

2019 RAIL ELECTION ANNOUNCEMENTS

ARA Policy Proposals

1. Making Cities Liveable

The Australian Government must continue to increase its funding of urban passenger and freight rail projects which are essential to reduce road congestion, improve the quality of life in major cities and increase productivity.

2. Connecting Our Regions

The Australian Government must plan and resource inter-regional fast rail projects and East Coast High Speed rail through a national planning agency.

3. Supporting Employment

The Australian Government should lead the response to identified critical skilled labour shortages by formalising a high level taskforce of government, industry and the education sector to lead reforms, build partnerships and implement recommendations contained in the ARA report *Rail Skills Crisis: A Call to Action*.

4. Strengthening Our Economy

Rail Freight is fundamental to maintaining the international competitiveness of Australia's export industry. Rail freight companies move thousands of tonnes of coal, iron ore and other minerals as well as agricultural and general freight around the nation. The Australian Government should implement national mode-neutral freight strategies, policies and investment and independent price regulation of heavy vehicles to establish an even playing field between road and rail.

5. National Coordination to support Industry

The Australian Government should lead the development of a National Rail Industry Plan to make way for a more coherent national approach to rail involving all state and territory governments and industry. The plan will recognise the importance of rail for infrastructure development, urban planning and freight movements, increase opportunities for Australian companies to participate in the rail supply chain, give manufacturers greater predictability, grow jobs, harmonise operational and safety standards, and foster innovation, research and development.

Labor response and policies

Projects have been listed in an ALP policy document.

https://alp.org.au/media/1902/nation_building_infrastructure.pdf

Establish a High Speed Rail Authority to progress planning and begin securing the corridor required to build a high speed rail link from Brisbane to Melbourne via Sydney and Canberra. When completed the project will also be an economic game changer for communities along its path, including Gold Coast, Grafton, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie, Newcastle, the Central Coast, Southern Highlands, Canberra, Wagga Wagga and Shepparton.

https://alp.org.au/media/1902/nation_building_infrastructure.pdf

"A Shorten Labor Government will adopt the central recommendation arising out of the report released by the ARA and establish a Strategic Rail Workforce Development Forum. It will be tasked with developing strategic responses to the skills issues facing the industry, and building productive working relationships across the industry and with TAFE and other training providers." Shadow Minister Albanese speech to AusRail, December 2018.

"A Shorten Labor Government will invest \$20 Million towards a purpose built Rail Technology Campus (RTC) at the Chullora precinct." Media statement by Shadow Minister Burke, Cameron and Clare, 16 May 2019.
<https://alp.org.au/policies/building-tafe-for-the-future/>
<https://alp.org.au/policies/labors-plan-for-apprentices/>

Commenting on the National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy during his address to ALC Forum, Mr. Albanese confirmed "a future Labor Government would not try and reinvent the wheel yet again." ALC Annual Forum, 7 March 2019.

"Labor will Appoint an eminent Australian to conduct an independent, transparent inquiry into the integrity and efficacy of the route selection process and financing arrangements associated with delivery of the Inland Rail project. Federal Labor supports Inland Rail." Shadow Minister Albanese, Media Release, 23 April 2019.

"A Shorten Labor Government will ensure that more trains are built in Australia by local workers. We will establish a National Rail Plan to ensure that every dollar of Federal funding spent on rail projects goes towards creating local jobs and protecting our rail industry. Labor will work with the states and territories through the Council of Australian Governments to develop a National Rail Procurement and Manufacturing Strategy. As part of this strategy, future Commonwealth grant funding for rail infrastructure projects will be linked to objectives such as work being undertaken in Australia and jurisdictions cooperating on procurement."

<https://alp.org.au/policies/labors-plan-for-rail-manufacturing-jobs/>

Coalition response and policies

Projects have been listed in a Coalition policy document.

<https://www.liberal.org.au/our-plan/infrastructure>

Creation of a National Fast Rail Agency to guide the work, determine priorities based on the assessments, work with state governments and communities and the private sector and provide innovative finance.

Funding the business cases of 5 projects: Sydney-Wollongong; Sydney-Parkes (via Bathurst & Orange); Melbourne-Albury; Melbourne-Taralgon; Brisbane-Gold Coast.

<https://www.liberal.org.au/our-plan-population-migration-and-better-cities>

"A thorough review of the findings and recommendations of the report will be undertaken as part of the multi government process that is underway to craft the (National Rail) plan which will be presented to Transport and Infrastructure Council for endorsement in 2019." DPM McCormack correspondence to ARA, 14 January 2019.

<https://www.liberal.org.au/our-plan-delivering-high-quality-skills-and-vocational-education>

"Good progress is being made in partnership with all levels of government and it (the National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy) will be a key item of discussion at the next COAG Transport and Infrastructure Ministerial Council Meeting" DPM McCormack to ALC Annual Forum, 7 March 2019.

"We are working with states through a new National Partnership Agreement coming into effect on 1 July to enhance local content and employment opportunities for Australian Government funded projects. A new National Rail Plan is being developed with all levels of government to be completed this year. This will update the 2016 TIC endorsed National Rail Vision and Work Program and incorporate appropriate elements of the ARA National Rail Industry Plan." Correspondence to the ARA, 15 May 2019.

<https://www.liberal.org.au/our-plan-stronger-manufacturing-sector>