

## MINUTES

Joint Inner Darling Downs and Southern Darling Downs Community Consultative Committee Meeting



## Minutes

### Joint Inner Darling Downs and Southern Darling Downs Community Consultative Committee Meeting

#### Date / Time

Tuesday, 15 April 2025  
5.00pm – 7.00pm

#### Location

Millmerran Cultural Centre  
47 Walpole Street, Millmerran QLD

#### Chairs

Mr Graham Clapham

#### Minute taker

Mieke Koorts, Stakeholder Engagement Lead

#### Distribution

All attendees

#### Attendees

##### Inner Darling Downs Committee

- Mr Bill Armagnacq (Chair) (online)
- Mr Ken Murphy (online)
- Mr Clinton Weber (online)
- Mr Chris Joseph
- Mr Rob Loch
- Mr Kev Loveday
- Ms Phoebe Mitchell
- Ms Vicki Battaglia
- Mr Brett Kelly
- Ms Kylie Schultz

##### Southern Darling Downs Committee

- Mr Graham Clapham (Chair)
- Ms Maria Oliver
- Mr Jeffrey Chandler
- Mr Andrew McCartney
- Ms Rosalie Millar
- Mr Robert Webb
- Mr Lindsay Krieg (online)
- Mr Robert Barrett

#### Inland Rail

- Mr Michael Farrell  
Regional Director Queensland
- Ms Naomi Tonscheck  
Head of Stakeholder Relations
- Mr Robert Smith  
Area Director B2G
- Andrew Roberts  
Engineering Manager
- Phoebe Moore  
Principal Environmental Advisor
- Wayne Window  
Environmental Manager Approvals
- Mr Zeb Dawson  
Queensland Manager of Stakeholder & Communications
- Mr David Thompson  
Project Manager
- Clare Siddins  
Stakeholder Engagement Lead

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Committee Meeting



- Mieke Koorts  
Stakeholder Engagement Lead
- Kirsten Elliott  
Stakeholder Engagement Officer

### Guests

- Shaun Ferris  
Assistant Coordinator-General  
Industry and Infrastructure Development  
Office of the Coordinator-General
- Kirsty Elliott  
Executive Director, Infrastructure & Projects  
Industry and Infrastructure Development  
Office of the Coordinator-General
- Karen Oakley  
Director  
Industry and Infrastructure Development  
Office of the Coordinator-General

### Apologies

- Mr Gary Garland
- Ms Georgina Krieg
- Mr Rick McDougall
- Mr Justin Saunders
- Mr Paul Hanlon
- Mr Lance McManus
- Ms Myf Rigby

