

Inland Rail Narromine to Narrabri Community Consultative Committee

Annual Report 2019

Community Consultative Committee Details

CCC / Project Name:	Inland Rail – Narromine to Narrabri	Reporting Period:	1 January 2019 to 31 December 2019
Independent Chairperson:	Michael Silver OAM	Proponent Contact:	Patricio Munoz

1. Executive Summary

The Community Consultative Committee (CCC) operated under three sub-committees based on Narromine, Gilgandra and Narrabri given the significant 307 kilometres lineal length of the project and to ensure that community engagement could be maximised, and local issues addressed.

The CCC was established in late 2018 with up to seven community members appointed to each sub-committee with the respective local government authorities having two representatives. The ARTC was represented by a single representative with support from various consultants and technical specialists during presentations and responding to questions from CCC members.

The formation of the Narromine sub-committee resulted in only three community members being appointed. Subsequently, further community nominations were invited, and an additional four community members were appointed.

In September 2019, Elizabeth Tomlinson, a stakeholder representative of the NSW Farmers Association on the Narrabri Sub-committee resigned and was replaced by David Scilley from the Association.

Following introduction to the scope of the project, the focus of the CCC during the year related to a broad range of issues to be considered in the development of the Environmental Impact Statement, including route selection, flooding issues, consultation and communication, economic and financial benefits and disbenefits for individuals and communities, access and amenity impacts on landholders, land acquisition processes, social and community impacts including accommodation impacts during construction, biodiversity and environmental considerations, cultural impacts, and impacts on the Pilliga Forest.

Considerable discussion and questions were raised by several CCC members over a number of meetings regarding historical route selection processes. These matters were outside the scope of the CCC to address and consequently were referred to the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development for response. These issues were also addressed as part of the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee report: *The Management of the Inland Rail project by the Australian Rail Track Corporation and the Commonwealth Government*

In July 2019, the Study Area for the project was refined to a Focus Area of Investigation approximately 150–400 metres wide. This resulted in one-on-one meetings with impacted landholders between July and December 2019 to discuss location of the Focused Area of Investigation as it relates to the landholder's property; flooding analysis, including seeking historic flooding information and outlining preliminary level crossing plans.

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CCC activities over last 12 months

- **Meetings**

The sub-committees met on four occasions:

- Narromine Sub-committee
 - 22 January 2019 at Narromine
 - 19 March 2019 at Narromine
 - 21 May 2019 at Narromine
 - 24 September 2019 at Narromine
- Gilgandra Sub-committee
 - 22 January 2019 at Gilgandra
 - 19 March 2019 at Gilgandra
 - 21 May 2019 at Gilgandra
 - 24 September 2019 at Gilgandra
- Narrabri Sub-committee
 - 23 January 2019 at Narrabri
 - 20 March 2019 at Barradine
 - 22 May 2019 at Narrabri
 - 25 September 2019 at Narrabri

- **Attendance**

Community Members, Local Government Authorities and Proponent Representative (*Meetings attended/Possible meetings*)

- **Narromine Sub-committee**

Andrew Knop (4/4), Paul Brydon (2/4), Shelley Baylis (1/4), Murray Feddersen (2/2), Lewis Lydon (1/2), Alan Channel (2/2), Taje Fowler (1/2), Narromine Shire Council (3/4), Inland Rail Representative (4/4).

- **Gilgandra Sub-committee**

Peter Bonnington (4/4), Alexander Deans (4/4), Barbara Deans (4/4), Karen McBurnie (3/4), Stuart Mudford (4/4), John Single (4/4), Coonamble Shire Council (4/4), Gilgandra Shire Council (4/4), Inland Rail Representative (4/4)

- **Narrabri Sub-committee**

Bruce Brierley (4/4), Christina Deans (2/4), Ted Hayman (4/4), Jane Judd (4/4), Cindy Neil (4/4), David Scilley (1/1), Lloyd Sutherland (0/4), Elizabeth Tomlinson (3/3), Narrabri Shire Council (4/4), Warrumbungle Shire Council (4/4). Inland Rail Representative (4/4)

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The Inland Rail representative for the first two meeting rounds was Ms Helena Orel, with Mr Patricio Munoz taking over the role for the last two meeting rounds.

The Local Government Authorities were represented by two members at each meeting.

