



22<sup>nd</sup> July, 2011

The Hon Anthony Albanese  
Minister for Infrastructure and Transport  
PO Box 6022  
Parliament House  
Canberra, ACT 2600

Dear Mr Albanese,

**Concerns Regarding Sydney to Melbourne Rail Corridor – ARTC**

I am writing to raise our ongoing concerns into the condition and related safety risks associated with the Sydney to Melbourne rail corridor (and in particular the southern section of this corridor) that we believe is a direct consequence of the ARTC re-sleeper program.

The poor condition of the corridor has been highlighted on numerous occasions, including on the ABC program the 7.30 Report, and in the Victorian Parliament. There have also been a number of representations made on behalf of the Rail Tram and Bus Union and our members. Despite these efforts, the ARTC has failed to address the main concerns or to rectify its practices. The management of the concrete re-sleeper program has failed to rectify mud holes and sinking in parts of the corridor which pose major risks to trains using the track.

The mud holes are still very endemic on parts of the Sydney to Melbourne rail corridor. At all the mud hole locations there are varying degrees of rail top faults with some line and twist faults which are causing the locomotives and cars bogies to bounce and rattle constantly, the affects including excessive lateral and vertical movement are being augmented to the drivers cab and cars and are causing major safety concerns for the drivers and crew.

We believe that the safety and well being of our members, passengers and locomotives has been seriously placed in jeopardy over the past several years as a result of the ARTC's re-sleeper program. On behalf of our members directly affected by these risks, we are calling on you to directly intervene in the matter, and to establish a genuinely independent inquiry into these and related concerns.

The ARTC need to be held accountable for their maintenance and management of the Melbourne to Sydney Rail corridor, and the risks that these practices potentially pose to those using the rail corridor. Obviously a self-regulatory approach has not worked in this situation, and in the absence of direct and urgent intervention, train drivers may be forced to refuse to operate this rail corridor, exercising their own responsibilities under the relevant Health and Safety legislation.

Yours Sincerely,

*Per* Robert Hayden  
Divisional Secretary

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