



Isle of Man
Government
Reeflus Eilan Vannin



infrastructure
bun-troggalys

Office of the Minister
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Our Ref: PG/cw
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To: All Members of Tynwald

Dear all,

July 2014 Tynwald – Item 15 Snaefell Mountain Railway Track renewal

I refer to the above motion, which I moved on behalf of Minister Gawne. Please find below, extracts from Hansard on the additional matters raised by Honourable Members and clarification from the Department.

Drainage Issues – Mr Downie and Mr Turner

Mr Downie – *So, in voting for this tonight, can I have an undertaking from the Member that she will relay back to the Railways Division that we want to see some proper maintenance –the water run-offs, the drainage ditches –and that all the other places that they have built into the system to keep the water away from the track are being properly maintained and they are not going to be neglected?*

Mr Turner: *Mr Downie raised some interesting points about the drainage on the scheme, and I know this has come out of some serious land slippage up there, but it was not just down to the railway itself: further along the mountain, near the Brandywell junction, there was also a major land slip due to the wet conditions we have had. So again, the railway is built in an area which is catching all, a huge catchment area, and that water has got to go somewhere.*

Answer - The drainage of all the railways is a very important aspect of management of the infrastructure which has for many years been ignored. The management team does include a Chartered Civil Engineer with many years of railway infrastructure maintenance and the appropriate actions have been taken over the last 6 years to start to put right historic deficiencies. As Mr Downie correctly notes there have been many years of under investment and lack of maintenance and we are probably now half way through our steady programme of repairing this neglect.

Future safety of the railway – Mr Speaker

Mr Speaker – *I would like an assurance from the mover –and I commend her for the way that she has made the case –that the railway system as we know it, which makes this valuable economic contribution and which has had so much invested in it, the Manx Electric Railway system –and I am thinking in particular of the stretch between Laxey and Ramsey, which has been the subject of considerable recent investment –is in fact safe. I think it would be reassuring that the siren calls that ‘this is nice-to-have expenditure’ and ‘now is the time pull the rug from under it for all sorts of financial reasons’... that in fact that is not going to happen and that the Department is*

committed and remains committed to the operation of not just the Snaefell Mountain Railway, but in fact the other part of this heritage transport jewel, which is the run from Laxey to Ramsey

Answer - The current work programme on the railways allows for their continued operation. In respect of the Laxey to Ramsey section, the Pink Book contains the refurbishment of Ballure Viaduct which has unfortunately not been painted or received any significant maintenance since 1981. This particular work requires a capital vote in Tywnald.

I trust the above information is helpful to you, however, please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any further details.

Yours sincerely,



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Member with Responsibility for Public Transport