



Rail Futures Inc

A0059839B

2014-2015 Victorian State Budget Submission

This submission has been prepared by Rail Futures Incorporated in the public interest. Rail Futures Inc is an independent non-partisan group formed to advocate cost effective rail and intermodal solutions for public transport and freight problems based on sound commercial, economic and social reasoning. Rail Futures members include very experienced rail professionals, engineers and economists

Secretary,

Dr E W Russell, PO Box 1257

Carlton Vic 3053

RAIL FUTURES SUBMISSION FOR THE 2014-5 STATE BUDGET

PRIORITY	PROJECT AND RATIONALE	ESTIMATED AMOUNT
1	<p>Melbourne Metro Project</p> <p>Rail Futures considers that expenditure on engineering development, planning and preliminaries on this project should be expedited, on the basis that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The Melbourne Metro project is the most significant public transport project needed currently being planned; (b) Vital enhancements to the suburban rail network depend on the project, including network extensions to Doncaster and Rowville as well as capacity increases on other key suburban routes; (c) Standard gauge rail freight access to Hastings cannot be provided until the project is completed; (d) Having the capacity equivalent to 28 lanes of freeway, the Metro is the project that will contribute most to the reduction in congestion in Melbourne; (e) The project specifically assists mobility in Melbourne's rapidly growing areas to the north west and south east; (f) It is vital that the project team be retained and built over coming years; (g) The project has been endorsed by Infrastructure Australia as sound and ready to proceed; (h) There is a minimum build time of 8 years and if commenced immediately likely completion would be 2022 – leaving a narrow window for the subsequent development of the South East Rail Link serving Hastings (i) The project has a positive Benefit Cost Ratio of 2. 	<p>Melbourne Metro was provided with \$40 million from the Federal Government for project development in the 2009 Budget. The Victorian Government allocated \$49.7 million in its 2012/13 State Budget to further progress planning and development work for Melbourne Metro, with \$10.2 million for 2013/2014.</p> <p>Rail Futures proposes that a further \$50 million for metro development be allocated in the 2014-15 State Budget</p>
	TOTAL REQUEST	\$ 50,000,000

PRIORITY	PROJECT AND RATIONALE	ESTIMATED REQUIREMENT
2	<p>Mildura Line Rehabilitation</p> <p>Despite substantial investment in recent years, the Mildura line remains in poor condition, while train speeds are low due to Temporary Speed Restrictions associated with level crossings. The case for further investment is based on the following considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The Mildura line is Victoria’s most important intrastate intermodal rail freight corridor, and intermodal services have positive private sector management through Wakefield transport; (b) The current Murray Basin Infrastructure Study is based on the potential this line has to serve intermodal, grain and mineral traffic on the line; (c) The long-awaited reinstatement of the Mildura passenger train will require the upgrades also required by the freight role of the line, with the first priority being to restore the North Geelong to Ballarat section to its previous Class 2 standard to facilitate operation of a restored regular Geelong-Ballarat passenger service (see next page re proposed Rail Revival project). (d) The ultimate development of a Mildura-Menindee transcontinental connection (which is important both for long distance container traffic as well as food bowl exports) is consistent with these investments. <p>Rail Futures proposes a staged program of level crossing upgrades and maintenance improvements, including restoration of the Geelong to Ballarat section to its previous Class 2 standard to facilitate the return of regular passenger train services. These improvements are necessary for the efficient and safe operations of the current intermodal and grain traffic on the line, but are also consistent with the possibility that after standardization Mildura traffic may be diverted on to a new connection from Lascelles to Hopetoun, as noted in “Victoria: the Freight State”.</p>	<p>Budget estimates: Mildura line level crossing upgrades: \$15M (commencement of multi-year program)</p> <p>Maintenance upgrades Total: \$30M</p>
	TOTAL REQUEST	\$ 45,000,000