The Sub-committee meetings were also attended by ARTC executives, technical specialists and consultants providing presentations on various elements of the project to the CCC. Government agencies, both Commonwealth and State, were also present at the Sub-committee meetings as observers and where required made presentations.

The meetings of the three sub-committees also drew strong local interest, with community observers being permitted to attend the meetings. There was particularly strong interest from community observers at the Gilgandra sub-committee meetings.

- **Site Visits**

No site visits were undertaken by any of the sub-committees.

- **Combined Meetings**

- No combined meetings of the three sub-committees were held during the period.

- **Other Actions**

- Distribution of advice that Gilgandra Shire Council had facilitated a workshop to provide an introduction and overview of the NSW Just Terms Compensation Act on 26 February 2019.
- The CCC determined at its September 2019 meetings to establish a protocol to permit observers to submit questions prior to the conclusion of a meeting for subsequent response by the Proponent.
- The CCC, in collaboration with the North Star to Border Inland Rail CCC, wrote to the Hon. Mark Coulton MP highlighting the need to upgrade telecommunication services to rural localities along the proposed Inland Rail alignment in concert with the installation of telecommunications services to support the Inland Rail operation.

2. Key issues

Issue	Actions Taken	Responses and Next Steps
Study Area Selection Considerable concern at Narromine regarding the process in determining the Study Area selection – adoption of an eastern study corridor in December 2017. Also	Sought clarification of the selection process and particularly the Multi Criteria Analysis Process used to make a recommendation to the Minister for Transport on the preferred Study Area for the Narromine to	The Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development provided a response to the CCC's concerns and outlined the timeline upon which the Study Corridor was endorsed in late 2017 and other process questions.

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<p>issues at Narrabri regarding the potential implications on flooding and uncertainty along the entire Study Area Corridor as to what properties would be impacted.</p>	<p>Narrabri section of the Inland Rail project. The CCC wrote to the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development seeking the timeline upon which the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, the Hon. Darren Chester MP, and Minister for Finance, Senator the Hon. Mathias Cormann endorsed the preferred Study Corridor and other process questions.</p>	<p>Criticism continued to be expressed at the Narromine Subcommittee regarding the process followed in selecting the eastern alignment and subsequent amendments south of the town. Similarly, there was ongoing criticism at the Gilgandra Subcommittee regarding the process undertaken to select the Study Area and how it was being refined to a Focus Area of Investigation.</p> <p>The issues were addressed as part of the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee report: <i>The Management of the Inland Rail project by the Australian Rail Track Corporation and the Commonwealth Government.</i></p>
<p>Flooding and Hydrology</p> <p>Concern over accuracy and extent of flood modelling across the Study Area and the lack of detailed hydrological information.</p>	<p>The CCC requested detailed presentations on the flood modelling and local flood impacts across the entire Study Area. Proponent provided various presentations throughout the year on flood modelling.</p>	<p>Several detailed hydrology and flood modelling presentations were provided outlining the issues that would be addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement. Presentations to the September 2019 meetings of the Subcommittees related to local issues.</p> <p>Concern continued to be expressed at the accuracy of the flood models and a failure to consider local flood knowledge in the development and calibration of flood models along many sections of the Study Area.</p>
<p>Access and Amenity</p> <p>Concern over segregation of rural properties, implications for access to land for machinery, stock movement and road transport movement as well as noise issues.</p>	<p>Information sought on access issues where properties are divided.</p>	<p>.Advised discussions will occur with Transport for NSW, Roads and Maritime Services and local Councils regarding road and transport issues. Road/rail interfaces will be designed to the relevant Australian and ARTC standards.</p> <p>Advised that with establishment of Focus Area that greater detail on</p>

