

MEDIA RELEASE

Inland Rail Conference on the Right Track

Close to 450 delegates are set to arrive in Toowoomba over the next few days to take part in the Inland Rail Conference, being jointly presented by the **Australian Logistics Council (ALC)** and the **Australasian Railway Association (ARA)** on **21-22 August 2019**.

The Inland Rail project, a 1,700km railway line directly linking Brisbane to Melbourne will transform Australia's freight networks, enhancing supply chain efficiency and safety, boosting the nation's export competitiveness and unlocking regional development and employment opportunities for local communities.

With backing from Gold Sponsor, the Inland Rail Project, and supported by the Toowoomba Regional Council and the Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise (TSBE), this two day event features keynote presentations from leading political figures, as well as panel sessions featuring representatives of some of Australia's leading companies that will explore all aspects of the historic Inland Rail project.

The Conference will be complemented by an exhibition featuring companies involved in or associated with the project.

Delegates will hear **keynote addresses** from leading political figures and project executives, including:

- The Hon. Michael McCormack MP**, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development
- The Hon. Catherine King MP**, Shadow Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development
- The Hon. Mark Coulton MP**, Minister for Regional Services, Decentralisation and Local Government, Assistant Trade and Investment Minister
- John Fullerton**, Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director, Australian Rail Track Corporation
- Richard Wankmuller**, Chief Executive Officer, Inland Rail Project, Australian Rail Track Corporation
- Cr Paul Antonio**, Mayor, Toowoomba Regional Council

The conference will address particular elements of the Inland Rail project, featuring high-profile panellists drawn from some of Australia's leading corporate, government, research and industry organisations.

Conference sessions will focus on key themes about the multifaceted impacts of the project:

- Customers and Inland Rail;
- Operators and Intermodals Enhancing Inland Rail;
- How Ports will Interact;
- Regional Development Opportunities;
- People Skills- How Inland Rail will boost workforce capacity;
- An Economic Enabler- What Inland Rail mean for Communities; and
- The Bigger Picture - Inland Rail and the wider rail network.

Danny Broad, CEO of the Australasian Railway Association said, "Once completed, the line will see freight move from Brisbane to Melbourne in less than 24 hours, reducing freight costs for customers, improving congestion on our roads, and reducing carbon and other polluting emissions,"

“This rail line will not just connect Melbourne to Brisbane, but connect to the East-West line at Parkes. It will become the backbone of the national freight supply chain,” he said.

Kirk Coningham, CEO, Australian Logistics Council said, “This industry-led conference will set out how the construction of Inland Rail is helping to deliver a critical missing link in our national supply chain – and highlight why we need to invest in complementary infrastructure, including connections to ports and intermodal facilities.”

“We will also be emphasising the importance of the federal, state and local government working cooperatively to get Inland Rail built, so that Australian producers can export their goods more efficiently, and we can boost our international competitiveness,” he said.

Richard Wankmuller, Chief Executive Officer, Inland Rail, Australian Rail Track Corporation said, “Our customers and industry have told us that connectivity and interoperability of rolling stock are key to the success of Inland Rail.”

“We have worked with many of Australia’s best engineering and consulting firms to determine a route that is as competitive with road as possible, and we are working closely with landowners and communities to ensure that impacts are minimised as much as possible while providing opportunities for farmers and businesses to reap significant economic benefits.”

Paul Antonio, Mayor of Toowoomba Regional Council said, “There is no doubt rail will play a big part in our Region’s future. About 60% of the goods that go in and out of the port of Brisbane already come from the region around Toowoomba and the Darling Downs and this would likely increase with the creation of this inland rail.”

It will help further stimulate our local economy through new opportunities and employment, as well as deliver benefits to our respective communities, Queensland and the nation,” he said.

Further information regarding the Inland Rail project is available [here](#).

Full details regarding the conference agenda can be viewed [here](#).

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