PRIORITY	PROJECT AND RATIONALE	ESTIMATED AMOUNT
3	<p>Rail Revival Project</p> <p>Rail Futures considers that the first stage of implementation of a Revised Rail Revival Project should proceed in this budget.</p> <p>The project will ultimately provide for the linking of the major cities of Bendigo, Castlemaine, Maryborough, Ballarat and Geelong with a regular cross-state rail service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) This project will link five of Victoria's cities with a direct passenger rail service and provide cross country connections for educational, medical, employment and social purposes; The total population along these route is in excess of 400,000 people (b) It will provide of enhanced urban development along the routes for a number of communities which are being held back due to a lack of acceptable public transport; (c) At a later stage, a re-established Castlemaine to Maryborough line will allow for the transport of grain and quarry materials from the Moolort siding as well as an alternative for directing grain traffic to Geelong from the highly congested Bendigo line; (d) It will allow an enhanced service on the Ballarat to Maryborough line; (e) An assessment of this project was one of the current government commitments prior to the 2010 State election; however the originally proposed scope was found to be unviable and unaffordable. Rail Futures proposes a reduced scope and staged project that should be deliverable during the next term of government. 	<p>This would ultimately include the restoration of the line between Castlemaine and Maryborough, integration of the Goldfields Tourist Railway's facilities into the V/Line system, upgrading level crossing protection and other remedial work on the network.</p> <p>In the first stage, the focus would be on reintroducing passenger rail services between Geelong and Ballarat and integration with an improved Ballarat to Maryborough service. New low cost platforms would be opened at Bannockburn and Meredith.</p> <p>It does not include the passing loops at Tourello or Meredith as these are dealt with in the upgrading of the freight lines.</p> <p>In 2014-5, \$10M is proposed for detailed planning of the Rail Revival project, while the crossing loops and Mildura line upgrading required for the project are covered in separate parts of this submission as they are needed now for freight operations.</p> <p>The new stations at Bannockburn and Meredith would be provided in 2015/6 and 2016/7.</p> <p>The required DMUs (2 x 3-car sets) to replace up to 5 Sprinter DMU's that would operate the service would be sought as an add on to the existing VLocity order, for delivery and the commencement of Geelong-Ballarat Maryborough operations during 2018.</p>
	TOTAL REQUEST	\$ 10,000,000

PRIORITY	PROJECT AND RATIONALE	ESTIMATED REQUIREMENT
4	<p>Major Periodic Maintenance Allocation for Broad Gauge Freight Network</p> <p>The current annual allocation for Major Periodic Maintenance for the intrastate broad gauge freight network is approximately \$30 million over 4 years – or about \$7.5 million a year for the 1673 km freight only network. This results in low train speeds and excessive cycle times. \$7.5 million per annum is an insufficient allocation for an asset of this scale and an increase to \$20 M per annum is suggested.</p>	Proposed annual Major Periodic Maintenance allocation of \$20M
	TOTAL REQUEST	\$ 20,000,000

PRIORITY	PROJECT AND RATIONALE	ESTIMATED REQUIREMENT
5	<p>Infrastructure Improvements to Enhance Grain Freight on Rail</p> <p>Rail Futures notes that the Grain Logistics Task Force identified several projects that would materially assist the efficiency of grain handling on rail. The restored crossing loops at Meredith and Tourello would also accommodate restored and/or upgraded passenger services on the Geelong-Ballarat-Maryborough lines for the proposed Rail Revival project.</p> <p>The extended crossing loop and refurbished sidings at Murchison East will facilitate the operation of grain and intermodal services on the Goulburn Valley corridor including Deniliquin services using the recently reopened Toolamba-Echuca line. It will also be needed in due course to support a justifiable increase in the frequency of Melbourne-Shepparton passenger services.</p> <p>Rail Futures supports the allocation of funds from the State Budget for the following grain related projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Restored and upgraded crossing loop at Meredith; (b) Restored and upgraded crossing loop at Tourello; (c) Extended crossing loop and refurbishment of Murchison East Sidings 	<p>Budget estimates: 2 x Crossing Loops @ \$10M Murchison East sidings - \$6 M TOTAL: \$26M</p> <p style="text-align: right;">TOTAL REQUEST \$ 26,000,000</p>