

STATE ELECTRICITY COMMISSION OF VICTORIA

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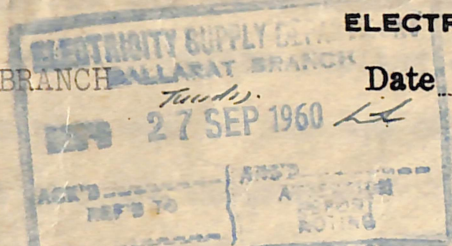
ENGINEER & MANAGER

ELECTRICITY SUPPLY DEPARTMENT

To MANAGER, BALLARAT BRANCH

Date 26th September, 1960

Subject -

TRAMS AND TARIFFSSimilar
letter to
N/W/R.

The cost of abandoning the Geelong tramway system has been set down at approximately £350,000, the greater portion of which relates to road reinstatement.

At the time the trams were abandoned the annual loss on the operations, averaged over a period of years, amounted to £70,000.

As soon as the trams were abandoned the Commission was approached for tariff reductions in Geelong on the grounds that we were now escaping the loss. In reply, the inquirers were told that serious consideration could not be given to the matter for a period of five years. This was determined by simple arithmetic from the above figures. The five-year period has now expired and the representations having been renewed I expect an announcement, possibly in the near future, that tariff reductions will be effected from the 1st January, 1961.

We now have to consider what will be our attitude in Ballarat and Bendigo if requests for tariff reductions follow a Geelong announcement.

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Under the Commission's Act no tramway system or part thereof can be abandoned without the consent of Parliament. In its annual report to Parliament, the Commission from time to time has expressed its dissatisfaction with the present state of affairs regarding trams in Ballarat and Bendigo but so far Parliament has not seen fit to do anything in the matter. It would be improper for any officer to speculate aloud as to whether there had been any discussions between the Commission and the Government on this question and, if so, why the discussions have not been fruitful. This is solely a confidential matter between the Government and the Commission.

Similarly, it would be quite wrong for any officer to

start his own campaign for the abandonment of trams. If the Commission wishes to stir up public feeling on this matter it will do so in its own time and in its own way. If a Branch Manager is asked what are the Commission's views on this tramway problem he can, of course, quote what has been said in the Commission's annual reports from time to time.

If, following an announcement regarding Geelong tariffs, the Branch Manager is asked what is the position regarding possible tariff reductions in Ballarat or Bendigo he can say that he, the Branch Manager, is not prepared to consider making any recommendation on the matter until such time as the Commission is relieved of the tramway losses.

W. A. ... 9