

Vince Manion
Productivity Commission

Dear Vince

Duaringa Shire was not able to attend the roundtable in Emerald on May 23 however it would like to submit something in relation to Session 4 – local environmental and social impacts.

The coal boom, whilst benefiting the town of Blackwater in terms of employment, population growth etc, also has a dark side to it viz increased noise and dust, visual impact, increased potential for traffic accidents. After the current rail duplication, 55 kilometres of coal trains will be passing by Blackwater every day of the year.

These matters have been discussed with the relevant authorities but it is an uphill battle to get a commitment to resolve the issues.

If the PC inquiry could take note of these concerns it would be very much appreciated.

Perhaps the best way to put Council's position is to provide you with a copy of a resolution that Duaringa Council that put to the Central Queensland Local Government Association in late April this year. The resolution was carried unanimously.

Yours faithfully

D P Carroll
Chief Executive Officer

Duaringa Shire Council
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Motion

That the Central Queensland Local Government Association support those local governments whose communities are affected by air and noise pollution and unsightly railway facilities, to lobby State Government and Queensland Rail for a better deal for their communities.

Background

Rail traffic has grown in parallel with the growth of the coal market and is predicted to increase by another 300% when the current duplication is completed and more mines come on stream.

Unfortunately this growth has not been matched by efforts to ameliorate air and noise pollution or to improve the lifestyle or aesthetics in the communities that are close to coal lines. In fact this growth has come with a substantial detrimental impact in lifestyle for some communities e.g increased air and noise pollution and traffic problems.

Notwithstanding that they collect massive amounts in royalties the State Government neatly avoids involvement by passing the buck to QR who in turn say that they can't afford to spend any money on such matters because they have to make a profit for the State Government.