



Department of Transport

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Our Ref: DOC/11/172830

Mr Peter White
Coroner
Coroners Court of Victoria
Level 1, 436 Lonsdale Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000



Dear Coroner

CORONER'S RECOMMENDATION INTO THE MATTER OF THE FINDING INTO FIRE WITH INQUEST – FIRE AT HAMILTON HWY, WINGEEL PLAINS, VICTORIA

Thank you for forwarding your findings following the inquest into the fire at Hamilton Highway, Wingeel Plains, Victoria (**Report**).

The Department of Transport has considered the Report and, in particular, your comments and recommendations in relation to the use of air braking and metal brake blocks. The Department wishes to advise you of the following actions and developments that have occurred since the Wingeel fires.

In relation to the recommendation that metal brake blocks be withdrawn from all freight wagon air braking systems in Victoria and throughout the Commonwealth, I advise that Pacific National, SCT Logistics and El Zorro (major freight operators in Victoria) already use composite brake blocks on all of their freight wagons. Cast iron brake blocks are only used by these companies to operate locomotives and to scrub treads.

The Department proposes to consult with the National Transport Commission to raise the issue of the withdrawal of metal brake blocks throughout the Commonwealth.

I trust that this information satisfies the request for a response to your recommendations, in accordance with the *Coroners Act 2008* (Vic). If you have any further queries regarding this matter, please contact Annette Wiltshire on (03) 9095 4018 or via email at Annette.Wiltshire@transport.vic.gov.au.

Yours sincerely

James Lavery
Executive Director, DOT Legal
General Counsel

15/8/11