

Sir,

I submit that the Quairading to York Railway Line be re-opened as a matter of urgency for the safety of all road users between these two towns.

I say this for the following reasons;

1. The road in its current state is not suited to heavy truck use, as would occur, to shift the 200,000+ tonnes of grain currently in store following a record harvest. Although the Government has said it will allocate \$105 million to improve the road how long will this take and to then combine multi sites of road works with heavy road train use does not bear the logic of a government that is governing "for the people". The work already completed near Greenhills is like a very poorly placed Band Aid as the additional strips on either side of the road are uneven and are crumbling, in parts, where they meet the original road surface.

It is not only the users of the Quairading to York road that will suffer, but also the people of York who already deal with the trucks carting hay into York but also those trucks carting the export hay containers to port. Both of these will be driving through York and down the road to the Lakes. This is not counting the trucks that usually use the road for fuel, super, general merchandise and machinery (usually on wide loads). It will also include those trucks carting grain from Greenhills and Mawson also.

It is also of concern that while the Government is already taking steps to reduce road congestion in the metropolitan area, it is going to add to that congestion with in excess of 4,000 truck movements from Quairading alone during the course of the year, whether they be going to Kewdale or Kwinana. As the truck movements are mostly in daylight hours and not on weekends or Public Holidays, that is an extraordinary increase to the already high congestion levels and not in keeping with "let's lessen the congestion on our roads".

2. The railway line itself is not in good condition and some of the line, close to Quairading, is 45lb line manufactured in the 1890s. However, surely the \$105 million could at least be split between the rail and the road and thus allow the majority of the grain to be railed out safely thereby lessening the pressure on the road and the road users. To me it seems strange that many other countries in the world are expanding their rail networks and we seem intent on shutting ours down in certain areas. All the rail needs is a little maintenance on upgrading the quality of rail, renewing the sleepers and re-ballasting and you then have a line that could go for another 100 years, as the original has just about done.

3. Since my arrival in Quairading (1995), CBH has added 5 new bins to the storage facilities – one very large concrete bin and four open bins. It appears to me that CBH have expressed confidence in the Quairading area to continue to produce large quantities of grain. It has also provided its own trains with which to shift the grain. This is a marvellous confidence boost for our farmers and our town. However, not being able to easily get the grain out by rail is a major sticking point.

4. A major problem seems to be the Brookfield contract – the Premier, in a radio interview on ABC during 2013 said he was not sure what was in the contract as did our Upper House member, Jim Chown at a meeting in Quairading during 2013. As nobody seems to know what is in the contract apart from Brookfields, it is having a large effect on our community. There is not one person I have spoken to in the Quairading Community who thinks it is a good idea to transport the grain by road. Mr Chown is talking up the road option but he is our representative and he is not representing his constituents who think the opposite to him. How do we solve the problem of the "unseen" contract? Could I suggest the the WA Government and CBH and Brookfield share the cost of repair and maintenance to the line in order to get it operating again for the safety of the road users. Then the three groups work out who is responsible for the ongoing maintenance, shake hands on that and we can all get on with our lives. At

the moment, it appears as if the Government, Brookfield and CBH are all handballing the problem with their hands behind their backs instead of working together for the good of the community.

5. Finally is the “common sense” factor. Surely it is self evident that to move a large quantity of grain safely in one train on a well maintained track (that only crosses the Quairading to York Road in 5 places) with two operators is eminently more sensible than to provide 50 trucks with 50 operators sharing the road with all the normal traffic? (And I did not mention the pollution factor!). However, for “common sense” to prevail, somebody, apart from Brookfield must be able to look at the “unseen contract” and determine a path that is sensible, economic and in the best interests of our community and all road users.

Rowlie Mellor,