The final step in the process is that ARTC makes a recommendation to the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport through the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail Steering Committee. This approach is considered to represent industry best practice. It is applied across the entire Inland Rail Programme to ensure a consistent approach to the ‘like for like’ comparison of all alternative route options.

This document describes how ARTC undertakes a ‘like for like’ comparison of alternative route options and is applied along the entire Inland Rail route. There are three elements.

Alternatives are compared on their ability to meet the
SERVICE OFFERING

- **TRANSIT TIME**: requires a transit time from Melbourne to Brisbane in less than 24 hours
- **RELIABILITY**: requires 98 per cent reliability to freight customers
- **COMPETITIVE PRICING**: requires competitive pricing for freight customers
- **AVAILABILITY**: requires suitable train paths at the times that suit the needs of the market

Alternatives are compared on basis of
COSTS

- **CONSTRUCTION ESTIMATE**
- **OPERATING COSTS**

And a range of factors is considered in a
MULTI-CRITERIA ANALYSIS

- **TECHNICAL VIABILITY** (17%): considers the alignment, impact on public utilities, geotechnical conditions, impacts on existing road and rail networks, flood immunity and hydrology and future proofing
- **SAFETY ASSESSMENT** (16.5%): considers construction safety, operational safety, public safety, road safety interfaces and emergency response
- **OPERATIONAL APPROACH** (16.5%): considers the impact on travel time, reliability and availability, and network interoperability and connectivity including interfaces with rail terminals and network
- **CONSTRUCTABILITY & SCHEDULE** (12.5%): considers construction duration, access, and complexity, resources, interface with operational railway and staging opportunities
- **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS** (12.5%): considers the ecological impacts (flora, fauna and habitats), visual impacts, noise and vibration impacts, flooding and waterway impacts and the effect on air quality and greenhouse gas emissions
- **COMMUNITY & PROPERTY IMPACTS** (12.5%): considers property impacts, Indigenous and non-Indigenous heritage, heritage, impact on community, community response and current and future land use and links to economic impacts
- **APPROVALS & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT** (12.5%): considers planning and approval requirements, State and Federal agency buy-in, Local government buy-in, other statutory and regulatory approvals and service authorities, such as utilities etc.
- **SAFETY ASSESSMENT** (16.5%): considers construction safety, operational safety, public safety, road safety interfaces and emergency response

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