



The Hon Michael McCormack MP

Deputy Prime Minister
Minister for Infrastructure and Transport
Leader of The Nationals
Federal Member for Riverina

Senator The Hon Mathias Cormann

Minister for Finance
Senator for Western Australia

The Hon Dr John McVeigh MP

Minister for Regional Development, Territories and Local Government
Federal Member for Groom

MEDIA RELEASE

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HELPING REGIONS BE READY FOR INLAND RAIL

The Liberal and Nationals Government has today announced the development of a strategic planning tool to support the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail, led by the Regional Australia Institute (RAI).

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Michael McCormack said the *'Are you Ready for Inland Rail?'* tool will help regional Australians maximise the benefits of Inland Rail.

"This tool will outline the information regional communities need to consider to best prepare and take advantage of the long term benefits of this corridor of commerce," Mr McCormack said.

"The RAI has a great track record in developing strategic regional planning tools, to help regions across Australia maximise their growth and development."

Minister for Finance Mathias Cormann said the \$9.3 billion commitment by the Australian Government to deliver the Inland Rail will ensure a fast, reliable and modern rail link between Melbourne and Brisbane, adding more than \$16 billion to the Australian economy.

"The Inland Rail delivers the infrastructure required to ensure that Australia's supply chain remains competitive into the future," Senator Cormann said.

"Not only does this provide a long-term solution for national freight task, it provides infrastructure that will help to grow economic opportunity throughout regional Australia."

Minister for Regional Development John McVeigh said the Inland Rail Regional Liaison Offices will work with communities utilising the tool to take advantage of long term benefits for regions.

“Staff from the Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities will be working with businesses and communities along the alignment to understand how they can make the most of this major investment in freight infrastructure,” Dr McVeigh said.

“The long term benefits of Inland Rail for regional Australia will be most effectively led by regional communities, and this tool will help regional communities to achieve this.

“The Regional Australia Institute, tasked with developing this tool, is an important advocate for regional communities and I am pleased we have been able to provide additional support for the RAI in this year’s Federal Budget.”

Regional Australia Institute CEO Jack Archer said for those regions along the Inland Rail route, being able to capitalise on the benefits it will bring is dependent on having a well planned and executed strategic plan.

“The planning tool, which every region will be able to access and benefit from, regardless of their size or resource constraints, will help communities prepare for this once in a generation opportunity,” Jack Archer said.

The ‘*Are You Ready for Inland Rail*’ strategic planning tool will be available from September 2018.

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