

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Tollroads](#)
Subject: Road Toll Enquiry Submission
Date: Monday, 6 August 2018 3:53:10 PM

Committee Secretary
Transport and Public Works Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Sir,

I strongly support an inquiry and changes to the operation of QLD toll roads and how future roads are created, managed and funded. I believe that the current system has allowed the toll contractors unfettered profit at the expense of users and for which the money could be used for improving the transport conditions in and around Brisbane.

Profiteering

I understand why we have used private companies for the building of roads and the need for that company to make a profit. The level of profit is too high, unregulated and unjustified. I see two problems with the current arrangements:

1. The Toll contracted period/s are too long and too easily extended which means there is no limit to the profits. Some “new” reason will be made to extend Logan Motorway Tolls just like the previous extension from 2018 to 2051. An extra 30 years is a ridiculous extension for an established road. We are stuck paying these ever increasing fees with no condition/s where the toll on a road can be returned to the state/ public. Primary arterial roads such as the Gateway Bridge or Logan Motorway the tolls should have ceased a LONG time ago.
2. Transurban level of risk does not justify 71%* margin on earnings (Transurban profit reported in Courier Mail, 03 Oct 2014). The toll roads are constructed in areas where there is existing congestion and strong property growth so there is no risk to demand. There is no limitation on what they can charge or for how long they can charge. Such a profit level should be significantly reduced or be for only the necessary years required to give a defined return on investment. The Government should then assume the direct income at a reduced toll to cover maintenance or cease the toll all together. We are paying to line the company pockets and nothing is being set aside to create a future fund for new works.

No Alternative to Toll Roads - Monopolies

The Logan Motorway, as an example, has been undergoing “upgrade” for an extended period which has caused regular delays (some over an hour long) but continued to charge full toll rates. Transurban can continue to charge this rate because the commuter demand to use these roads is relatively inelastic; there is no alternative then to use these toll roads. The Logan Motorway and Gateway Bridge tolls roads hold a monopoly on critical thoroughfares. A toll shouldn't be a penalty for less congestion traffic it should be just a method to pay for the infrastructure.

Linkt Account and Toll Transparency

So as to avoid account charges, I have to link my bank account and retain \$10 - \$25 on Linkt.

Therefore the toll company is holding a significant amount of cash from practically each and every Queenslanders. With over 2 million cars in SE Qld that means Linkt would be now holding circa \$30 M. The higher the tolls the more they demand to hold in the accounts. This is just another way the toll companies are making more profit at no risk. The other part of linking Linkt to a bank account is that the account top-ups occur without notice. For example I was still getting a single toll-“ping” when the Linkt account demanded top-up. For higher toll road users, like my wife, it is very difficult to budget or determine when over-charging occurs.

Please improve the Toll Road management, use the toll revenue to build more roads and not just let the current companies sit on the existing infrastructures.

Sincerely

Mr Adam Sewell

