

# **RAIL FUTURES INSTITUTE (INC)**

## **Submission to New South Wales TRAIN LINK DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN - June, 2024.**

### **FOREWORD**

This submission from the Rail Futures Institute Incorporated (RFI) puts forward initiatives to improve New South Wales (NSW) Train Link passenger rail services in the short to medium term. Our proposals primarily focus on modest increases in service frequencies and a small package of extensions to existing rail passenger services.

### **POTENTIAL SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS**

The aim overall should be to make the service much better than the current skeleton rail passenger service currently offered on some regional NSW lines in terms of days of operation and service frequency. Coupled with extension of selected existing Bathurst train services to originate / terminate at Orange and Dubbo, this can potentially be done at low cost through more intensive use of the new long distance train fleet and selective retention in the short term of some existing train sets, albeit operating to a less demanding duty cycle. This size train fleet should then be able to operate the enhanced services proposed below.

Patronage typically improves over all services on any route as a direct result of an enhanced service offering. Once the enhanced timetable has demonstrated its multiplier effect, timetables can be further fine-tuned to meet market demands. In turn, this would justify medium term further acquisition of new longer distance train sets (including locally manufactured units) allowing progressive withdrawal of existing older long distance rollingstock.

The enhanced NSW regional train timetables suggested below also offer the opportunity to rationalize, streamline and adjust the days of operation and schedules of connecting TRAIN LINK road coach services, further enhancing the overall network service offering (train and connecting coaches) compared to travel by private car or regional NSW airlines.

### **NORTHERN:**

Consider the practicality of re-structuring and supplementing daily train services along the lines listed below:

- ***Schedule an additional train from Sydney early evening to Coffs Harbour or Kempsey returning early morning next day to arrive in Sydney early afternoon allowing near a full day in Newcastle or half day in Sydney.***
- ***Alter the existing 0515 Up Grafton to run around an hour later arriving Sydney 1645 to offer more acceptable times from the North Coast and potentially regain the commuter traffic between Grafton and Coffs Harbour.***
- ***Consider re-arrangement of Brisbane services to operate as an extension off the existing 0708 Down Casino train arriving Brisbane at approximately 2115, returning late evening arriving Sydney next day around 1230.***
- ***The current overnight Southbound train can then be formed by the existing 1141 Northbound daylight Grafton train arriving at 2215, returning from Grafton around 2315, arriving Sydney next morning around 0915.***

### **SYDNEY - BROKEN HILL:**

Consider the practicality and potential patronage for a second weekly return train service ideally departing Sydney on Thursdays and returning from Broken Hill on Fridays. Provision of a second weekly service to/from Broken Hill will facilitate three and four day tourist stays, and external tour operator provision of 3 – 4 day tour packages.

## **WESTERN:**

### **SYDNEY – ORANGE - DUBBO**

Extend selected existing Bathurst train services to originate / terminate at Orange and Dubbo. This initiative requires no additional rollingstock and is low cost with excellent revenue potential noting that Orange has a population of 42,000 and Dubbo 55,000 at the 2021 census. The extra train running costs are marginal for these extensions but will be offset to a larger degree by new return trips from Dubbo and Orange to Sydney using largely existing available train capacity. Existing coach connections beyond Bathurst can be withdrawn resulting in reduced coach costs in the West.

#### **Sydney to Bathurst train services extend to ORANGE:**

***Weekdays ex Sydney 1747 arriving Orange at 2245, Saturdays/Sundays ex Sydney 1751, arriving Orange at 2245.***

#### **Bathurst to Sydney train services to originate from ORANGE:**

***Weekdays 0625 from Orange forming existing 0735 from Bathurst, arriving Sydney at 1124.***

***Saturdays/Sundays 0630 from Orange forming existing 0740 from Bathurst, arriving Sydney at 1124***

Consider provision of a daily Dubbo – Sydney day return train to complement the existing daily Sydney – Dubbo day return trip. This is most easily done by extending existing return day return trips already operating between Bathurst and Sydney as outlined below. This proposal is made also in the expectation there will be a need to operate the new train sets to and from Dubbo for programmed maintenance.

