

## BRIEFING NOTE

# RAIL SUPPLY CHAIN RESEARCH PROJECT

**Australia's rail supply chain is critical to the efficient operation and development of our national passenger and freight networks to support our continued growth and prosperity.**

### Assessing the rail supply chain

As the factors affecting the rail supply chain continue to change, a clear understanding of the capability, capacity, size, structure and contribution of the industry is required to help shape the future direction of the industry.

This is particularly important at the moment as the industry responds to the impact of COVID-19. Current global events have created significant challenges for the rail supply chain, but there will also be new opportunities emerging as the nation's economic recovery begins.

Understanding this complexity will be key to supporting the industry and ensuring the right policy settings are in place to ensure those working in rail can prosper.

More than \$110 billion in rail construction investment is expected during the 2020s. This historic level of investment will drive higher levels of operations and maintenance over the longer term.

Delivering on this investment will further accentuate the challenges that exist for the Australian rail supply chain, highlighting the need for policies that build capacity, capability and resilience to ensure the longevity and success of the Australian rail supply chain.

### About the research project

The Australasian Railway Association (ARA) has commissioned BIS Oxford Economics to undertake a research project to better understand the Australian rail supply chain and inform the development of an Australian Rail Supply Chain Blueprint.

Data and information on the rail sector is often limited in its availability and completeness. Many suppliers may not consider themselves as rail suppliers as they may not solely service the rail industry. Therefore, significant effort will go into determining the number, size, location and ownership of organisations that are involved in the Australian supply chain to recognise the breadth and depth of the industry, and the importance of local employment, training, investment, economic contribution and exports.

The report will seek to draw together recent publications and analyses, as well as developing strong quantitative and qualitative evidence through significant industry consultation.

Identifying where and how the rail supply chain has been held back over recent years will ensure its potential can be fully realised in the future.

The research will also help better understand the harmonisation challenges that fragment the industry in respect to local content procurement, economies of scale, training and competencies, R&D and standards.

This report is expected to be published in October 2020.

#### Want to know more?

For more information, please contact ARA General Manager Supply Chain Natalie Currey at [ncurrey@ara.net.au](mailto:ncurrey@ara.net.au).