## Agenda items & Minutes

NO.	MINUTES
1.	<p>Welcome and introductions.</p> <p><i>Naomi Tonscheck, Head of Stakeholder Relations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Naomi Tonscheck opened with an Acknowledgement of Country.</li> <li>Inland Rail acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land in which we meet and pays respects to the elders past and present.</li> <li>New attendees introduced, including representatives from the Office of the Coordinator-General and Inland Rail: Sean Ferris, Kristy Elliott, Karen Oakley, David Thompson, Zeb Dawson.</li> <li>Zeb Dawson introduced as the new Inland Rail Queensland Manager of Communication and Stakeholder Relations and will present on behalf of Inland Rail.</li> <li>Graham Clapham acknowledged his fellow Chair, Bill Armagnacq, and noted his presence online.</li> <li>Graham reminded the committee to prioritise process-related discussions, especially due to the presence of Coordinator-General representatives.</li> <li>No conflicts of interest declared.</li> </ul>
2.	<p>Actions arising from previous meeting</p> <p><i>Robert Smith, Area Director B2G</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Robert Smith gave an update about actions from the previous meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. What are the 6 recommendations yet to be delivered from the Independent Review?</b> <i>Work is ongoing to finalise recommendations 6, 8, 9, 13, 18, and 19. There may be ongoing actions required to fully implement these recommendations that will transition this work into a business-as-usual status.</i></li> <li><b>2. Confirm the Gilgai Road Crossing measurements against suitability for agricultural machinery usage.</b> <i>The current design for Gilgai Lane is a rail bridge over the road, with a span of approximately 23 metres wide and a clearance of approximately 6.1 metres to the existing surface level.</i></li> <li><b>3. Provide information on the calculations for 40 trains movements in 24 hours.</b> <i>The Inland Rail Business Case projected future freight demand along Australia's eastern seaboard and estimated the number of trains required to meet this demand. Using computer models that factor in train characteristics, track alignment, and freight volume, optimal locations for crossing loops on the single-track railway were identified to allow trains to pass each other efficiently. These model results are validated against ARTC's operational experience. This methodology was applied to the full Inland Rail route, including the G2H section, where crossing loop locations were confirmed to support the expected daily train volumes.</i></li> <li><b>4. Will the ETV results be considered in the cost review due to impacts on design.</b> <i>The ETV results will be used to inform the design development, which will in turn influence any updates to cost estimates in the future.</i></li> <li><b>5. Confirm the altered kilometres due to the altered endpoints (Beveridge and Ebenezer).</b> <i>The original 2015 Inland Rail Business Case proposed a 1,700 km route. However, when Beveridge (Victoria) and Ebenezer (Queensland) were chosen as the endpoints for double-stacked freight operations, two sections—Tottenham to Beveridge and Kagaru to Acacia Ridge/Bromelton—totalling about 92 km, were removed from the double-stack scope. While further minor route adjustments may affect the overall length, removing these sections has not affected the project's ability to meet its 24-hour transit time goal.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<p><b>6. Submit a request to the OCG for extended review timeframes for the public notification stage on the B2G revised draft EIS.</b></p> <p><i>IDD &amp; SDD Chairs to submit this request.</i></p>
3.	<p>Program update <i>Zeb Dawson, Qld Manager Communications &amp; Stakeholder Relations</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zeb introduced his team and provided insights from a recent site visit by CEO, Nick Miller and Executive Director, David Fogwill.</li> <li>• Zeb shared his background in agronomy and resource sectors; expressed intent to learn from community experiences.</li> <li>• Zeb emphasised importance of understanding community concerns, particularly regarding the Condamine floodplain crossing.</li> <li>• An update was provided on the Inland Rail Program in Victoria and New South Wales.</li> <li>• Naomi clarified train movements are occurring in the southern section; however, construction is aligned with maintenance windows.</li> </ul> <p><b>Questions</b> Did the CEO meet landowners along the alignment?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zeb noted that he did not meet landowners along the alignment. The intent was to take the CEO to key locations and discuss some of the issues with our subject matter experts e.g., the Condamine floodplain.</li> <li>• Naomi supplied that having been engaged on Border to Gowrie for many years, she was able to represent the concerns of landowners to the CEO during the site visits. Naomi expressed that she called landowners during the site visits to let them know that they would be stopping near to their properties, and to talk to the issues that they had raised over the last few years including flooding and erosion.</li> </ul>
4.	<p>Field Investigations activities <i>Dave Thompson, Project Manager B2G</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dave Thompson gave an update about the embankment trial planned for the B2G project in late 2025.</li> <li>• It was noted the embankment trial will be located within the Condamine floodplain area (TBD) and is being conducted to assess material performance under various soil stabilisation methodologies.</li> <li>• The trial is specifically focused on evaluating the behaviour of non-conforming earthworks material commonly found in the Condamine floodplain, considering the black soil present in the area.</li> <li>• The trial will consist of up to four embankments, with the preliminary design outlining two embankments that will each be approximately three metres high and 200 metres long.</li> <li>• It will be constructed using a variety of materials and methods to assess their long-term performance.</li> <li>• To evaluate performance, around 180 moisture monitors will be installed at various levels within the embankment to detect where material movement occurs, and a sprinkler system will simulate three years of wet weather conditions.</li> <li>• It was noted that the outcomes of this trial will not directly influence and were not required for the B2G revised draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). As a temporary activity, a separate Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is being conducted for the trial itself. The EIA is expected to be completed by the end of Q3 2025.</li> <li>• This assessment will be subject to an independent third-party review to provide assurance on the quality of assessment and objectivity in decision making.</li> <li>• During the meeting, several members expressed concerns regarding the execution of the trial, particularly in reference to past unsuccessful experiences with lime stabilisation. Also raised concerns with use of lime, that it could move off site and impact waterways.