



### **Reinstatement of Bell Bay Rail Freight Service**

Freight forwarders and industry in Tasmania who are calling for the reinstatement of the Bell Bay rail freight service were advised that they needed to commit to the service and provide sufficient and consistent volume to make it financially viable at a forum conducted in Launceston yesterday by the Tasmanian Freight Logistics Council.

Over forty representatives from TasRail, TasPorts, Tasmanian Government, unions and stakeholders attended the forum in Launceston yesterday to determine what it would take to reinstate the Bell Bay rail freight service.

Rail is an integral part of the supply-chain in Tasmania and it is essential that a commercially and operationally viable rail service be maintained in Tasmania, including the link to Bell Bay – which was suspended by TasRail in January 2010 following the transfer of the ANL shipping service from Bell Bay to Burnie.

The forum was addressed by representatives from both TasRail and TasPorts and was advised that significant investment was required to upgrade the rail service to overcome safety issues at the port. In addition substantial investment in both below rail and rolling stock assets is required to enable TasRail to provide a regular and reliable service to Bell Bay.

Until the service was suspended in January 2010, TasRail used to provide a service from Hobart to Bell Bay five times a week, with 75% of the volume being zinc and paper (all of which is now being shipped from Burnie.)

The Council's CEO, Rob McGuire, was pleased with the attendance at the Forum and the positive comments received from the stakeholders present. "With a likely doubling of the freight task in Tasmania over the next twenty years, it is essential that as much of that freight as possible be carried by rail and not on the State's highways which already carry far too many truck movements on them" said McGuire.

"The Tasmanian Freight Logistics Council has agreed to work with TasRail to identify if there are sufficient volumes of freight that could be taken on the Bell Bay line and to seek a commitment from the freight forwarders and industry involved to move their freight by rail. If that happens, then hopefully the Bell Bay rail freight service could be reinstated in the future" said McGuire.