

Submission form: Victoria’s draft 30-year infrastructure strategy

Your details

Name:	Dr Philip Laird OAM, FCILT, Comp IE Aust
Organisation (if applicable):	Click or tap here to enter text.
Position (if applicable):	Click or tap here to enter text.
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About you

Please tell us which best describes you:

- Victorian resident
- Victorian business owner/operator
- Industry professional
- Community organisation representative
- Local government representative
- State government representative
- Researcher
- Other (please specify): Click or tap here to enter text.

Your focus areas

Select the topics or regions you are providing feedback on (select all that apply):

Topics	Regions
<input type="checkbox"/> Across sectors	<input type="checkbox"/> Regional Victoria
<input type="checkbox"/> Circular economy	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban growth areas
<input type="checkbox"/> Cities	<input type="checkbox"/> Melbourne
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Climate change	
<input type="checkbox"/> Community infrastructure	
<input type="checkbox"/> Education	
<input type="checkbox"/> Energy	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Freight	
<input type="checkbox"/> Health	
<input type="checkbox"/> Housing	
<input type="checkbox"/> Infrastructure for Victoria's First Peoples	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transport	
<input type="checkbox"/> Water	

Your feedback

Add as many sections as you need to provide all your feedback in this submission.

Topic/area:	Freight
Recommendation name:	Develop and publish a 30-year integrated rail freight network plan and fund a 10-year rail freight maintenance program. Develop a freight network coordination policy.
Recommendation number:	41
1. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
2. Tell us why	As noted, freight is expected to increase, and road freight has high external costs. It produces more emissions than rail freight.
3. Share any supporting evidence or examples	<p>Please see https://www.uow.edu.au/media/2021/instead-of-putting-more-massive-trucks-on-our-roads-we-need-to-invest-in-our-railnetwork.php</p> <p>In part, The Port of Melbourne moves more containers than any other port in Australia, over 3m TEU pa, yet only a small percentage arrives or leaves the port by rail. With current road pricing subject to large hidden subsidies via under-recovery of road system costs, (\$2 billion pa for Australia) and road freight having high emissions and external costs, the Mode Shift Incentive scheme should continue until road pricing is addressed.</p>
4. Include proposed changes and improvements	<p>More attention is needed to the gauge issue currently afflicting rail freight in Victoria.</p> <p>Victoria, whose mainlines were all broad gauge up to 1962, is slowly moving to more standard gauge for its freight lines. After the Melbourne Adelaide rail standardisation project in 1995, with three intrastate lines, the next project was from near Seymour to Albury by the ARTC, along with a branch line from Benalla via Yarrawonga to Oaklands in NSW.</p> <p>The Victorian rail freight network logically should become entirely standard gauge with seamless ability to use locomotives and rolling stock from anywhere in Australia. This was amply demonstrated during 2020 with the rail export of grain from Western Victoria and South Australia to drought ravaged areas of NSW in standard gauge trains comprising wagons and locomotives sourced from all parts of the nation.</p>

	<p>Moreover, these standard gauge grain trains were able to reach NSW via both Albury and South Australia.</p> <p>Attention could also be given to getting more interstate freight onto rail (or sea). Hopefully completion of new intermodal terminals at Somerton and Beveridge in Melbourne (and Moorebank in Sydney) will help here.</p>
Topic/area:	Introduce road charges that help manage congestion and improve productivity. Consider options such as car parking levies, off-peak freeway tolls, congestion pricing trials, or road user charging for all motorists with lowered fixed road charges. Work with the Australian Government on road pricing options.
Recommendation name:	Topic on page 133
Recommendation number:	Page
5. Do you support this topic or recommendation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> In part
6. Tell us why	<p>In part as above. The citation of overseas cities having congestion charging is helpful. To this could be added New York where some congestion charging started in early 2025.</p> <p>As noted, road congestion is increasing in and near Melbourne. It is simply impossible to overcome road congestion simply by building more road capacity.</p>
7. Share any supporting evidence or examples	Click or tap here to enter text.
8. Include proposed changes and improvements	Would like to see this elevated to a recommendation.

More feedback (optional)

Tell us about infrastructure challenges, gaps or opportunities not covered by the draft strategy. This can include things you think we should add to an existing recommendation, or suggestions for a new recommendation.

Please provide evidence for your suggestions. This can include data, specific examples, cost benefit analyses, surveys, or program evaluations. Also, explain how your suggestions align with the objectives of our draft strategy (see page 11 of the draft strategy).

Suggestions for new recommendations should point towards infrastructure opportunities that can deliver long-term benefits for Victorians. They should also be areas where the Victorian Government has a leading role.

A few items that could be given some or more attention.

1. Completion of rail access to Tullamarine airport. Sydney has had rail access to its major airport since the year 2000 followed by Brisbane, and recently Perth. Sydney's new second airport will also have a rail connection.
2. Maintain the Melbourne-Adelaide passenger rail service and increase its frequency.
3. Work with the NSW and Australian governments to improve the Melbourne-Sydney passenger rail service. See <https://theconversation.com/more-than-ever-its-time-to-upgrade-the-sydney-melbourne-railway-187169> for ways to make the current service faster.
4. Work with the NSW and Australian governments to provide a Melbourne-Wagga Wagga passenger rail service.
5. Acknowledge that there is potential, in the long term (20 years or more) for a Melbourne Canberra Sydney high speed rail with trains moving at 250 km/h or more on dedicated new track, with a need for the Victorian government to assist in corridor identification and protection.