

## **Question on Notice**

**No. 1658**

**Asked on Thursday 29 October 2009**

MR RICKUSS ASKED THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT (MS NOLAN)—

QUESTION:

With reference to the closure of five freight distribution centres around Queensland—  
Why is the government still proceeding with the Southern Freight Line when there has been no business study undertaken?

ANSWER:

I thank the Member for Lockyer for the question.

The closure of the five freight distribution centres on 30 October 2009 is the final element of the reforms of QR Limited's previously loss making and inefficient general freight operations on the Mount Isa line. The reform package commenced in July 2008 and has been an excellent example of what can be achieved with extensive consultation and good planning.

The Southern Freight Rail Corridor study is a planning study to identify and protect a freight only rail alignment to provide for future freight capacity in South East Queensland. Freight movement in this region is expected to double by 2020 and the Southern Freight Rail Corridor is identified as key infrastructure to cater for this growth.

The detailed business case on this project will be undertaken closer to the construction date. What's not in doubt however is that the size of the freight task will grow over time and that if we fail to plan for rail, the result will be more trucks on the road.

I understand that it is difficult when planning is undertaken for a project that may not be needed for many years. However if we do not undertake this planning now, then many more homes and lives will be disturbed in the future when we have to come back and retrofit a rail line after population growth has occurred.

The only point which is in doubt here is the LNP's position on this matter. Indeed some LNP members are on the public record advocating for more freight to be transported on rail. I take it from your public comments and support for the group opposing the corridor that you do not support the preservation of this rail freight corridor.

This government's position is clear: we will plan for sustainable future transport. I note the inherent confusion in the LNP's position.