

Media Release

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Victorian Budget confirms landmark rail projects, new trams critical to recovery

The Victorian Budget delivered today has confirmed the rail industry will be key to the state's economic recovery, with landmark projects and a significant order of new trams to create jobs and support the state's sustainable future.

Australasian Railway Association (ARA) Chief Executive Officer Caroline Wilkie said the billions of dollars in funding would change the future of transport in Victoria.

Ms Wilkie said the \$2.2 billion for the Suburban Rail Loop project and \$1.48 billion to build 100 new trams would deliver significant, tangible and long term benefits to the economy and community.

The major funding announcements were in addition to confirmation of the Melbourne Airport Rail route and \$2 billion in funding for the Geelong Fast Rail project on Saturday.

Several other major projects would be funded as part of the budget to continue to upgrade the state's rail network.

"This is a huge investment in rail infrastructure that will change how the people travel to school and work for the better," Ms Wilkie said.

"The Victorian Government's commitment to these city shaping infrastructure projects and Australian-made rollingstock is a real win for the people of Melbourne and wider Victoria.

"These projects will deliver a modern, efficient and sustainable rail network to support the growth of the state for years to come."

The Suburban Rail Loop project would generate up to 20,000 jobs, building on the significant growth in rail jobs nationally over the last three years.

Ms Wilkie said the decision to place an unprecedented order for the construction of 100 new trams was a welcome boost for the Australian rail manufacturing and supply sector and would create up to 1900 jobs at peak production.

“When orders like this are placed locally, they drive jobs not just for manufacturers but for many more of the 900 Australian businesses that make up the rail supply chain,” Ms Wilkie said.

“Orders of this magnitude provide the scale the industry needs to innovate and grow and is a welcome investment in the future of Australian manufacturing and the wider rail supply chain.”

The Budget also includes funding for rail projects across the state, including:

- \$899 million for track upgrades from South Geelong to Waurin Ponds stations, in addition to the business case development for the South Geelong Tunnel
- \$650 million to deliver the next stages of the Shepparton and Warrnambool Line upgrades
- \$276.5 million for the final stages of the Dandenong Corridor
- \$187.6 million for operations and maintenance for the regional rail network to support reliability, punctuality and safety
- \$5.5 million for track works near Caulfield Station
- \$2.4 million to boost equality and diversity in the transport sector

The [ARA's Value of Rail 2020](#) report released earlier this month confirmed the need for continued investment in rail, forecasting long term growth in demand for both passenger and freight services.

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