

Media Release

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Murray Basin Freight Rail Project to deliver huge boost to region

A \$200.2 million Federal Government rescue package will transform the Murray Basin freight network and boost the region's agricultural industry.

Australasian Railway Association (ARA) Chief Executive Officer Caroline Wilkie welcomed today's funding announcement, which comes in addition to \$240.2 million in Federal funds already committed to the Murray Basin Freight Rail Project.

"This is a huge boost for the Murray Basin and confirms the vital role rail freight will play in supporting the region's growth and development," Ms Wilkie said.

"It is fantastic to see the Federal Government getting behind this project to make sure the region can benefit from better access to freight rail as soon as possible.

"Safe, sustainable and efficient rail freight services will help connect local producers with the rest of Australia and the world once this project is complete.

"A fully standardised rail freight network will create new jobs and opportunity for the region and make the Murray Basin a truly connected part of the national rail freight network."

Ms Wilkie said projects like this would ensure the agricultural industry could enjoy the full benefits of greater use of rail, after traditionally using less rail freight than sectors such as mining and wholesale trade.

She said both the Murray Basin Freight Rail Project and Inland Rail would provide greater direct access to rail freight networks for producers, providing new opportunities to grow their business.

The project would also relieve congestion on local roads, with one short haul port train able to carry the equivalent payload of 41 B-Double trucks.

"The Federal Government has shown real vision to prioritise projects like this to make sure primary producers can connect with efficient and reliable freight services," Ms Wilkie said.

“We look forward to seeing this project progress as a priority so producers in the Murray Basin can realise the significant benefits of rail freight.”

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