

**PUBLIC**

## **SUBMISSION IN SUPPORT OF PETITION NO. 24**

### **Passenger Rail Service between Perth and Geraldton**

I, ALBERT TONKS, of 13 Alexander Street, offer the following submission in support of the above petition, which was tabled in the Legislative Council on March 19, 2009 by the Hon. Brian Ellis MLC, Member for the Agricultural Region.

#### ***Submission***

I instigated the petition because I realised that there were many people such as senior citizens, pregnant women, and disabled people who had no option but to travel by bus if they did not have private transport or were unable to drive their vehicles or could not afford the airfare to between Geraldton and Perth – which is currently around \$450.00 return.

I also believed that Geraldton, as a tourist destination, would be more accessible to tourists if a passenger train service existed.

The present situation is that Westrail runs bus services daily – the buses terminate in Perth at the East Perth facility. This in itself is a drawback for people who have to travel to the suburbs in Perth. Once at the East Perth terminal passengers needing to access the suburban train service need to walk to the end of the interstate rail platform and walk over a bridge and on to the suburban train service platform. Here again, this is very difficult for the less ambulatory passengers.

A train from Geraldton to Perth would terminate at the train station on Wellington Street where easy access to other suburban trains is available as well as buses.

The Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics of the Federal Government has predicted that traffic between Perth and Geraldton will double by the year 2030. The Federal Transport Minister said in March last year that transport growth nationwide showed the need to encourage more Australians out of their cars and onto trains.

Additionally, the population of Geraldton and surrounding areas is predicted to swell to 100,000 by 2020 and if this were the case, then a passenger rail service would seem to be a sensible progression.

I believe that the State Government should be making plans to bring a passenger rail service between Perth and Geraldton to fruition within the next few years.

Over 3,500 people have signed the petition and this shows that there is a great need to have a reasonably low cost alternative to the bus service and the air service.

Dear Committee Members I urge you to do all you can to help the people of Geraldton and surrounding areas to 'come in from the dark' and have a train service such as those enjoyed by other communities in Australia.

Signed:           A J Tonks            
Albert Tonks, Ph: 99655789

Dated:           03/04/2009