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		<p>localized rural amenity impacts will become available</p> <p>Ongoing - concern regarding implications for rural roads and property access.</p>
<p>Consultation and Communication</p> <p>Lack of meaningful communication particularly in the initial establishment of the Study Area resulting in the landholders being unaware of the likely implications for their property. Issues with access to property protocols and how this is negotiated and managed. Further issues with availability of mapping and documentation detailing flood impacts and notice to be given for one-on-one meetings.</p>	<p>Initial poor communication was acknowledged, and assurances given that landholders will be provided with appropriate notice and documentation for the conduct of one-on-one meetings.</p>	<p>The concerns were addressed as part of the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee report: The Management of the Inland Rail project by the Australian Rail Track Corporation and the Commonwealth Government.</p> <p>Advised that the engagement team had been increased, incorporating locally based regional staff.</p> <p>Ongoing monitoring of the consultation, communication, and engagement processes will be undertaken by the CCC.</p>
<p>Community and Social Impacts</p> <p>Concern over implications for the local road network particularly in respect of access to properties, also how accommodation for construction workers and community and social impacts will be addressed particularly during the construction phase.</p>	<p>Request for a presentation on Social Impact issues and how these will be evaluated.</p>	<p>Presentation at the September 2019 meeting on Social Impact Assessment. The CCC members undertook a Social Impact Assessment analysis, responding to various questions which will form part of the Assessment for inclusion in the Environmental Impact Statement. The issues of employment and accommodation remained unresolved but would be addressed in the Environmental Impact Statement with the location of accommodation camps near Narromine, Gilgandra, Baradine and Narrabri under consideration.</p> <p>Advised that a representative sample of the 180 landholders in the Focus Area of Investigation</p>

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		<p>(25 approximately) will be evaluated through the Social Impact Assessment process to identify specific potential impacts in order to develop mitigation measures for inclusion in the Environmental Impact Statement.</p> <p>Concern at the lack of certainty as to where accommodation for the construction workforce will be located and how it will be managed.</p>
<p>Economic and Financial Impacts</p> <p>Concern over the financial and economic impacts to farming enterprises from the proposed development.</p>	<p>Request for a report on the financial implications (positive and negative) of product transfer from the farm gate to the anticipated Inland Rail load out points relative to existing freight movements from the farm gate to current freight hubs.</p> <p>Also, a report was requested on the economic impact of the rail corridor bisecting properties.</p>	<p>A Freight Operations presentation was provided to the May 2019 meetings indicating that the Inland Rail project will facilitate competition and investment in the freight market. The presentation did not fully address how the connection from the farm gate to the Inland Rail will be achieved and what benefit there is at a local level.</p> <p>Ongoing - further information requested.</p>
<p>Land Acquisition</p> <p>Concern and lack of understanding over how the land acquisition process will be implement.</p>	<p>Requested that a presentation be provided by a suitably qualified property specialist regarding the land acquisition process.</p>	<p>A Property Report was presented to the May 2019 meeting detailing the land acquisition processes and the provisions of <i>the Land Acquisition (Just Terms Compensation) Act 1991</i>.</p>
<p>Pilliga Forest Impacts</p> <p>Concern over impacts on the Pilliga Forest and particularly on endangered species and overall biodiversity.</p>	<p>Requested a report on how biodiversity and endangered species will be assessed and managed.</p>	<p>Awaiting biodiversity report and advice on bush fire management.</p>
<p>Environmental Impacts</p> <p>Concern regarding noise impacts</p>	<p>The CCC received regular Environmental Assessment presentations at each meeting as field work, data collection and</p>	<p>Concerns that some locations for sourcing data (particularly noise data) was not representative of the rural localities. Further advice requested on how remote</p>

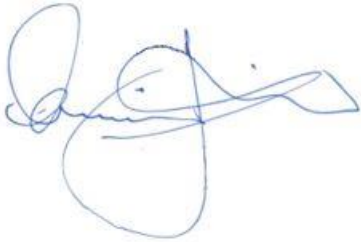
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particularly in more remote rural areas.	analysis continued in providing data to inform preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement and refinement of the Study Area to a Focus Area. Request for details of location of noise loggers.	properties will be considered in the noise assessment. The presentation of Environmental Assessments reports to the CCC will be ongoing until completion of the Environmental Impact Statement. Ongoing review of environmental presentations.
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3. Focus for next 12 months

- Monitoring the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement and the refinement of the Focus Area of Investigation to a Rail Corridor with particular attention to the following matters:
 - Flooding and Hydrology
 - Access and Amenity
 - Consultation and Community Engagement
 - Economic Benefits
 - Community and Social Impacts
 - Land Acquisition Processes
 - Environmental and Biodiversity Issues
 - Pilliga Forest

Signature of Chair:	
Date:	8 April 2022