

This submission is from Ronald James McLean from Newdegate WA and is about grain farmers' requirements from a national freight supply chain now and into the future.

I am a farmer who produces canola, wheat, barley, lupins which is for domestic and/or export markets and also sheep for wool and meat for the domestic and/or export market. Getting the supply chain right is important to my business because freight costs are about 19% of my total costs each year.

What is moving where, why and how?

Road to CBH local silo.

How well does your supply chain perform?

Rail from siding to Albany WA 370 klms has the restriction of not being able to run at full Capacity. The reason being, there is no passing site for trains halfway and this causes a much lower delivery to Albany per 24 hours

What are the critical "first and last mile" issues you face in getting your grain to market?

The main problem in the last miles to the farm, is the heavy trucks have to travel on roads which are not gazetted for trucks used now days of cartage to local silos

What changes would you like to see to make your supply chain work better?

The biggest problem which I see in the future is that the railway system is controlled by overseas companies and it is very likely that they will get control of ports also in the near future enabling them to make huge profits out of farmers.

Competitiveness in the Australian freight sector

In your view, is Australia's freight system internationally competitive? What are the key indicators which tell us this?

No it is not competitive when you consider that the cost of cartage of grain in Western Australia by rail is 2.3 times more for the same distance in the Canadian system.

How important is freight movement to your business' competitiveness?

Very important

Are regulatory factors affecting productivity for your business?

Yes the are: restrictions on machinery travelling along roads to from one farm to another are out of date and have not kept up with modern farming practices urgently needs modifying.

Please provide any other views about the problems you face, or expect in the future to face, moving your grain through Australian land or sea ports?

Closure of 725 kilms of railway line right in the middle of the wheat growing area of W.A. has caused greater costs of getting grain to port as carting grain by rail is much cheaper by rail than road which is happening within the area where railway lines have been closed. This is also causing big increases in shire rates, for the upkeep of roads which run in those areas and of course it is mainly farmers who pay rates in those areas.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Signed: Ronald James McLean

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