upgrade alignment on critical link on northern line & for the Maroochydore link;
2. **Caboolture to Maroochydore** – connect long commute from Sunshine Coast, however this link should be progressed as a rail link and not staged with bus priority;
3. **CAMCOS extension** – preserve a rail corridor from Maroochydore, through Coolum and Noosaville to Cooroy; and
4. **Landsborough to Nambour** – upgrade alignment on critical northern link. Identify preferred alignment and preserve corridor before land and property developments preclude the optimal alignment.

The **RTBU does not support** an interim bus corridor using the CAMCOS corridor from Parrearra to Maroochydore at the expense of jeopardising the future rail corridor.

The **RTBU recommends** that consideration be given to preserving a rail corridor north from Maroochydore to Coolum, Noosaville and connecting to Cooroy.

6. Implementation, monitoring and review

The RBTU strongly supports a strong sustained regional planning, implementation and review process, involving key delivery stakeholders at state and local level, with appropriate advisory arrangements with other stakeholders with a vested interest.

The RTBU supports a stronger local government involvement in planning and delivery of integrated transport infrastructure and services, to allow synergy impacts across jurisdictions.

As a major stakeholder representing rail and bus industry employees, the **RTBU requests** a significant role in providing input to the process of finalisation of the TransLink Network Plan and providing ongoing advice on planning, implementation and monitoring of public transport in South East Queensland (page 221). This could be achieved by inviting the RTBU to become a member of the TransLink Advisory Board or similar.

Ongoing funding considerations

The RBTU agrees that infrastructure funding needs to consider all available options and the following should be on the list for transport:

- Removal of the Queensland fuel subsidy and direct the funds to transport infrastructure;
- Consideration of parking and access and/or congestion pricing, especially since the success of congestion pricing London in reducing travel demand and providing finance for public transport infrastructure and services;
- Value capture of transport infrastructure – investigate options to capture some of the property and development value created by investing in transport infrastructure such as new rail lines, interchanges and busways; and
- Including externalities and sustainability assessments in infrastructure investment evaluation.

The **RTBU believes** there is limited potential for public-private partnerships in public transport delivery as these services are rarely commercial in financial terms, due to the need for government subsidy. International experience suggests that these arrangements have resulted in increased risk to government.

Service delivery

The RTBU supports bus services provided by government agencies, such as Brisbane Transport, which can provide very cost-effective services. And due to economies of scale with their large fleet size and scope of services, is very flexible, responsive and responsible in responding to day-to-day circumstances. Flexibility is critical in being able to respond to major service interruptions and to cater for special events.

The RTBU also supports employers, particularly government agencies, providing incentives to use public transport, by providing consideration in employment packages.

QR has considerable expertise in planning, concept and design of rail infrastructure and services. **The RTBU recommends** that QR's expertise and capability be utilised in developing and implementing strategic rail infrastructure and services, as they have considerable experience and practical knowledge in optimising corridor alignment, station design and facilities and day-to-day operational requirements (page 226).

The **RTBU emphasise** the need to consider the implications for rail service delivery of the shared infrastructure used for passenger and freight services.

Performance monitoring

The RTBU supports an appropriate ongoing evaluation and monitoring institutional framework being established, including a governance structure and agreed processes and actions.

Appropriate investigation and analysis is required to fill the gaps in information and knowledge required to effectively plan, implement and monitor the Network Plan requirements. This includes establishing and formally reporting appropriate performance information.

The RTBU recommends that the governance structure for ongoing performance monitoring and review should include formal membership of Queensland Rail, Local Government and the RTBU, such as the TransLink Advisory Board or similar.

The **RTBU strongly supports** the broader community performance indicators on economic, social and environmental costs and benefits (page 228). This information is required for transparent assessment of investment proposals.

The **RTBU supports** the performance indicators outlined (Tables on page 229 & 230), and **believe** that supplementary quantitative performance indicators are required for comfort, under Strategic Priority 4, which would measure the quality of the experience, eg such things as ride quality (ride, vibration, surge etc).

The **RTBU notes** that the primary indicator for patronage (6% over the next 3 years in Table on page 230) falls far short of the IRTP target. This highlights the need for additional and accelerated investment in public transport infrastructure and services to avoid potential financial and political risks.

7. Conclusion

The RTBU congratulates the Queensland Government and TransLink on undertaking the challenging task of developing a network plan for public transport in South East Queensland.

Patronage on the public transport network, while reversing the downward trend, is still well below the challenging IRTP targets. A particular concern of the RBTU is that the Network Plan initiatives target a patronage growth of 6% per year whereas a growth of 11% per year is needed to reach the IRTP target. The IRTP also needs to be updated, and its challenging targets need to be maintained.

The RTBU strongly recommends the following key principles in finalising the Network Plan:

- **Additional and accelerated investment** is required to boost public transport patronage – including boosting the service quality;
- **Integrated services** – ensure passenger transport services have seamless transition connections at key nodes, ie integrated bus and rail timetables and ease of physical access;
- **Quality service** – encourage greater use of public transport through careful attention to improving the quality of service, ie comfort, ergonomic design, ride quality etc;
- **Leading infrastructure and services** – develop public transport infrastructure and services in advance of when it is required, in particular passenger rail to serve developing urban areas such as Beaudesert, Springfield and along the western corridor to Ipswich, and to the Sunshine Coast;
- **Capital investment** – invest in priority transport infrastructure in key corridors to provide for future population and economic growth. In particular, there is a need to significantly increase rail capacity in inner Brisbane;
- **Transport corridors** – urgently undertake actions to identify and protect strategic transport corridors;
- **Travel demand management measures** – consideration of pricing initiatives – parking, congestion etc; and a greater focus on travel demand management, especially further emphasis on the TravelSmart initiative; and

- **Quality planning data** – one of the current constraints on good planning is the shortage of robust data on public transport demands and the true cost of transport. Early action is needed to improve the quality of data and analysis.

Given the long lead time involved in planning, designing and developing major transport infrastructure and their role in leading desired development, the **RTBU recommends** that feasibility, planning and design of priority projects set out in the Network Plan should be commenced promptly. Adequate funds need to be budgeted to carry out this work.

As a major stakeholder, the **RTBU requests** a significant role in providing input to the process of finalisation of the TransLink Network Plan and providing ongoing advice on planning, implementation and monitoring of public transport in South East Queensland.

References

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