Benefits to Victoria

$7 billion of economic benefit will be injected into the region.

Improved connectivity to the rail network means a faster, lower-cost link to Brisbane, New South Wales and other markets.

Regional employment will see a boost, with approximately 2,800 jobs during the construction period.

The need for Inland Rail

Australia’s freight volumes are forecast to more than double by 2050. If nothing changes, this will mean even greater road congestion due to more trucks impacting our national and local road networks. The first train is scheduled to operate in 2024-25 and each 1,800m train using the Inland Rail network has the ability to remove the equivalent of 110 B-double trucks from our roads by transporting freight in a cost and time competitive way. This means reduced carbon emissions of 750,000 tonnes.

This sustainable solution will slash Australia’s fuel bill, moving our consumer goods and exports with as little as one-third of the fuel that it would take to move the load on our highways.

Inland Rail will provide freight customers on the east coast with competitive pricing, 98% reliability, a transit time from Melbourne to Brisbane of less than 24 hours, flexibility for faster and slower services, and freight that is available when the market wants.

About the Tottenham to Albury Project

The Tottenham to Albury (T2A) project is an enhancement to 305km of existing North East Rail corridor. Travelling from north to south, the existing rail corridor runs largely parallel to the Hume Highway from the Murray River at Wodonga to the outskirts of Melbourne. It then shares the metropolitan rail corridor from Seymour to Jacana, continues south-east on its own line to meet up with the Sunbury line at Albion.

This project will see enhancements of existing structures to provide increased clearances along the rail corridor. The enhancement works are required to accommodate double stacked trains of 1,800m in length to be run on the track.
Where are we now?
In 2016, we started early thinking about engineering concepts that could support the running of double stacked trains on the rail line in Victoria. This was the ‘Concept Assessment’. We are now undertaking a series of investigations and field studies to gain an understanding of the local flora and fauna to identify habitats and/or species that exist within the rail corridor and identify local ground conditions. This is called ‘Project Feasibility’ and will help us understand any technical challenges and opportunities. It also helps to inform our conversations with communities across regional Victoria.

Picturing the detail
Point and click – and you have a 3D scan of a bridge! A new laser scanner with on-board cameras is allowing engineers on the Inland Rail project to capture the dimensions of bridges along the rail line in just minutes. Engineer Kris Brown from KBR has been using the 3D scan technology to snap the heights, widths and depths of concrete bridges from Tottenham to Albury while working on Feasibility Stage designs.

“We’re using the Leica BLK360 camera for the first time in Victoria to capture High Definition Laser Scans of existing bridges along the Inland Rail project,” Engineer Kris Brown says. “It’s an extremely handy tool to help us measure large structures accurately from a short distance away which helps keep our team safe around operating rail lines.”
Next steps
We are engaging with the community at locations in metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria from mid to late 2018 to discuss our early design thinking. These conversations will focus on sharing information around how the proposed enhancement works will sit in the local environment, what this may mean in terms of changes in the way you may travel in your community and what you can expect to see and hear from the operation of double stacked freight train operations.

Join the Conversation
We are planning:
- one-on-one meetings with neighbours in the areas where enhancements are being undertaken
- neighbourhood conversation booths to share information and hear local feedback
- catch-ups at events hosted inside your community – such as farmers markets for example
- opportunities to share your thoughts with us in person or via our website
- engaging with Councils, industry and road and rail agencies to facilitate design solutions that support wider community outcomes where practicable.

We’re looking forward to visiting your town soon to share our story and gather your feedback to help us further develop and refine our thinking.
Check your letterbox or visit our website inlandrail.com.au/T2A to see when we will be in your community.

A key element of this phase of planning is engaging with our communities around the existing rail corridor enhancement sites. It is important to us to work with neighbours and local communities to ensure local knowledge and experience is captured.

What does Inland Rail mean for me?
While Inland Rail will use the existing rail line through Victoria, we will need to make changes to some bridges and other structures so that higher and longer trains will be able to travel along the rail line in future. No new track is required, though in some places we may move it slightly inside the current corridor.

The work we are doing now includes understanding what these changes might mean for local walking and cycling connections, noise and visual amenity.

Will Inland Rail upgrade the existing passenger line?
Inland Rail focuses on freight; however the Australian Government has also committed $235 million for the North East Rail Line Improvement Upgrade project which is designed to also enhance passenger rail services. We will coordinate our planning and construction work with the project to get the best results for local communities.

When will works start?
While we’re now into the second phase of our planning and engineering investigations, we’ve still got some way to go. Community consultation and engagement is starting now to help inform this work, and the necessary approvals. We plan to be doing a lot of talking before we start building. At this stage, we expect construction to start in 2020.

What if my property borders the existing rail line being enhanced as part of Inland Rail?
Over the coming six months you might see our teams conducting various field studies near your property to support environmental and engineering assessment.
We will also be out in the community meeting our immediate neighbours and introducing ourselves to the wider community.
We are happy to meet with you to listen, understand and answer your questions in person – please contact us if you would like to arrange a meeting. We will also let you know how you can provide input to the planning process.

How noisy will Inland Rail be?
ARTC is committed to limiting the impact of operational activities on the communities in which we work. As part of the Tottenham to Albury project, noise monitoring and assessment will be undertaken along the alignment to better understand how the introduction of double stack trains may impact our neighbours.
Want to know more?

ARTC is committed to working with communities and landowners, State and local governments as a vital part of our planning and consultation work, and we value your input. If you have any questions or comments about the T2A project please let us know.

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The Australian Government is delivering Inland Rail through the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC), in partnership with the private sector.