



STUART GRIMLEY MP

Member for Western Victoria
State Leader of Derryn Hinch's Justice Party

MEDIA RELEASE



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Grimley Seeks Clarity on Murray Basin Rail Project

Member for Western Victoria Stuart Grimley MP has written to the Deputy Prime Minister and Federal Minister for Regional Development (Hon. Michael McCormack) seeking clarity on the Murray Basin Rail Project.

Whilst the Victorian Government has coordinated the rollout of a new business case for the Murray Basin Rail Project, the final report is now sitting with the Deputy Prime Minister.

The decision to write to Mr McCormack comes after Mr Grimley met virtually with Glenelg Shire Council CEO Greg Burgoyne and Mayor Cr Anita Rank to discuss local priorities.

The Council indicated that they weren't properly consulted during the drafting of the new business case, which was particularly concerning given the Glenelg Shire had been the main advocates for the Maroona to Portland freight line service.

Maintaining local roads which are used for the transport of freight continues to be a growing cost for councils all around rural and regional Victoria.

Rolling out new freight rail services around the state is not only an economic imperative, it also dramatically improves the safety of roads for local residents.

During the development of the business case, the Victorian Government has not only refused to consult local stakeholders, but is now refusing to release any part of the updated costings to the public, including to Mr Grimley's office.

Mr Grimley says that councils, farmers and other stakeholders should have been *heavily* involved in this business case through consultation.

There is 'hope' that the business case will be provided and feedback will be able to be provided to the Deputy Prime Minister about why it is vital for the Western region of Victoria.

Quotes Attributable to Stuart Grimley MP:

"The Murray Basin Rail Project business case has been completed by the Victorian Government and should be made public for Victorians to have their say.

It is becoming really frustrating to see a lack of consultation on a number of major projects. Councils, farmers and other stakeholders should have been heavily involved in this business case through consultation.

If two Governments can't work together to get the Murray Basin Rail Project website working, it only supports the argument that the business case needs to be made public for scrutinising.

Whilst State and Federal Ministers continue to kick around this 'political football', rural and regional Victorians continue to miss out on vitally important infrastructure."

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