

Significant milestone for Surat Basin Rail

The Surat Basin Rail Joint Venture (SBRJV) partners made a significant decision at the July 2008 board meeting in Brisbane, adopting an alignment for the proposed railway that will be suitable for both coal and freight traffic.



The decision confirms the State Government's requirements that the line will be operated as an open-access freight line, and not confined exclusively to the transport of coal.

This vital inland rail link represents a major investment in the future of the vast Surat Basin.

SBRJV CEO Graham Dooley said no further studies will be undertaken on an exclusively narrow gauge coal alignment.

The project team will now progress the coal freight alignment option as the preferred option with the potential for a dual-gauge track, through to the end of the current feasibility stage of the project.

Mr Dooley said design work for the alignment and earthworks were based on the railway being constructed as a train line suitable for diesel trains.

Provision will be made in the design for electrification at some time in the future.

"The draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), reporting and consultation activities will be based on this chosen route," he said.

Some small localised changes to the final rail alignment may occur once further studies are completed into the way the line will be operated, and more detailed survey information and geotechnical results become available. This decision on a definite coal freight rail route is a major milestone for the Surat Basin Rail.

Meet the Joint Venture

Australian Transport and Energy Corridor Limited, founded by private investors, has been the sole proponent of the Australian Inland Rail Expressway, which will link Melbourne and Darwin via New South Wales and Queensland.

Industry Funds Management is a fund manager that manages over \$10 billion in assets across a number of specialised private investment products.

Anglo Coal is one of Australia's leading coal producers with extensive coal mining interests and prospects in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria.

Xstrata Coal is the world's largest exporter of thermal coal and the fifth largest producer of hard coking coal. Xstrata Coal Queensland has four large coal mining complexes in the state and is actively pursuing development of the Wandoan project in the Surat Basin.

QR is the dominant rail transport operator in Queensland and one of the largest transport companies in Australia. Provision of rail access and freight haulage services to the Queensland coal industry is a major element of QR's business.



Industry Funds Management



Environmental Impact Statement – our journey

Public comment considered in finalising Terms of Reference

Since our last newsletter, the final Terms of Reference (ToR) for the EIS have been released for the Surat Basin Rail project.

The ToR is the check sheet that enables government and non-government agencies to ensure the EIS has addressed all of the key topics.

The final version of the ToR followed public comment on a draft document, which resulted in a total of 21 submissions.

These included 14 submissions from Advisory Agencies, two from Local Governments and five from members of the public, including one that represented seven local landowners. All submissions were reviewed and considered by the Coordinator-General in finalising the

ToR, which can be viewed online at the Department of Infrastructure and Planning's website at www.dip.qld.gov.au (search Surat Basin Rail).

Objectives of the Environmental Impact Statement

The Surat Basin Rail project team is currently preparing the draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

This document will aim to address and identify potential environmental, social and economic impacts of the project, as well as provide recommendations on how adverse impacts may be mitigated or avoided.

Some of the key topics you can expect to read about in the draft EIS in late 2008 are listed in the table below.

Opportunity for public comment

Similar to the process for commenting on the draft ToR, the draft EIS will be made available via our website or by request in late 2008 for public and agency feedback.

This means you will have the opportunity to provide a written submission to the Coordinator-General in response to the draft EIS.

The community engagement team will be holding a series of activities to help promote awareness and discussion of the draft EIS.

The project team will consider all submissions when developing the final EIS.

Details of the project	<p>The EIS will include comprehensive information on the project, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Proposed construction and operation ○ Possible future expansion ○ Other infrastructure requirements, such as roads, bridges, cables etc. ○ Possible impacts during construction ○ Water supply during construction ○ Social impacts
Co-location opportunities	<p>Opportunities may exist to maximise efficiency and limit social and environmental impacts through the inclusion of other infrastructure in the study area alongside the railway. The project team has met with a number of other project teams in the area to discuss opportunities to work together.</p>
Impact on residents and community	<p>Development of the draft EIS has incorporated a program of landowner and community engagement activities. Feedback, issues and concerns identified through this process are formally reported to the SBRJV and help to inform the EIS and project decisions.</p>
Environmental impacts	<p>Environmental and other investigations for the SBR started in late 2007. The project team has gathered information about local wildlife and vegetation, geology and soils, water quality, and noise and vibration. The draft EIS will address and provide recommendations on these and many other important issues.</p>

SBR on display

Since our last newsletter, SBR has widened its community consultation activities beyond directly affected landowners to include members of the general community.

