



Speech by

**KAREN STRUTHERS**

**MEMBER FOR ARCHERFIELD**

---

Hansard 17 November 1998

**FREIGHT RAIL SERVICES**

**Ms STRUTHERS** (Archerfield—ALP) (10.27 p.m.): I could not end the parliamentary session this year without speaking on the topic of trains—the pet love of my predecessor, Len Ardill; a tribute to Len.

Recently, the Regional Manager of National Rail, John McNamara, gave me a tour of the freight terminal at Acacia Ridge in the Archerfield electorate. Many residents in my area are employed at the terminal and some of them fear that they will get the Christmas gift from hell, that is, job loss. Rail is not attracting enough freight and not shifting it cheaply and efficiently enough.

John McNamara spoke with enthusiasm about the great potential that exists for the expansion of freight rail services in Australia. He also expressed concern about the poor quality of rail infrastructure in Australia. This is a major factor inhibiting the expansion and efficiency of freight rail services.

Fifteen hundred metre long freight trains have now been introduced on the east coast corridor. In order to avoid long delays, new crossing loops need to be constructed. National Rail has argued that investment in the national road highway system continues to be more than 10 times the investment in the national rail highway. Many local people have sought my support to hold their jobs. Action may not be swift enough to avoid current job losses.

However, it is critical that the Federal Government works cooperatively with State Governments to secure a much-needed boost in rail infrastructure Australiawide. The National Rail employees in my area want trains, trains and more trains in order to hold their jobs. I will continue to do my bit to make it possible for these carriages to keep rolling in and out of Queensland.

---