Dear Sis / Madam

I received a letter from Mrs Roma Britnell M.P. Member for South West Coast to make a submission to the Parliament Inquiry into Vic Roads Management of Country Roads

Please find attached a copy of the letter I replied to her I have also sent a copy of my letter to Mr. James Purcell M.P

I thing Vic Roads performance in maintaining country roads is nothing short of appalling and something needs to be done to fix our shocking roads.

Mr W.A. Hicks
Dear Mrs Britnell,

Thank you for your letter in regard of the condition of our roads in Victoria.

Firstly, I agree that the road network is in poor condition and it is in a need of a lot repair, but the problem is there hasn’t been enough money spent on the road network for more than 15 years in that time it has slowly got worse to where it is today.

The southwest of the state is the most productive agricultural area of the state and is the second most productive area in the nation.

So how are the governments going to fix it when there is not enough money to the job, I believe in the user pays system of raising the money I would support a rise in the tax on fuel of 10 cents a litre on fuel for cars and 15 cents a litre for heavy vehicles there would be a big song and dance about it in the press and media but they are the ones that continue to press the issue, if the governments did this and spent the extra money on the road network it might get fixed in time, the other problem that governments have is the fact that electric cars are on the road now so how are they going to get any money out of them other than putting a high registration fee on them.

I was recently in Canada and like Australia most of their population live along the southern border their roads are fantastic part of the reason for this is a lot of their long-haul freight is moved by train they don’t have extra large trucks on the road and this is part of the problem we have in Australia there is simply too many trucks on the roads, that were never built in the first place to carry them and now we have the mess that we now have.

As for your comments about the current Government all Governments are city-centric Liberals included there is no votes in the country that count as far as city based politicians are concerned the biggest problem we have in the South West is that Labor will never spend much money down here and the Liberals don’t have to.

All so you mention about Vic Roads I believe Vic Roads have become top heavy in their administration and they don’t have enough skilled people at the coal face (I mean out on the job) supervising the work that is being done and a lot of the work that is being done is for a price and not for quality, so the roads will last longer a good example of this is the Princess Highway between Geelong and Winchelsea there is already patches on the road and it is a new road.

You all so mention about whether Vic Roads should be split into City and Country departments I don’t think this is a good idea if it was to be split it should only be a City, with the responsibility of licencing, registrations, and road rules, if it was to be split the local councils and shires would do a better job than a country Vic Roads.

Finally, I think the whole road network in Victoria is a mess at the moment Melbourne needs another river crossing from the west it all so needs all the freeways linked up and some sections made wider.
I just think the State has missed out on the opportunity to build more badly needed infrastructure while the interest rate has been so low I can think of many projects that are needed that would benefit the community both short and long term.

I think all Governments in Australia don’t think long term and are only thinking about the next election and don’t have any vision to the future.

Yours Sincerely

William Hicks

Warrnambool

Victoria 3280