

# RAIL PLATFORMS FOR THE FUTURE

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A rail industry vision  
with practical and  
achievable actions:  
2017-35

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This document, developed by the Australasian Railway Association on behalf of the Australian rail industry, identifies a vision for rail in Australia over the next 20 years and outlines our priorities and a range of actions to progress this vision.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF RAIL

There is wide recognition of the importance of rail including its role in:

- relieving congestion in our major cities
- providing an efficient way to move people
- getting freight to markets through cost-effective long haul and short haul options
- having a positive safety and environmental impact compared to alternate land transport options
- enhancing investment around the fixed routes passenger and freight rail offer
- creating jobs and building capability in the workforce
- facilitating regional development
- promoting an inclusive and healthy society

Business chooses freight rail when it offers reliability, value for money and there is a customer focus. Customers choose passenger rail when it is punctual, reliable, safe, and able to get them to their destination in an efficient, cost-effective way.

# VISION

## THE RAIL INDUSTRY IN AUSTRALIA

Australia's operational heavy rail network is approximately 33,300 route-kilometres with around 10% electrified. There are nearly 300 route-kilometres of operational light rail.

The rail industry makes a significant contribution to the Australian economy and to those depending on it for transport and the movement of freight. Rail is a large employer, with close to 200,000 directly or indirectly involved through freight and passenger operators, track owners and managers, manufacturers, suppliers and contractors.

Rail is an important economic activity generator with close to \$60b in committed investment over the next 5 years.

In 2014–15 around 850m passengers are carried on the heavy and light rail passenger networks in our capital cities and on regional services.

1.3b net tonnes of freight, primarily bulk commodities, was moved on rail in 2014–15, up 11% on the previous year. The freight network is dominated by the national standard gauge connecting Perth with Brisbane. Regional freight lines also exist in most States carrying grain and other commodities.

The rail manufacturing sector employs more than 15,000 people in over 330 firms across the country and generates annual revenues exceeding \$4b.

Rail suppliers are mostly small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) with 86% Australian ownership.

Rail has strong safety and environmental credentials. Rail produces significantly less emissions than road transport per passenger kilometre and it is the safest form of land transport.



### FREIGHT

FREIGHT MOVED IN 2014–15.

# 1.23

BILLION TONNES

### PASSENGERS

CARRIED IN OUR CAPITAL CITIES AND ON REGIONAL SERVICES.

# 850M

PASSENGERS IN 2014–15

### WORKFORCE

RAIL EMPLOYS MORE THAN

# 200,000

PEOPLE FROM OVER 180 EMPLOYERS

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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The rail industry stands ready to work with governments to meet the challenges ahead. Passenger rail faces the challenge of extreme growth as cities expand and road congestion becomes intolerable. Linking urban planning to transport, adopting new technologies such as high capacity rolling stock and signalling and improving station precincts with effective integration across modes can help meet this challenge.

The freight rail sector can be central to the growing freight task by providing cost-effective, safe and environmentally beneficial options including port shuttles to relieve urban congestion.

Governments also have a role to play through better co-ordination and collaboration between jurisdictions and the Commonwealth. The rail industry also wants independence and transparency in infrastructure investment decisions.

The manufacturing sector (including a myriad of suppliers) wants long term certainty with governments working together to remove the volatility from the rollingstock procurement cycle. Contractors want a steady pipeline of work with simple, nationally consistent procurement processes.

The industry needs to ensure future activity, including the adoption of new technologies, is harmonised across the nation.

## THE RAIL INDUSTRY VISION

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Over the next 20 years, the rail industry is focused on making a difference, contributing to both the economy and society. The rail industry sees four fundamental platforms going forward:

1. Longer term planning
2. Smarter investment
3. Enhanced productivity
4. Practical Innovation

### The rail industry sees a number of key outcomes:

- A steady and intense pipeline of infrastructure and rollingstock projects over the next 20 years
- A more comprehensive and innovative approach to funding rail including expanding competition for rail operations
- More people using passenger rail with full accessibility for the diverse customer base
- More freight being carried on rail
- Separated freight and passenger networks in our cities
- A strong and vibrant rail manufacturing and supply industry with greater national cohesion and collaboration
- A reduced burden on the industry in safety regulation, environmental regulation, industrial relations and tendering processes
- Skilled people from diverse backgrounds working in the rail industry

