

# ALP COMMITMENTS ELECTION BRIEFING

ARA INSIGHTS



## 2022 ALP Election Commitments– Rail Highlights

With it likely the Australian Labor Party will be able to form a majority government in the next few days, the Australasian Railway Association has reidentified their commitments to the rail industry made during the election.

### NATIONAL RAIL MANUFACTURING PLAN

Labor's commitment of \$14 million to develop the **National Rail Manufacturing Plan** that would require more trains built in Australia by local manufacturing workers and that Federal funding spent on rail projects contributes towards creating local jobs and protecting Australia's rail industry.

By manufacturing trains here Labor contends its Plan would create up to 659 full-time jobs, create a rolling stock export industry and boost Australia's GDP by up to \$5 billion.

The plan is part of Labor's Future Made in Australia policy and would include:

- Establishing an **Office of National Rail Industry Coordination** (ONRIC) within the Department of Industry, to undertake a national audit of the adequacy, capacity and condition of passenger trains and develop train priority plans, including a proposed delivery schedule for the next 10 years.

ONRIC would develop the **National Rail Procurement and Manufacturing Strategy** in consultation with the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, state governments, rail transport operators, rail unions and manufacturers, and in accordance with Australia's World Trade Organisation (WTO) obligations. One element of the Strategy is that future Commonwealth grant funding for infrastructure projects will be contingent on the states and territories agreeing to be active partners in the development and implementation of the National Rail Procurement and Manufacturing Strategy.

- Reinstating the **Rail Supplier Advocate** discontinued by the Government in 2013 – to help small and medium-sized enterprises identify export opportunities and to

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get a foot in the door with government purchasing bodies. Central to the Advocate's role would be helping small and medium-sized enterprises market their products to government purchasing bodies and champion sectoral initiatives to improve competitiveness. The Advocate would also be tasked with helping Australian manufacturers finding export opportunities and to assess and provide advice on local content targets for rolling stock.

- Establishing a **Rail Industry Innovation Council** – to prevent the loss of jobs and address the need for more local research and development, skills and capabilities. The Council would have the role of transforming industry and addressing the issues of research and development, skills and capabilities. The Council would also provide strategic advice on innovation priorities to the Minister; champion innovation in the industry; and build connections and collaborate with other innovation initiatives and organisations.

## NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION FUND

Labor's \$15 billion **National Reconstruction Fund** to rebuild Australia's industrial base.

The National Reconstruction Fund would provide a financing vehicle to specifically drive investment in projects that will build prosperity across the country, broadening Australia's industrial base and boosting regional economic development.

The Fund would provide loans, guarantees and equity to support projects that create secure well-paid jobs, drive regional development, and invest in Australia's national sovereign capability, broadening and diversifying Australia's economy.

Through the National Reconstruction Fund, Labor would partner with businesses to unlock further potential private investment of more than \$30 billion.

This investment will play to Australia's strengths supporting new and emerging industries, transitioning existing industries to net zero emissions and by making it easier to commercialise innovation and technology.

The National Reconstruction Fund would be administered by an independent board with government setting its mandate to drive investment in key sectors focusing on value

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adding and capability development to leverage Australia's natural and competitive strengths including:

- Transport: Develop Australia's capabilities in transport manufacturing and supply chains including for trains.

## EDUCATION AND SKILLS

### Fee Free TAFE

Labor's **Fee Free TAFE Plan** that would enable 465,000 fee free TAFE places – including 45,000 new places for students studying for industries with skills shortages.

Labor would make sure at least 70 per cent of all public funding for vocational education goes to TAFE to strengthen Australia's public education system. Labor would also deliver \$50 million to boost technology on campuses, creating world-leading TAFE training centres.

### University Places

Labor would invest \$481.7 million to deliver up to 20,000 extra university places over 2022 and 2023, making it easier for Australians to secure a place at university and get a job.

Labor would aim to prioritise the new funding for universities that are able to offer additional courses in national priority areas like clean energy, advanced manufacturing, health and education, or where there are skills shortages.

Labor would also establish an **Australian Universities Accord** to drive lasting reform for universities. The Accord would help deliver accessibility, affordability, quality, certainty, sustainability and prosperity to the higher education sector and the country.

### Australian Skills Guarantee

Labor would enable the training of thousands of workers by ensuring one in ten workers on major government projects is an apprentice, trainee or cadet.

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## Jobs and Skills Australia

Labor would establish **Jobs and Skills Australia** as an independent body to bring together the business community, states and territories, unions, education providers and regional organisations to match skills training with the evolving demands of industry and strengthen workforce planning.

## FASTER RAIL

Labor would prioritise a fast rail connection between Sydney, the Central Coast and Newcastle through a new statutory agency, the **High-Speed Rail Authority**. The line would include stops in the Central Coast, with Wyong and Gosford, and be built with the capacity for trains to run up to and over 250kmh.

While this route is a priority, the High-Speed Rail Authority would continue work on advancing other sections of the line, eventually connecting Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney and Brisbane.

Labor would provide a \$500 million down payment in its first budget to start corridor acquisition, planning and early works, working closely with the New South Wales Government, which has also identified this project as a key priority.

## SUBURBAN RAIL LOOP

Labor would invest an initial \$2.2 billion in the Melbourne Suburban Rail Loop over the next five years to give the Victorian Government confidence of partnership with the Federal Government on delivering the major rail project.

## BUY AUSTRALIAN PLAN

Labor's **Buy Australian Plan** that aims to improve the way Australian Government contracts work, ensuring more opportunities are available to Australian businesses and their employees.

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The Buy Australian Plan will:

1. Establish a **Future Made in Australia Office**, backed up by laws that will lock in key elements of Commonwealth Procurement Rules (CPRs) to actively support local industry in taking advantage of government purchasing opportunities
2. Maximise opportunities for Australia businesses in major infrastructure projects
3. Open the door to more government work for more small and medium businesses by decoding and simplifying procurement processes
4. Establish a **Secure Australian Jobs Code** to prioritise secure work in government contracts and ensure that government purchasing power is being used to support businesses that engage in fair, equitable, ethical and sustainable practices
5. Provide more opportunities for First Nations businesses with a view to maximise skills transfer so that we can get more First Nations workers into long-term skilled work
6. Level the playing field by bringing in a **Fair Go Procurement Framework** requiring those that gain government contracts to pay their fair share of tax
7. Supporting industry sectors through the government's purchasing power
8. Use government spending power to take action on climate change and support energy projects
9. Strengthen Defence industries and capability
10. Make National Partnerships work to maximise the use of local workers and businesses.

## MORE LIVEABLE CITIES AND SUBURBS

Labor's **Plan for Cities** that will invest in Australian cities and suburbs to make them more productive, sustainable and liveable:

1. Transform City Deals into City Partnerships – promoting genuine collaboration between the three levels of government, business and the community
2. Revitalise Central Business Districts (CBDs)
3. Renew the independent role of Infrastructure Australia – through the creation of an **Australian Cities and Suburbs Unit**
4. Produce an annual state of the cities report to inform policy-making with evidence.
5. Deliver a new **National Urban Policy Framework**

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6. Give local government a voice in a meaningful National Cabinet process.

## LEVEL CROSSING SAFETY

Labor's commitment of \$87.5 million towards **a new elevated Beckenham Station and level crossing removal** to support the delivery of METRONET in Western Australia.

## MORE INFORMATION

For more information, please contact ARA General Manager Policy & Government Relations, Simon Bourke at [sbourke@ara.net.au](mailto:sbourke@ara.net.au).