

19 October 2022

## Rail industry comes together for inaugural ARA Rail Freight Conference

The Australasian Railway Association (ARA) will host its inaugural Rail Freight Conference this week, bringing together senior executives from the rail freight and intermodal sectors to discuss the major issues impacting the industry.

ARA Chief Executive Officer Caroline Wilkie said the Rail Freight Conference will explore the transformational projects that are shaping the industry, and the importance of sustainability and decarbonisation for the rail freight sector.

“The conference reflects the significant opportunities ahead for the rail freight sector as it plays an increasing role in meeting the nation’s future freight needs,” Ms Wilkie said.

“Rail is expected to meet almost three-quarters of the growth in demand for freight services in the next decade, providing an efficient and sustainable solution to support strong supply chains.”

“This week’s conference brings industry together to discuss the projects and innovation underway to meet this growth as the sector continues to support our economy and communities.”

The Rail Freight Conference will be attended by almost 250 people representing rail freight and heavy haul operators, track owners, operators and maintainers, suppliers, consultants, engineers and technical experts to discuss the projects and initiatives that are helping to build Australia’s rail freight capability.

The three-day event features an extensive program of over 45 speakers, with keynotes and panel discussions from freight industry leaders and specialists including:

- Australian Rail Track Corporation CEO Mark Campbell
- Aurizon Managing Director and CEO Andrew Harding
- Port of Melbourne Executive General Manager Port Growth and Planning Caryn Anderson
- Toll Global Express Chief Transformation Officer Mario Philippou
- Pacific National Chief Operating Officer Patrick O'Donnell
- National Transport Commission Executive Leader Facilitated Reform Sandra McKay
- Port of Brisbane CEO Neil Stephens
- NSW Ports GM Operations and Environment Jonathan Lafforgue

- Coles Supermarkets Executive General Manager Central Operations and Transformation Kevin Gunn
- CQUniversity Centre for Railway Engineering Maksym Spiryagin

The program also includes key updates from federal and state government representatives including Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development the Hon Catherine King MP, Queensland Minister for Transport and Main Roads the Hon Mark Bailey MP and representatives from Transport for NSW and Freight Victoria.

Delegates will discuss topics ranging from Inland Rail, intermodals and ports, operations, safety, technology and innovation to supply chain resilience, sustainability and regional economic growth.

The ARA Rail Freight Conference is the only national conference for the rail freight sector and takes place from Wednesday 19 October to Friday 21 October at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre.

As part of the pre-conference events being staged on Wednesday 19 October, delegates can participate in an Inland Rail Workshop to facilitate a more in-depth discussion on the largest rail freight project in the country.

View the program [here](#).

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#### Further information

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