

Rail Futures Institute Inc.

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GENERAL POLICY AND ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS TO POLITICAL PARTIES DURING 2017

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

- **REGIONAL RAIL UPGRADING TO BE PRIORITY DRIVER TO INCENTIVISE REGIONAL LIVING** - Regional rail upgrading to be positioned as a key driver for incentivising population re-balancing between Melbourne and the regions - investment in faster rail will shrink distance and enhance opportunities for regional living, access to jobs and much improved housing affordability.
- **FAST LINE TO MELBOURNE AIRPORT TO BE THE NEXT MAJOR RAIL PROJECT** - A new stand-alone standard gauge fast line from the CBD to Melbourne Airport should be the next major rail project after Melbourne Metro. It will be the catalyst for major re-configuration and standardisation of the regional rail network along the lines of the *InterCity* concept.
- **BENDIGO AND SEYMOUR/SHEPPARTON/ALBURY LINES TO BE DIVERTED VIA MELBOURNE AIRPORT** - Subsequent stages should extend the Airport line to the Bendigo line at Clarkefield and Seymour/Shepparton lines at Wallan and be a catalyst for standardising and upgrading these lines.
- **METRO AND REGIONAL RAIL NETWORKS TO BE PROGRESSIVELY SEGREGATED** - Full segregation of regional from metropolitan lines is essential for the efficient and reliable operation of both rail networks and should be reflected in all future network planning and rolling stock acquisitions.
- **REGIONAL LINES TO BE PROGRESSIVELY CONVERTED TO STANDARD GAUGE** starting with the Ballarat-Maryborough (part of Murray Basin project) and Ballarat-Ararat lines.
- **DANDENONG RAIL LINE TO BECOME A FOUR TRACK CORRIDOR** to enable express running of Pakenham and Cranbourne trains and for Gippsland passengers to have acceptable journey times.
- **METROPOLITAN LINE EXTENSIONS TO BE PRIORITISED** especially in respect of Werribee to Wyndham Vale and Cranbourne to Clyde lines.
- **GOVERNMENT TO ACTIVELY FACILITATE GROWTH OF FREIGHT ON RAIL.**

CRITICAL ACTION RECOMMENDATIONS

- **PRIORITISE JOURNEY TIME REDUCTIONS IN REGIONAL RAIL NETWORK PLANNING** in addition to network capacity growth and progressing early acquisition of new long distance trains.
- **INITIATE PLANNING FOR A SOUTHERN CROSS TO AIRPORT FAST LINE** - With a lead time of 8-10 years, detailed planning must commence immediately.
- **RESERVE CORRIDORS FOR REGIONAL CONNECTIONS BEYOND MELBOURNE AIRPORT** - Early action is needed to identify and reserve land for an Airport to Clarkefield connection on the Bendigo line. Connection to the Seymour line to be via the reserved OMR corridor.
- **PLAN EARLY ELECTRIFICATION OF RRL LINES SOUTHERN CROSS TO WYNDHAM VALE** for use by Metro trains, including four track sections beyond Deer Park for overtaking by Geelong VLocity trains.
- **DIRECT V/LINE TO ANTICIPATE FUTURE STANDARDISATION OF ITS REGIONAL NETWORK** – V/Line to be directed that future major rail works on its broad gauge regional lines must use gauge convertible sleepers. Early conversion to be planned for Ballarat to Ararat and Ballarat to Maryborough lines.
- **PLAN FOR A FOUR TRACK DANDENONG RAIL CORRIDOR** to be progressively implemented in subsequent stages following the current upgrade and level crossing removal project, including future proofing for a Melbourne Metro extension from South Yarra to Caulfield.
- **PLAN FOR EARLY METROPOLITAN LINE EXTENSIONS** from Werribee to Wyndham Vale and from Cranbourne to Clyde.
- **ESTABLISH A RAIL FREIGHT FACILITATION UNIT** within DEDJTR with clear accountability for identifying rail freight opportunities and facilitating their implementation in conjunction with the private sector.