## WORKING TOGETHER

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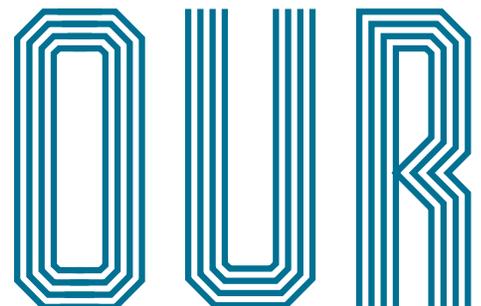
Rail sees these outcomes being progressed collaboratively with government and key stakeholders. Government and industry each must play a part. Government must lead through longer term planning, development of policies, reviewing regulatory reform, engaging the community, exploring investment options and working together to achieve greater harmonisation.

The rail industry recognises that it has a vital role to play in achieving its vision. To ensure the success of our rail systems into the future, the Industry commits to improving safety, exploring new technologies, managing its assets, working as one industry and integrating with other transport modes.

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### THE RAIL INDUSTRY VISION

A world-class rail industry in Australia that contributes to a liveable and sustainable society that benefits all.



PLATFORM

# 1 LONGER TERM PLANNING

A commitment from Governments, with industry input, to the immediate **development of a practical long term national rail action plan** which should include infrastructure plans for cities and a pipeline of infrastructure investment and a national freight and supply chain strategy.

HIGHEST PRIORITIES

SUPPORTING OR COMPLEMENTARY ACTIONS

- Investigate opportunities to enhance regional development (including exploring the role of rail in assisting housing affordability) through fast, reliable connections between capital and major regional cities
- Develop a digital road map for the rail industry
- Continue the roll out of train control technology including ensuring systems are harmonised and interoperable
- Develop a national freight and supply chain strategy
- Introduce automated rail vehicles

# 2 SMARTER INVESTMENT

**A more comprehensive and innovative approach to funding rail investment** including incentives to encourage private sector investment, expanding competition for service provision where appropriate and implementing new funding options such as value capture by linking transport and land-use planning.

**Introduce a mass-distance-location charging mechanism for heavy vehicles** on national highways and major State roads.

**Introduce a greater level of harmonisation in rolling stock** in a manner that underpins the domestic supply industry and generates growth in international markets.

- Using rail to reduce congestion and improve environmental and safety outcomes in our cities with investment in passenger (e.g. new metros) and freight rail (e.g. port shuttles)
- Industry and governments to work together to develop a nationally coordinated approach to rolling stock procurement
- Appoint a national economic regulator for road transport
- Investigate taxation or other incentives to encourage private sector investment
- Engage the private sector to develop precincts around stations

PLATFORM

# 3 ENHANCED PRODUCTIVITY

**Introduce new port shuttle services** between intermodal terminals and major ports, particularly Melbourne and Brisbane.

**Reduce the regulatory burden on the industry** in safety, environment, industrial relations and tendering processes.

**Enhance urban rail capacity** by constructing metro style passenger services in major capital cities and extending lines in peri-urban areas.

Fund double stacked, longer and faster services between our capital cities headlined by the **Inland Rail project being completed.**

HIGHEST PRIORITIES

SUPPORTING OR COMPLEMENTARY ACTIONS

- Continued enhancements for passenger rail — high capacity trains, high capacity signalling, improved accessibility and stations funded by governments and the private sector
- Adjust current freight curfews to improve productivity
- Adopt common standards across the rail industry in safety, environment and asset management
- Coalesce multiple operational rules
- Reduce multiple access regimes where feasible
- Adopt a single national rail safety law including in the areas of drugs and alcohol, fatigue and medical standards
- Provide industry with regulator guidance on rail safety work
- Implement common and complementary national approaches to environmental regulation
- Introduce a national SPAD categorisations scheme
- Invest in the separation of freight and passenger lines in capital cities
- Implement virtual training options to boost skills

# 4 PRACTICAL INNOVATION

**Introduce technologies which boost the efficiency of rail operations.**

- Ensure there is a focus on advanced manufacturing and developing supplier capability
- Introduce cross-modal regulatory standards or new technologies
- Continue to expand the Rail Industry Worker card scheme to encompass more roles and assist in workforce mobility
- Research and implement new level crossing technologies to reduce incidents
- Investigate ticketing options including the option of a national public transport ticket

# FUTURE