



Australian Government

Department of Infrastructure and Transport

Reference: 02237-2011

Ms Marika Norton
Coroners Registrar
Coroners Court of Victoria
Level 1
436 Lonsdale Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000



Dear Ms Norton

Thank you for your letter dated 6th April 2011 to the Hon Robert McClelland MP, Attorney-General about the Investigation into the Wingeel Plains Fire by the Coroners Court of Victoria and the inquest finding (court reference 4668/2005). As the matters raised fall within the portfolio responsibility of the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport your letter has been forwarded to the Hon Anthony Albanese MP for consideration. The Minister has asked me to reply on his behalf.

Recommendation 3, which seeks a federal requirement for the withdrawal of metal brake blocks from all freight wagon air braking systems, is not a matter regulated by the Commonwealth government. Rail safety is predominantly regulated by the states, with a National Rail Safety Regulator commencing in 2013. This matter may best be addressed by the industry body the Rail Industry Safety and Standards Board (RISSB) as part of its standards development process. RISSB is jointly funded in the development of standards, rules and guidelines by industry and both the Commonwealth and the states. RISSB's Rolling Stock Standing Committee is currently working on the braking standard and the fire safety standard is one of the new standards proposed for commencement in 2011-12.

Ms Kym McLaughlin is the Manager, Rolling Stock at RISSB and the Chairperson of the RISSB Rolling Stock work group. She has indicated that she would be pleased to accept the information in the Coroner's Inquest Findings as part of evidence and circulation in relation to both standards. Ms McLaughlin may be contacted by email at kmclaughlin@rissb.com.au and by telephone on (07) 3235 2415. I have forwarded a copy of this correspondence to Ms McLaughlin.

Thank you for raising this matter.

Yours sincerely

Richard Wood
General Manager
Rail and Intermodal
Nation Building - Infrastructure Investment

8 June 2011