

## **Questions for the Transport Minister and Planning Minister from Footscray residents and traders affected by the RRL project.**

*Compiled: 22<sup>nd</sup> April, 2011*

It is important to reiterate here that the FFRR group has never opposed the RRL project. Our people are generally strong supporters of further rail development. We believe that it is entirely possible to have better train services and thriving, healthy communities near railway corridors, and we hope to see the RRL project implemented as an example of best practice in this respect. We ask simply that those impacted negatively by the project be treated fairly and respectfully, and that the future health and liveability of Footscray not be sacrificed on account of poor project planning and implementation.

### **Questions:**

1. When will the pending operational noise and vibration report be completed, and will this report be made available to affected residents and traders?
2. Will the government commit to making public all documents relating to the health and environmental impacts of the RRL project, including the original EPA report and noise sampling data?
3. Does the government intend to commission an RRL air-quality impacts report?
4. What parameters, requirements, specifications or guidelines have been provided to tendering firms regarding operational noise, vibration and air quality standards for each work package?
5. South Australia and Tasmania have set noise limits of no more than 60 dB LAeq for rail operations on existing train lines and less for new lines. NSW and Queensland are similar. When Australian taxpayers fund projects in those states, residents there receive noise protection, but when 3.2 billion dollars of Federal Government money is spent in Victoria on the RRL project, Footscray residents are slated to receive no such protections. Does the State Government believe it is reasonable for Footscray residents and businesses to have the same rights as our interstate counterparts, and what levels of rail noise, vibration and air pollution does the government consider acceptable for our community?
6. Given the recently announced project completion delay of two years (2016), when will work commence in the Footscray corridor sections?
7. A number of residents have expressed their wish to remain in their homes after the August vacancy deadline, in the event that project implementation along the Middle Footscray corridor is delayed for any length of time. Residents and traders facing compulsory acquisition have been given 31st August as the vacancy date and DoT continues to advise that there is no change to this date. Has DoT been advised of the Minister's support for residents to stay on in the event of project delay?
8. What is the current timetable for the commencement of work on the Footscray sections (best-estimate or otherwise), and at what point will the project actually need use of acquired properties? If this information is not yet ascertained, when will this information be

provided?

9. Have all of the remaining 'offer of purchase' residents received their offer from the department? These bulk of these offers appear to have been frozen along with commercial property acquisitions. These residents are now being unreasonably squeezed for time, given the Aug 31st vacancy requirement.
10. Does the government intend to release details of the RRL review process and findings?
11. What information emerged from the RRL review to turn around, in such a short space of time, a project described by the minister as having a 'back of the envelope' plan, lacking in substance and quality? What faith can we have that this very short review was any more thorough than all of the other RRL processes to date?
12. The Minister for Transport undertook, at a meeting with an FFRR delegation on Feb 9th, to keep the group informed of developments regarding the shape and timing of the RRL review. No information was forthcoming until a subset of affected residents received calls from RRL representatives, late-evening before the Minister's announcement appeared in the media, advising merely that, "The review has been completed, the Minister has given the go-ahead for the project and the media will carry the story tomorrow". Is the Minister aware that proper information was not provided to affected residents and traders as promised?
13. Will the government consider commissioning modelling for the number of people projected to live within 500 meters of the Footscray rail corridors over the next decade, and the consequent social and economic impact of future rail development on these communities?
14. Individuals and communities affected by the RRL project continue to find it difficult to obtain timely and accurate information regarding the project and its impacts. From the beginning, this project has lacked a single, authoritative source of reliable information. In response to our questions the RRL team direct us to the Transport Minister's office, the Transport Minister points us to the Planning Minister's office and our questions remain largely unanswered. Will the government commit to providing a single source of authoritative, accurate and timely information to those affected by the project?

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