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasis was placed on the importance of engaging the community throughout the process and ensuring technical transparency.</li> <li>• The committee strongly highlighted the need for continued and open communication with the community as the trial progresses to build trust and keep stakeholders informed.</li> <li>• It was noted that early works, such as the trial, do not mean approval has been given for major construction of the B2G project.</li> <li>• The exact location of the trial is still being determined.</li> </ul> <p><b>Questions</b></p> <p>If this trial is being done outside of the revised draft EIS, how can we comment on it if we're not across the results and other detail?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was clarified that the current material performance trial is not part of the EIS process.</li> <li>• The EIA will identify risks relating to the trial and mitigations. The EIA will then condition the works being conducted as part of the trial</li> <li>• The trial is a separate investigation to the EIS, requiring its own approvals before any construction can proceed.</li> <li>• The purpose of the trial is to inform future phases of design development by testing how onsite materials perform in the project environment.</li> <li>• It was noted that the trial is not guaranteed to be successful but is a critical step in exploring viable construction options.</li> <li>• The project team acknowledged community concerns and committed to providing ongoing updates as the trial progresses.</li> <li>• The CCC members raised whether a site visit to see the trial site could be arranged. This was taken on notice.</li> </ul>
5.	<p>NSW/Qld Border to Gowrie revised draft EIS</p> <p><i>Robert Smith, Area Director B2G</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rob Smith reported that the B2G revised draft EIS has been reviewed by the Office of the Coordinator-General and is set to progress to public consultation.</li> <li>• Rob highlighted the availability of updated EIS documents and the introduction of an online flood portal to assist in reviewing hydrology chapters.</li> <li>• It was noted Clare will provide further details on community engagement and support available during the consultation period.</li> </ul> <p><b>Questions</b></p> <p>No questions.</p>
6.	<p>Revised draft EIS</p> <p><i>Shaun Ferris, Assistant Coordinator-General</i></p> <p>Industry and Infrastructure Development Office of the Coordinator-General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shaun Ferris provided an overview and background of the previous draft EIS.</li> <li>• It was noted additional work has been undertaken to ensure information requested for the draft EIS have been addressed and that public comments from the previous consultation have been adequately considered.</li> <li>• The Coordinator-General (CG) has determined that the revised draft EIS is now adequate for public notification.</li> <li>• It was clarified that this is not the final EIS, but a draft intended to inform the public of the project's likely impacts and proposed management measures for both construction and operation phases.</li> <li>• It was noted public notification will commence on 10 May 2025, with the revised draft EIS open for submissions over an eight-week period.</li> <li>• Notification will be promoted via public notices in national, state, and local publications.</li> <li>• As with the previous round, submissions will be welcomed through multiple channels: the official "Have Your Say" website, email submissions and postal submissions</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Efforts are being made to ensure meaningful public engagement, beyond simply providing access to the revised draft EIS via website, USB, or hard copy.</li> <li>• Inland Rail will actively engage with impacted landholders and community members to increase awareness and understanding of the revised draft EIS and its changes.</li> <li>• It was highlighted the EIS process is iterative, not passive.</li> <li>• Following submission of public comments Inland Rail will work with the CG to ensure all issues are properly considered and addressed. Revisions may be made to management strategies, plans, assessments, or project design as needed.</li> <li>• Once all submissions and changes are reviewed to the CG's satisfaction, the EIS will be deemed final.</li> <li>• This will trigger the development of the Coordinator-General's Evaluation Report, which will confirm the final project description, assess and document the project impacts and outline any conditions for the construction and operational phases.</li> </ul> <p><b>Questions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns were expressed by members that this timeframe is insufficient for the community to adequately review and comment on the complex issues presented in the revised draft EIS.</li> <li>• These concerns were acknowledged, and it was noted that extensions to the consultation period could be considered.</li> <li>• It was stressed that local knowledge should not be overlooked in project planning, as residents are familiar with the impacts of weather events and other local conditions.</li> <li>• This view was supported, noting that true understanding comes from engaging with local communities and governments.</li> </ul>
7.	<p>Border to Gowrie revised draft EIS consultation program <i>Clare Siddins, Stakeholder Engagement Lead</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clare Siddins presented the engagement strategy for the consultation period.</li> <li>• It was noted the strategy will roll out in three stages to ensure stakeholders are informed about the revised draft EIS set to be published on 10 May: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Pre-notification phase – Stakeholders will be informed ahead of the official consultation period, with a focus on raising awareness of the anticipated EIS release date (10 May).</li> <li>○ Start of the consultation period – Direct communications and engagement activities will be launched to ensure stakeholders are aware the consultation is live.</li> <li>○ Approaching the close of the consultation period – Final reminders and updates will be issued to encourage last-minute submissions and queries.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The communication and engagement will utilise multiple channels, including social media, e-newsletters, and direct outreach to over 10,000 households.</li> <li>• Key opportunities for engagement include community information sessions and one-on-one meetings with subject matter experts.</li> <li>• Andrew Roberts provided an overview of the fly-through video for the B2G project, highlighting improvements made since the draft EIS.</li> <li>• Phoebe Mitchell asked if there were any issues relating to the NSW/QLD Border crossing. IRPL clarified that the NS2B EIS has been approved and noted that the B2G Project begins at the midpoint of the Macintyre River.</li> <li>• The discussion also included details about road-rail interfaces and the complexities of design choices, notably the Warrego Highway.</li> </ul> <p><b>Questions</b></p> <p>Maria Oliver asked there will be posters available to put up around towns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirmed that they will be available.</li> </ul>

