

**CALL FOR A ROYAL COMMISSION INTO THE  
PLANNING AND DELIVERY OF TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE  
IN NEW SOUTH WALES.**

**To the Premier of NSW,**

We:

- [name of organisation]
- e.g. "the members and supporters of Community Action For Windsor Bridge"
- etc...

call for a Royal Commission into the planning and delivery of transport infrastructure in New South Wales; this independent inquiry to be given inquisitorial powers and responsibility for:-

**1) Making recommendations with regard to:**

- i. Whether Transport planning policies are supporting NSW economically, environmentally and socially, including the planning and delivery of public transport;
- ii. The influence of the private sector on transport planning decisions and the privatisation of public roads;
- iii. The impact of State Significant Infrastructure legislation in relation to heritage and the environment;
- iv. The use of compulsory acquisition orders, with particular reference to changes made to the relevant legislation in 2016;
- v. The probity risks associated with both planning and delivery of major transport infrastructure projects being managed through a single agency;
- vi. Budget and Treasury policies and processes for Capital funding of transport infrastructure projects and agency compliance with those policies and processes;
- vii. Value for money achieved by transport projects in NSW, in comparison with relevant international standards;
- viii. Agencies most at risk of cost overruns and contract variations.

**2) Exploring and if necessary, making recommendations on:**

- Other relevant issues, which may arise in the course of the Inquiry.

**GENERAL CONDITIONS**

It is contended the very broad coercive powers of a Royal Commissioner may be required to defeat protective systems that may shield public officials from conventional investigation. The Inquiry therefore to have coercive statutory powers: the Warrant will grant immense investigatory powers, including summoning witnesses under oath, offering of indemnities, seizing of documents and other evidence (including those normally protected, such as classified information), holding hearings *in camera* if necessary, and if necessary, compelling all government officials to aid in the execution of the Commission.

Inquiry recommendations to be made public, with implementation monitoring similar to that of Victoria, where statutory implementation monitors report publicly on the government's implementation of Royal Commission recommendations; increasing accountability and, ultimately, the value derived from the Inquiry.

It is anticipated this inquiry will attract significant media and public attention and it is accordingly requested all public hearings be live-streamed and transcripts published.

**NEED FOR A ROYAL COMMISSION**

Throughout the greater Sydney region and across NSW there are communities actively protesting against current transport infrastructure projects. There is considerable disquiet in

the community regarding transport infrastructure expenditure, the use of certain legislation to the disadvantage of local communities and individuals, with no perceptible statewide strategic advantage. In fact in some cases projects are compounding existing transport problems.

The following section catalogues concerns specific to individual projects.

*[Summaries of the concerns for each group signing this Call listed below]*

**e g Windsor Bridge Replacement**

- The Government's plans will not deliver what has been promised.
- Decisions are made and approvals granted in advance of required documentation.
- There will be irreversible damage to precious colonial artefacts and extremely significant heritage landscapes.
- The cost of the project has gone from \$25m to at least \$136m and evidence suggests this figure will continue to rise.
- Financial and procurement practices do not appear to be compliant with published government policy.
- There is a culture of secrecy.
- Community consultation has been a sham.
- The community has been forced to defend itself against an inappropriate development sponsored by its own government.
- Increasingly draconian responses to opposition and protest against the project are observable.
- Significant business disruption and loss of income is anticipated during construction.

Further concerns include:

- Sydney light rail sub-contractor Acciona is seeking additional \$1.1 billion
- Queensland-based VAC Group is seeking more than \$4 million - plus damages - from the NSW Government
- CPB Contractors (previously Leightons) is seeking an extra \$1 billion for "variations" in building the second stage of WestConnex due to planning approval delays.

Transport for NSW and agencies such as the RMS are causing destruction that can never be repaired, compromising current and future economic development through poorly designed and unnecessarily expensive transport solutions that fail to meet even the most basic community expectations of a responsible government.

The current system not only fails to deliver technically competent infrastructure designs, it fails to aspire to excellence in design, innovation, vision or a genuine balancing of community ambitions. Its failures come at a financial cost that is unsustainable.

The proposed inquisitorial inquiry is in response to a growing crisis of confidence in decision-making related to these very large public investments, and in order to restore government legitimacy and public trust.

*Signed by:*

Harry Terry (on behalf of the members and supporters of Community Action For Windsor Bridge)

X (on behalf of the members of X)

X (on behalf of the members of X) etc,etc...