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Council presents its case to Inland Rail Senate Inquiry

Gladstone Regional Council has provided its submission to the Senate Inquiry into the management of the Inland Rail Project by the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) and the Commonwealth Government.

Council is calling on the ARTC and State and Federal Governments to review and invest in connecting the Inland Rail to the Port of Gladstone.

The connection of the Inland Rail to the Port of Gladstone has the potential to provide a fully integrated, efficient and cost-effective east coast supply chain that can be a gateway to Asian economies.

Gladstone Region Mayor Matt Burnett said the Inland Rail extension to the Port of Gladstone was a strategic priority for Council.

“Currently the Inland Rail Project is designed to go from Melbourne through to Toowoomba and from there it’s proposed the line will go to the Port of Brisbane,” Councillor Burnett said.

“The Port of Brisbane has issues with capacity, costs and efficiencies, which I believe strengthens our case for the line to come to the Port of Gladstone.

“Council supports the proposed Inland Rail extension and have backing from our neighbouring councils as well.

“Our Port has the capacity to grow to more than 300 million tonnes per annum which is more than double the import and export tonnage currently experienced.

“This rail line would open further export opportunities, not only for the Gladstone Region, but for Central Queensland as a whole.

“Linking the Inland Rail to the Port of Gladstone has the potential to unlock long-term regional economic benefits and improve road safety, while reducing land and sea transport congestion in southeast Queensland.”

The Gladstone Region has many natural and economic assets that provide a competitive advantage over other ports including:

- Natural deep-water port which is one of Australia’s largest multi-commodity ports
- Strategic direction in proximity to considerable natural resources
- Existing heavy industry and supporting infrastructure

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- Strong supply chains to support industry and a highly skilled workforce
- Track record of delivering major projects.

Cr Burnett said Council is calling on the Australian Government to finalise and release the study into the extension of the Inland Rail to the Port of Gladstone.

“The Australian Government should work to align with regional councils and other key stakeholders to invest in the Inland Rail extension to the Port of Gladstone to advance the case for this important piece of regional enabling infrastructure,” he said.

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