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Rail Freight Industry's number one project to achieve another milestone

Rail's national peak body; the Australasian Railway Association (ARA) has welcomed the Federal Government's announcement today that phase two of market testing for private sector involvement in Inland Rail will be held in late January and early February 2017.

Five elements have been identified for the phase two market testing including opportunities to improve the performance and value of the project as well as design and construction procurement models.

ARA CEO, Danny Broad said this stage will be an important project milestone for Inland Rail.

"The average freight train takes 110 trucks off our roads. Efficient delivery of the Inland Rail project is vital and I commend the Federal Government for its thorough approach to date", he said.

"As Australia's population continues to grow, so too do our freight requirements. As a result, Inland Rail is a high priority infrastructure project for Australia that will benefit our economy and road users alike.

"Momentum must be maintained and I encourage the Federal Government to continue its focus and support for the completion of this important project," said Mr Broad.

The Inland Rail project, a 1700km rail freight line between Melbourne and Brisbane is the highest priority for Australian rail freight operators. It will increase rail freight's reliability and efficiency, reduce travel times by up to seven hours, permit double-stacked and longer trains, avoid the Sydney passenger network bottleneck (2m tonnes of freight passes through Sydney annually) and allow train speeds of 110km/hr; all of which will improve rail's service delivery.

"The majority of freight along Australia's East Coast is moved on our roads, creating traffic congestion, increasing road wear and tear and adding to maintenance costs and pollution levels," continued Mr Broad.

"The completion of Inland Rail will contribute to Australia's productivity by establishing a world-class freight supply chain to meet the needs of Australia's growing population.

"The rail industry looks forward to continuing to work with the Federal Government in delivering this vital project in the years ahead," Mr Broad concluded.

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