***Up: Dubbo depart 0445 Daily, Sydney arrive Weekdays (except Wed) & Sat, Sun at 1124, Wednesdays arrive 1146***

***Down: Sydney depart 1505 Daily (except Wed), Dubbo arrive 2145; Wed Sydney depart 1557 Dubbo arrive 2240***

## **SOUTHERN:**

### **SYDNEY - CANBERRA**

Investigate the medium term practicality of introducing a fourth Weekday service each way on the Sydney – Canberra route by extension of and augmentation of Sydney – Goulburn local trips, ideally along these indicative times:

***0530 from Canberra to Sydney with limited stops on the Up side of Goulburn arriving Sydney 0940***

***1600 from Sydney to Canberra, with limited stops between Sydney and Goulburn arriving Canberra around 2030***

### **SYDNEY - JUNEE / GRIFFITH (Attaching to and / from Canberra services at GOULBURN)**

Re-structure the Griffith timetable to provide a THIRD return Sydney – Griffith trip each week, ideally on the following days to maximize weekend return patronage in both directions:

***Sydney to Griffith: Mondays and Thursdays depart 1201 arrive 2011, Saturdays depart 0705 arrive 1535***

***Griffith to Sydney: Fridays and Sundays depart 1240 arrive 2116, Tuesdays depart 0725 arrive 1603***

### **SYDNEY / JUNEE / WAGGA**

Provide a DAILY day return service from Wagga Wagga to Sydney, (operating to Melbourne XPT stopping conditions between Sydney and Goulburn), ideally to this type of timetable:

***Wagga Wagga to Sydney: Depart Wagga Wagga around 0530 arrive Sydney Central 1210***

***Sydney to Wagga Wagga : Depart Sydney Central around 1630 arrive Wagga Wagga 2250***

***ENDS.***

## Attachment “A”.

### **About The Rail Futures Institute (Inc)**

The Rail futures Institute Inc was registered on 25<sup>th</sup> August 2013, in compliance with the Associations Incorporation Reform Regulations 2012, Victoria, as:

**The Rail Futures Institute Incorporated No A0059839B**, was registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for Profits Commission as a non - fund raising entity on 28 August 2013 – **ABN 77 808 559 618**

Our Committee and members include experienced rail professionals, urban planners, engineers and economists. (see page ii)

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### **Objectives of the Rail Futures Institute**

*The purposes of the association are to —*

1. Undertake public interest advocacy for the adoption of cost-effective passenger rail and intermodal rail freight solutions.
2. Undertake research, publish and disseminate information concerning public transport and freight issues.
3. Advocate for triple bottom line solutions to transport issues
4. Conduct conferences, seminars and forums on transport issues
5. Co-operate with other organizations which share these same aims.

### **Rail Futures Institute - Committee Members - 2023 / 2024**

**President** - John Hearsch

**Vice - President** – Peter Don

**Secretary** - David Hardy

**Treasurer** – Peter Doughty

#### ***General Committee Members -***

Jackie Fristacky AM

Dr Ross Lowrey

Fergus Moffat

Marianne Richards

Peter Tesdorpf

**Specialist Advisory** – Dr Clyde Croft AM, Emeritus Prof Michael Buxton AM, Dr E W Russell,

Graeme Macmillan, Max Michell, Mark Williams

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*e-mail:* [secretary@railfutures.org.au](mailto:secretary@railfutures.org.au)

## **Our Objectives and Strategy**

RFI is an entirely self-funded voluntary research and advocacy organisation. We undertake a wide range of activities designed to inform decision makers and all stakeholders on the urgent need to develop our existing rail assets and provide new assets for the benefit of present and future generations.

Our scope covers public passenger transport, commercial freight and their interaction with town and regional planning. We actively promote the economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits of using rail-based transport to move people and goods efficiently and in an environmentally sustainable manner. By anticipating future needs, we use targeted, non-partisan advocacy to recommend practical solutions for transport systems with the aim of reducing motor vehicle dependency and improving inter connectivity between people and places.

RFI seeks to influence public policy through publishing technical papers and brochures advocating practical rail-based transport applications linked with land use planning and population changes. This provides a broad context for our proposals which at this stage have mainly involved rail transport in the State of Victoria.

## **Rail Futures Institute Inc - Publications include :**

**The Case for Melbourne Metro** (December 2013)

**Melbourne Metro vs. Melbourne Rail Link** (August 2014)

**Trams and Light Rail in Melbourne's Future** (July 2015)

**Future Proofing Melbourne:** Advocating a Plan for Melbourne that integrates Metropolitan Land use and Transport Strategy and ensures a sustainable, resilient, less car dependent city. (June 2015)

**Getting Freight Back on Track in Victoria** (April 2016)

**Introducing *INTERCITY*:** How regional rail can re-balance population growth and create a 'State of Cities' in Victoria (September 2016)

***AIRtrain*** – The Airport Train Melbourne Needs (March 2017)

***INTER – CITY*** : How regional Rail can re-balance population growth and create a "State of Cities" in Victoria – (July 2018)

***The MELBOURNE RAIL PLAN 2020 - 2050*** – Public Transport for a City of 8 million people – (September 2019)

### ***GROWING VICTORIA'S REGIONS***

A plan to progressively re-balance Victorias population through targeted growth of regional cities, facilitated by parallel upgrading of the regional rail passenger network.

– (July 2024)

As at: 24/06/2024.