

Media Release

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National tendering approach needed to speed jobs-creating projects

The Australasian Railway Association (ARA) has called for new national standards to simplify government tendering processes for rail projects and help speed the post-COVID-19 recovery.

The ARA launched its new tendering framework today, outlining 21 recommendations for changes state governments could make now to get jobs-creating rail projects off the ground faster and easier.

ARA Chief Executive Officer Caroline Wilkie said a team of industry experts had developed the framework to guide the procurement process for rolling stock and signalling equipment and to address the high tendering costs associated with projects in Australia.

“Australian tendering costs are higher than global benchmarks and that makes it harder to get projects out of the planning phase into delivery.” Ms Wilkie said.

“As governments look to bring on new projects to speed our post-pandemic economic recovery, simple and fast tendering processes will be needed to get people quickly back to work.

“Small measures like a one-time-only pre-qualification process and standardised templates, terms and conditions would make a big difference and reduce costs for both government and the private sector.”

Ms Wilkie said the NSW Government Action Plan set the standard for better, faster and easier procurement processes and should inform the basis for a nationally consistent approach.

“Now more than ever we need government and industry working together to get projects up and running to deliver jobs for all Australians,” Ms Wilkie said.

“A nationally consistent procurement process would cut red tape and focus tender discussions on the all-important project outcomes.”

Ms Wilkie recommended early contractor involvement processes be used carefully, and only when the project scope was clearly defined.

“Getting early contractor involvement right can fuel innovation and drive real improvements for industry but it is often frustrated by changing project scope,” Ms Wilkie said.

“It is important tender processes are fit for purpose and resourced to succeed so projects can move from planning to delivery as soon as possible.”

Ms Wilkie said a national procurement approach would ensure the benefits of future rail projects can be maximised.

To view the document, *Tendering Framework: A Best Practice Guide to Rolling Stock and Signalling Tendering in the Australian Rail Industry*, click [here](#).

To view our fact sheet, click [here](#).

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