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	<p>A query was raised regarding the availability of the full EIS document at public locations, similar to the previous consultation round.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It was confirmed that printed chapters of the revised draft EIS will be available at the Inland Rail Toowoomba and Goondiwindi office.</li><li>• The Millmerran library was suggested as a possible additional location. However, it was noted that libraries were generally reluctant to hold the entire document due to its size and space constraints.</li><li>• It was noted each CCC member will receive two full copies of the revised draft EIS on USB sticks at the start of the consultation period.</li><li>• USB copies of the full revised draft EIS are also available upon request to any community member.</li><li>• The revised draft EIS will be preloaded onto iPads available at static display sites, allowing visitors to search and view the document electronically.</li><li>• It was suggested that council service centres may be more suitable than libraries for housing the revised draft EIS, particularly given their accessibility and community focus.</li><li>• A participant noted that one council has unused council chambers, which could serve as an ideal, quiet location for the public to review the revised draft EIS in person.</li></ul> <p>A request was made to add the Oakey postcode (4401) to our distribution list.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Confirmed the postcode will be added.</li></ul>
	<p>General Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Question was raised regarding the next CCC meeting.</li><li>• Graham noted the Chairs will discuss this with Inland Rail and get back to the members.</li></ul>
8.	<p>Conclusion and confirmation of actions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Rob Smith will follow up with the Australian Rail Track Corporation regarding the existence of tunnels and gradients equivalent to those being modelled for the G2H Project</li><li>2. Graham Clapham will submit a request to the Office of the Coordinator-General for extended review time for the public consultation stage on the B2G revised draft EIS.</li><li>3. Naomi Tonscheck will ensure that briefing or background papers are sent to committee members in advance of future meetings.</li><li>4. Dave Thompson will provide updates on the embankment trial and its environmental impact assessment to the community as it progresses.</li><li>5. Rob will investigate the opportunity to discuss the Inland Rail network capacity and modelled train numbers</li><li>6. Clare Siddins will send out poster materials to Maria Oliver for distribution around town.</li></ol>

### Next meeting

To be confirmed.