Our previous edition of the Rail Update reached over 7,500 people within the rail project area, and was followed by community information days at the Theodore CWA Hall and the Wandoan Show.

John Hooper, Mayor of the new Banana Regional Council, and Councillors Maureen Clancy, Nev Ferrier and Vaughan Becker were among the visitors to our community event in Theodore, which attracted landowners and the public from the Banana and Theodore area.

The project team would like to thank the Theodore Rotary Club for catering this event with a delicious sausage sizzle.

At the Wandoan Show, our display was located near the arts and crafts pavilion, and drew a large number of interested show goers, including members of the new Dalby Regional Council.

Potential cornerstone customer Xstrata Coal also had a display featuring the proposed Wandoan Mine nearby.

There was a good flow of information between both displays as the district community gained valuable information on how the different projects would interact.

SBR was proud to be a sponsor of showing announcements throughout the two day event.



Members of the public raised a number of issues ranging from opportunities for contractors and local employment, to the location of construction camps.

Our project team kept a careful record of all feedback and issues raised, which will be considered in developing the draft EIS due to be released later in 2008.

Top: Project team member David Tait explains key features of the project to showgoers at Wandoan.

Above: Surat Basin Rail display in Theodore. Left to right: Cr Vaughan Becker, Cr Maureen Clancy, Cr Nev Ferrier and Mayor John Hooper of the new Banana Regional Council.

Fine tuning for the future

Work is well advanced on the feasibility stage of the Surat Basin Rail, with the project targeting completion of this stage by December 2008, SBRJV CEO Graham Dooley told delegates at the Second Surat Basin Coal Conference in Brisbane on 13 June 2008.

Mr Dooley was one of a number of high profile presenters at the conference, attended by representatives of leading Australian and international coal companies, to discuss new and proposed projects for the region.

Major infrastructure planning, including the rail line, upgrade of the Moura–Gladstone line and the construction of the Wiggins Island Coal Terminal, were regarded as key developments that could potentially open up over four billion tonnes of coal from the Surat Basin.

Mr Dooley said the Queensland Government has granted the SBRJV an Exclusive Mandate to investigate the construction of an investor-funded, rather than State-funded, railway that would present open access to customers, while providing a level playing field on prices and access terms.

“The line will accommodate freight as well as coal, and we’re investigating a possible dual gauge to accommodate interstate trains,” he said.

SBR has prepared a detailed engineering estimate on making the line suitable for standard gauge. This information is now with the State Government.

Mr Dooley said the feasibility study on the rail route, the development of an Environmental Impact Statement, and a cost estimate, were proceeding well.

Assuming bankability and financial close targets were met next year, construction would proceed towards a completion target of early 2012, which would align with the Wandoan Mine project and ahead of the opening of Wiggins Island.

“We are currently talking to potential customers, including all coal mines along the SBR line.

Some mines south of Wandoan are also seeking to ship out via Gladstone, and we are



Above: SBRJV CEO Graham Dooley

working on a proposal to connect them to the SBR,” he said.

Mr Dooley predicted that new jobs, enhanced communities and greater economic activities are the expected outcomes of the SBR project.

“We have worked closely with landowners and Councils in the region to minimise the impact of our footprint by trying to locate the track along existing natural boundaries, fences and roads where possible.

A major focus for SBR is to enhance public safety and improve economic efficiencies of the trains,” he said.

Your Community and Stakeholder Relations Team

Your feedback is important to us.

The Community and Stakeholder Relations Team is available to discuss any questions, issues or concerns that you may have.

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