



NZ Has Anti-Rail 'Experts' Too! So We Need Your Help

An example, Victoria University of Wellington's Institute for the Study of Competition and Regulation. Sound familiar? We need Rail supporters and RMTU members to attend this meeting so as to be aware of the arguments being used to destroy and discredit Rail in NZ.

ISCR February Seminar - The future of rail in New Zealand

Thursday 19th February 2009,

Rutherford House Lecture Hall, Theatre 3.

This seminar starts at 12:30 p.m. Feel free to bring your lunch. Tea and coffee provided.

Did the 2002-08 re-nationalisation of New Zealand railways represent the end of a failed experiment in the privatisation of essential infrastructure and herald the renaissance of environmentally-friendly rail? Or was it a misguided attempt to stem the inevitable decline of a 19th century technology that has no place in a modern transportation infrastructure?

Dave Heatley examines the economics, structure and role of New Zealand's rail network since 1863. The economics of rail have become increasingly unviable and largely unresponsive to changes in governance and ownership arrangements. Technological changes in rail have been minor when compared with the changes in sea, road and air transport over that period. The role of rail has changed as it has adapted to competition from these substitutes. Various reasons why "it's different this time" are examined, including externalities (greenhouse gas emissions and congestion), government policy to induce "modal shift" towards rail and predicted increases in the total freight task. It is argued that these factors are not sufficient to make the current rail network viable. Rail is likely to be increasingly squeezed between environmentally friendly sea transport and flexible road transport. Closure of at least part of the rail network appears inevitable. Dave concludes by looking at whether there is a viable subset of the current rail network, and what factors might hinder us in moving towards that goal. Presenter: Dave Heatley

Dave Heatley is a Research Fellow at ISCR. He is a successful software entrepreneur turned economist with particular interests in environmental and information economics. This seminar is based on a soon-to-be-available ISCR working paper *The Future Of Rail In New Zealand*.

If you would like to attend this seminar please contact:
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