

MEDIA RELEASE

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Australasian and UK rail industries sign ground-breaking partnership

The UK and Australasian rail trade bodies have signed a Memorandum of Understanding that will lead to greater co-operation and collaboration between the two industries.

The UK Railway Industry Association (RIA) and the Australasian Railway Association (ARA) announced the partnership at a reception hosted by the British Consul-General in Australia, as part of a UK rail trade delegation visit.

The partnership will see the two associations work more closely together, benefiting both organisation's memberships, and helping to boost each country's export potential in rail.

The agreement will see:

- The exchanging of information linked to research and innovation (not IP protected) undertaken in either country;
- Sharing and exchanging information and approaches relating to skill needs, training and the attraction of career aspirants to the rail industry;
- Closer working arrangements in trade fairs and rail exhibitions in either Australia, the UK or in third countries, where appropriate;
- Access to meeting facilities in the offices of ARA or RIA by members of either organisation.

Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development The Hon Michael McCormack MP, said:

"Australia and the UK have long been partners in many aspects of our economies and our communities.

This agreement is yet another partnership which will build upon our strong trade relationship, help encourage even more jobs and opportunities in the rail sector and be mutually beneficial for our economies.

I know Australia's regions have many exports – particularly our world-leading food and fibre – which the UK is looking to import and rail is a vital part of the mix to get that premium produce from paddock to port to plate.

I look forward to seeing how our two countries can share expertise, ideas and insights to help grow jobs and opportunities in the rail sector in Australia and the UK.”

UK Minister of State for Trade and Export Promotion Baroness Fairhead said:

“This agreement between RIA and ARA will further strengthen our trading relationship with Australia so that we can work together more closely on the delivery of ambitious rail infrastructure programmes.

“The UK is a world leader in rail and has a particular focus on developing exciting new technologies. Projects including those such as Crossrail and HS2 mean that the UK is well placed to share insights, expertise and knowledge to help build rail industry capability around the world. This capability has been harnessed in the Government’s recently launched Rail Sector Deal which aims to support yet further innovation and the application of more, new technologies in this growing sector.

“We very much look forward to the enhanced co-operation that this new agreement with Australia can bring and encourage any interested companies to get in touch with the UK Department for International Trade to find out more.”

Danny Broad, Chief Executive Officer of the Australasian Railway Association

(ARA), said: “This partnership is of immense value to our industry. We are undergoing a renaissance in rail in Australia, with major new rail projects in our capital cities and regions over the next decade. The opportunity to leverage the skills and expertise of UK rail companies will add breadth and depth to our industry, and give Australian businesses valuable insights and partnerships. Working and collaborating with the RIA on common industry challenges will provide consolidation of ideas for possible suitable outcomes for the rail sectors covered by both the ARA and RIA.”

Darren Caplan, Chief Executive of the UK Railway Industry Association, said: “We are delighted to support this partnership between the UK and Australasian rail industries, which will see the exchange of knowledge and expertise across the two countries. In the UK, rail exports £800 million a year and will play a vital role in achieving the UK Government’s aim of increasing exports to 35% of GDP, as we exit the EU. We look forward to working with our colleagues at ARA to maximise the exporting potential of both industries.”

Notes to Editors

1. **About RIA:** The Railway Industry Association (RIA) is the voice of the UK rail supply community. We help to grow a sustainable, high-performing, railway supply industry, and to export UK rail expertise and products. We promote and represent our members’ interests to policy makers, clients and other stakeholders in the UK and overseas. RIA has 250+ companies in membership in a sector that contributes

£36 billion in economic growth and £11 billion in tax revenue each year, as well as employing 600,000 people—more than the workforce of Birmingham. It is also a growing industry with the number of rail journeys expected to double over the next 25 years and freight set to grow significantly too. RIA's membership is active across the whole of railway supply, covering a diverse range of products and services and including both multi-national companies and SMEs (60% by number). RIA works to promote the importance of the rail system to UK plc, to help export UK expertise around the globe and to share best practice and innovation across the industry.
www.riagb.org.uk

2. **About ARA:** The Australasian Railway Association (ARA) is the peak body for rail in Australia and New Zealand. We represent more than 140 member organisations including passenger and freight operators, track owners and managers, manufacturers of rolling stock, construction companies, and consultants supplying and contributing to the Australasian rail sector. Members include listed and private companies, government agencies and franchisees. Rail contributes \$26 billion to the Australian economy and supports employment of over 140,000 employees. ARA undertakes advocacy, provides networking and business opportunities, collaboration and knowledge sharing and employment marketing for the sector. Rail is growing in Australasia with over \$100 Billion committed to rail projects over the next 10 years nationally. www.ara.net.au

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For background and information

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