

3 March 2022

## AusRAIL PLUS Conference and Exhibition concludes

Over 3000 people participated in the Australasian Railway Association's AusRAIL PLUS Conference and Exhibition at the International Convention Centre Sydney (ICC Sydney) this week.

The entire rail industry – from stakeholder to suppliers – explored an extensive Exhibition showcasing more than 250 suppliers and Conference program from Monday 28 February to Wednesday 2 March.

The event featured 134 speakers, including keynotes and range of panel discussions with key rail decision makers.

ARA Chief Executive Officer Caroline Wilkie said it was so important to bring the industry back together again to discuss the issues that will influence the future of rail.

"The energy this week has been incredible. COVID-19 has impacted our industry in many ways, and it was so important to reconnect, reflect and discuss how we address the issues facing our industry," Ms Wilkie said.

This year's conference identified several key themes for government and industry to work together to address, including:

- The importance of welcoming passengers back to public transport as pandemic restrictions ease
- The need for reform to support greater use of rail freight, including the implementation of recommendations from the ARA's new report on freight mode shift
- The importance of supporting the essential role rail will play in Australia and New Zealand's path to net zero, and the need for collaboration between industry and government to accelerate decarbonisation
- The need for immediate action to support the attraction and retention of top talent to address skills shortages and support the growth of the industry, confirmed in the ARA's new report on building rail skills capability
- The importance of reform to drive efficiencies in manufacturing and construction, including the adoption of a national approach to local content policies, procurement and planning
- The need for a national approach to rail technology and innovation to take advantage of the huge wave of investment in rail, and future-proof the Australian industry

Ms Wilkie said the conference had unveiled new innovations, products and solutions and provided a chance for operators, contractors and suppliers to discuss future projects and opportunities in the rail industry.

She thanked all delegates, visitors, presenters, exhibitors and sponsors for helping to make AusRail PLUS such a success.

ICC Sydney CEO Geoff Donaghy said that the venue's team was delighted to host this important event.

"Rail provides crucial infrastructure supporting our community's connectivity and we were very pleased to host the AusRAIL Conference and Exhibition this year," Mr Donaghy said.

"Trade exhibitions, such as AusRAIL, are an extremely important market segment for Sydney as they can accelerate new businesses, face to face networking and are a platform for business to be exchanged on the show floor.

"Our team of world class professionals were delighted to provide the environment and services to help facilitate advancement of Australia's essential transport sector."

The ARA is now planning for AusRAIL 2022 in Brisbane from 5-7 December in Brisbane.

"We are really looking forward to reconnecting with industry at AusRAIL 2022 to reflect on the achievements of the year and prepare for 2023," Ms Wilkie said.

"We have already received significant interest in the event and expect to see strong representation from both Australian and international delegates when we get together in Brisbane in December."

ENDS

## Further information

Joeley Pettit

Director Corporate Services and Corporate Affairs

0407 061 421, [jpettit@ara.net.au](mailto:jpettit@ara.net.au)