

Wednesday 10 August 2011
Embargoed until 1300 AEST

Unlock billions each year in productivity - landmark report launched at National Press Club

The Rail Industry is urging Governments across Australia to unlock billions of dollars annually in lost economic productivity, urban congestion and traffic accident costs by greater investment in rail infrastructure.

A landmark study by Deloitte Access Economics, released today at the National Press Club, for the first time quantifies the economic, social and environmental benefits of rail investment in Australia.

The study has found that the savings rail travel creates could fund more hospital beds and doctors whilst removing cars and trucks from our roads and helping reduce Australia's greenhouse gas emissions.

In launching The True Value of Rail report, Lance Hockridge, Chairman of the Australasian Railway Association (ARA) and Managing Director & CEO of QR National, called for Governments to address Australia's transport challenges.

"The report provides a very telling commentary on the results of slow, sometimes misguided transport reform in this country over recent decades, Mr Hockridge said.

"This manifests not only in extra cost and lost production but also in poorer outcomes for health, safety and liveability.

"The report details the true benefits of rail, compared to other transport modes, in alleviating congestion, reducing our carbon footprint and improving the health and well-being of Australians."

The report underlined that all relevant costs and benefits of each transport mode must be weighed up when making decisions on infrastructure investment.

According to Bryan Nye, ARA CEO, the True Value of Rail report confirms that it is time to end Australia's love affair with the car.

"Since 1985, Governments have invested more than \$293 billion on roads. This has brought us many challenges and hidden costs such as traffic congestion, carbon emissions and road fatalities that impede our standard of living and the nation's productivity," said Mr Nye.

"Continuing our irresponsible spending on roads will lead us no-where. Governments must consider the true costs and benefits of each transport mode when making investment decisions and developing transport policies.

The study shows that, for example:

- one passenger train takes 525 cars off the road. In one year, one trainload of passengers is equal to removing more than three million vehicle kilometres of traffic from our roads.
- one freight train in place of trucks between Melbourne and Brisbane reduces carbon emissions by the same amount as a household of three going without electricity for 46 years.
- one trainload of passengers travelling by rail instead of car for one year reduces accident costs by an amount that could fund 130 hospital visits, 505 hospital beds per day, or 6 doctors for one year.

According to Mr Nye, rail has much wider benefits than it receives acknowledgment for.

"If we are to genuinely realise these benefits, strong political leadership is essential. Our Governments need to consider the impacts of each transport mode when making investment decisions or developing transport policies," he said.

Mr Bryan Nye

Chief Executive Officer
+61 4 00 007 951

Media Contact

Emma Woods
+61 2 6270 4512
+61 4 3820 9588
ewoods@ara.net.au
www.ara.net.au

The 'True Value of Rail' study was commissioned by the ARA to better inform the community and governments of the financial, social and environmental benefits that rail travel provides.

"We must take a truly national approach and recognise that state borders and regulations are no longer relevant. We must have a National Transport Plan, a plan that will allow each mode of transport to play to its strengths.

"This is a challenging task but it must be done. We urge governments to step up and make bold long-term decisions for the nation. No more reviews, no more committees, just actions."

The report is available at www.ara.net.au

-ENDS-

The True Value of Rail Key Findings

Relieving Congestion

- One passenger train can take 525 cars off the road. This is 3.2 million vehicle kilometres annually or 1000 trips Sydney to Perth
- The average freight train takes 110 trucks off the road. This reduces truck movements by around 49.7 million truck kilometres per year or 3100 times the distance between Sydney and New York.

Safer and Healthier Australians

- One passenger train reduces accident costs by an amount that could fund 130 hospital visits, 505 hospital beds per day, or 6 doctors for one year.

Reducing Carbon Emissions and Protecting our Environment

- One freight train in place of trucks between Melbourne and Brisbane reduces carbon emissions by the same amount as a household of 3 people going without electricity for 46 years.
- In one year, one passenger train reduces carbon emissions by the same amount as planting 320 hectares of trees. This would cover Melbourne's CBD, Docklands Stadium and Fitzroy and Carlton Gardens or an area twice the size of Newtown in Sydney's inner west.
- In one year, one freight train travelling between Melbourne and Brisbane reduces carbon emissions by the same amount as planting 600 hectares of trees. This would cover Sydney's CBD, Hyde Park, the Domain, Botanical Gardens, Pyrmont and Central Station or an area 8.5 times the size of Brisbane's CBD.

About the Australasian Railway Association

The ARA is the peak body representing passenger, freight, track operators and the wider rail industry in Australia and New Zealand.

About Lance Hockridge

Lance is the ARA Chairman and Managing Director & CEO of QR National, a top 50 ASX company and Australia's largest rail freight business.

Rail in Australia

Rail in Australia provides more than 769.9 million annual passenger train trips and moves more than 853.5 million tonnes of freight annually. Rail achieves this on more than 41,000 kilometres of track, more than 1,800 locomotives, 32,000 carriages and wagons and more than 100,000 people in over 150 companies.

Mr Bryan Nye

Chief Executive Officer

+61 4 00 007 951

Media Contact

Emma Woods

+61 2 6270 4512

+61 4 3820 9588

ewoods@ara.net.au

www.ara.net.au