



# Media release

Friday 23 April 2021

## Port of Melbourne backs Inland Rail

Connection of Inland Rail to the Port of Melbourne will be essential to meeting the long term demands of consumers and businesses, according to the operator of Australia's largest container port.

Port of Melbourne CEO Brendan Bourke testified this week in support of the Inland Rail project at a public Senate hearing held by the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee.

Mr Bourke emphasised the need for an integrated and connected freight supply chain system. This means Inland Rail needs to connect efficiently with other freight infrastructure, including the port of Melbourne and metropolitan and regional intermodal freight hubs.

Inland Rail has a vital role in re-positioning Australia's domestic and by extension, international freight task and should be considered more than an investment in an infrastructure project. To leverage the full benefit we need to:

- Focus on the movement of freight as a system and ensure system connectivity to bring the total supply chain together to drive efficiencies; and,
- Provide certainty on the scope and timing of investments to leverage private participation and drive market outcomes.

"As the primary trade gateway for south-eastern Australia, Port of Melbourne facilitates more than one-third of the nation's container trade and is a key driver of the economy," he said.

"It is important, therefore, that the infrastructure which supports the movement of freight is connected to the Port," he said.

"This entails the Inland Rail Project having a finalised intermodal terminal in Melbourne and a direct freight connection to the Port of Melbourne, including Webb Dock."

Efficiently connecting the Inland Rail intermodal terminal to the Port is a critical element of Port of Melbourne's 30-year Port Development Strategy, designed to deliver sustainable trade growth over the long term, with ultimate benefits for the economy and community at-large.

Port of Melbourne is committed to increasing the use of rail, particularly for the transport of containers.

The Port Rail Transformation Project is an example of Port of Melbourne's demonstrated commitment to rail. With an investment of more than \$125 million, the Port Rail Transformation Project will enhance existing and build new rail infrastructure while also transforming how rail works at the Port.

In addition to the community benefit of taking trucks off roads, the project will increase rail terminal capacity and improve rail operations at the Port.

"As the manager of the Port, we will continue to invest along with industry and government to support the efficiency of the port supply chain," Mr Bourke said.

Over the next 30 years, total container trade volumes through the Port are forecast to almost triple from 3 million twenty-foot equivalent units (TEU) per year, to around 8.9 million by 2050.

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Port of Melbourne

