

**From:** Mr Geoff Page [geoffpage1@bigpond.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, 19 June 2006 2:17 PM  
**To:** TasFreight (Ex Email)  
**Subject:** Productivity commissioner

8<sup>th</sup> June 2006

Mr. Mike Woods  
Productivity Commission  
P.O. Box 80  
Belconnen ACT  
2616

Dear Mike,

Thank you for your frank and informative discussion held at the Tamar Yacht Club in Launceston with members of the Tasmanian Transport Association. I would like in the following pages to make some points on how I see the provision of a freight subsidy to assist Tasmania in the shipment of livestock on Bass Strait.

My company is Page Transport, a family owned business, which pioneered the shipment of livestock on Bass Strait as a roll-on roll-off service in 1963. We currently ship in the region of 3500 Teu's of cattle, sheep, pigs, goats and many other varieties of farm animals as required on both northbound and southbound as well as King Island routes.

I am sure that many submissions on the economic impact of the subsidy will pass your desk, but I will only focus on what I know to be the specific transport issues involving the shipment of livestock and the disadvantages of shipping as against road transport.

1. The provision of shipping equipment is far more scrutinized and must be kept to a standard for shipping far exceeding the requirements for land based transport, thus adding to the intermodal costs for each shipment. Estimated to be around \$50 per trip.
2. The provision of trailers for shipping allows each unit to be used only up to 3 times per fortnight at the busy times of the year, none at seasonally quiet times of the year, due to the turnaround and regularity of shipping services and time taken for the washout of every trailer/container after every movement. e.g. \$70,000 capital cost for trailer carries 50 loads per year in Bass Strait trade, whereas land based trailer could complete at least 2 of the same distance trips per day say 500 trips per year thus incurring ten times less a capital cost allowance.
3. The extra wear and tear of trailers on Bass Strait service is noticeable but hard to put a cost differential on paper.
4. The extra handling costs of livestock on Bass Strait having to be fed and watered prior to and following a shipping movement, and the event of inclement weather not suitable for shipping livestock due to animal welfare requirements is substantial, given our company's investment in depots at Tullamarine Victoria and Carrick Tasmania, a similar distance land movement in Victoria would not have these requirements.
5. The extra provision of Prime mover trucks needed to be at docks immediately the trailers/containers come off the ship to move them as quickly as possible from the wharf means that the trailer load on the ship is utilising one truck per load per day, whereas a land transport operation can utilise the Prime mover to take on several tasks not waiting for a ship to dock or leave at an early afternoon departure.
6. The evidence of all the prior points can be substantiated by one piece of evidence provided in an attachment to this paper, that of our main client Greenham Tasmania, one account is for

land transport within Tasmania over a distance of around 410 kms, the other is for cattle delivered from Northern Tasmania to Tongala Victoria a distance of 310 kms, the difference in price highlights my argument that Bass Strait is far more expensive.

Thanks again Mike, and I hope you can isolate the argument for livestock shipments as a case in point when it comes to shipping on Bass Strait.

Yours truly,

Geoff Page