

## Inland Rail remains essential to the future of freight

**6 May 2026**

The Australasian Railway Association (ARA) has reaffirmed its support for the Inland Rail project, which remains critical to meeting our transport and supply chain needs for the future.

ARA Chief Executive Officer Caroline Wilkie said it was essential the completion of the route remained in focus as the Federal Government confirmed construction would not proceed north of Parkes at this time.

“When completed, Inland Rail will deliver a faster, more reliable and higher-capacity rail corridor between Melbourne and Brisbane, improving efficiency for freight operators and reducing pressure on congested road networks,” Ms Wilkie said.

“This is needed to meet future rail freight requirements in this century.”

Ms Wilkie recognised the impact of cost escalations of the project, but said the full completion of the route must remain on the agenda.

“Whilst the rail industry still strongly supports the completion of the Inland Rail project, we recognise that the escalating projects costs need to be balanced against broader infrastructure priorities,” Ms Wilkie said.

“We welcome the continued preservation of the rail corridor and intermodal sites to ensure we can get this project back on track in the future.

“Inland Rail remains an essential project for Australia’s freight network and the industry is committed to completing its delivery to Parkes.

“The ARA will now engage with Government to identify what additional investment is required on the ARTC east coast network to address the impact of Inland Rail not being completed to Brisbane.

“We need to ensure that the ARTC network is resilient and fit for purpose, to meet the needs of the rail freight sector over the coming decade.

“We hope to see Government revisit the remaining sections of Inland Rail in the future to realise its vision to unlock economic opportunity along the full Melbourne-Brisbane route.”

The Inland Rail is a 1600km freight line that would enable double-stacked freight services from Melbourne to Brisbane in less than 24 hours.

**ENDS**

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