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Rail industry welcomes new Labor Federal Cabinet

The Australasian Railway Association (ARA) has congratulated Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on the announcement of his new Ministry and the appointment of The Hon. Catherine King MP as Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government.

ARA Chief Executive Officer Caroline Wilkie said the rail industry looked forward to continuing to work with Minister King to support a strong national focus for the rail industry.

The ARA also looked forward to working with Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Carol Brown, Minister for Industry and Science Ed Husic MP and Assistant Minister for Manufacturing Hon Tim Ayres on advancing the government's rail policies.

Ms Wilkie said the delivery of the National Rail Manufacturing Plan, reinstating of the Rail Supplier Advocate and establishment of a Rail Innovation Council would help create more jobs in cities and regions across Australia.

"The Australian rail industry is currently experiencing an unprecedented level of infrastructure investment, which represents a huge opportunity to build capability across the rail supply chain," Ms Wilkie said.

"We look forward to working with Government to advance the National Rail Manufacturing Plan to support a strong and sustainable industry for the long term."

Ms Wilkie said the Labor Government's commitment to establish a national infrastructure agenda and framework would also maximise the benefits of rail investment, and build on the recommendations of the recent report from the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities.

"We look forward to working together collaboratively to progress the important infrastructure reforms outlined in Infrastructure Australia's *Australian Infrastructure Plan 2021*," Ms Wilkie said.

"There is a huge opportunity to improve outcomes for both industry and government by better planning and coordinating the national infrastructure pipeline and achieving greater standardisation across the country.

“This will encourage more industry representatives to bid for and deliver the projects that will shape our infrastructure network in years to come.”

Ms Wilkie said the continued development of the Inland Rail project to ensure this critical national building project meets Australia’s rail freight needs was also essential to help more freight on rail and meet future demand.

“It is important that we realise this once-in-a-generation opportunity and ensure Inland Rail is used to its full benefit, with continued investment by Commonwealth and state governments,” Ms Wilkie said.

Ms Wilkie said the ARA would also work with Minister King and the Federal Government on making faster rail a reality with the establishment of the High Speed Rail Authority and the prioritisation of a fast rail connection between Sydney, the Central Coast and Newcastle.

“There is a significant opportunity for faster rail to unlock new opportunities for regional development, making centres like Newcastle just a 1-2 hour train journey from Sydney,” Ms Wilkie said.

“We look forward to seeing faster rail become a reality to better connect regional centres with our capital cities and drive new economic growth for the communities it serves.”

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Further information

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