

VICTORIAN ELECTION PRIORITIES 2026

BUILDING VICTORIA'S FUTURE FREIGHT NETWORK



COMMERCIALLY
COMPETITIVE RAIL



FUTURE FREIGHT
GATEWAYS



PRODUCTIVE
SUPPLY CHAINS



SUPPORTING VICTORIAN TRADE
STRENGTHENING SUPPLY CHAINS
DELIVERING ECONOMIC PROSPERITY



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AUSTRALIA'S LEADING VOICE FOR TRADE & SUPPLY CHAIN EFFICIENCY

Representing Australia's International Trade Community

Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) is Australia's leading representative body for the international supply chain sector bringing together importers, exporters, customs brokers, freight forwarders, logistics service providers and industry groups.

The Australian Peak Shippers' Association (APSA) is the peak body as designated by the Federal Minister of Infrastructure and Transport to protect the interests of Australia's cargo owners and shippers in respect to shipping and international logistics services.

Together we form an influential advocacy alliance ensuring that our members are at the forefront of all emerging supply chain issues through our responsive operational support, professional development training, industry updates, commercial services and corporate events.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Building on Victoria's Freight and Rail Plans

Victoria already has a strong strategic framework for freight.

The Victorian Freight Plan 2025-30 and the Victorian Rail Freight Plan 2026-2036 provide an important foundation for future investment, freight productivity and network planning. Both plans recognise that Victoria's freight task is expected to exceed 900 million tonnes annually by 2050 and that rail, ports, airports and intermodal terminals will play an increasingly important role in supporting economic growth.

FTA/APSA supports the direction established by these plans.

The focus must now shift from planning to delivery.

To support future growth and maintain Victoria's position as Australia's freight and logistics capital, FTA/APSA recommends three strategic priorities:

Future Freight Gateways

Support the next generation of freight infrastructure and gateway capacity, including Webb Dock, Melbourne Airport and Avalon Airport.

Commercially Competitive Rail

Deliver practical reforms that improve rail competitiveness, utilisation and reliability across Victoria's freight network.

Productive and Efficient Supply Chains

Strengthen freight productivity, corridor protection, industrial land availability and supply chain transparency.

These priorities are designed to support investment, exports, jobs and economic growth for all Victorians.

FUTURE FREIGHT GATEWAYS

Planning Beyond Today's Freight Task

Victoria's success as Australia's freight and logistics capital depends on maintaining sufficient capacity across ports, airports and freight precincts.

The Victorian Freight Plan identifies freight gateways as a strategic priority and highlights the need to support future growth at key gateways.

Progress a Long-Term Freight Access Solution for Webb Dock

Webb Dock is now the largest container terminal precinct at the Port of Melbourne and is expected to accommodate a growing share of Victoria's future container task. The Victorian Freight Plan acknowledges that additional landside transport capacity will be required as Webb Dock expands and highlights the need to optimise rail access to and from the Port of Melbourne.

FTA/APSA supports the development of a long-term freight access strategy for Webb Dock, including evaluation of future rail access opportunities and integration into broader freight network planning.

Support Melbourne Airport's Third Runway and Freight Growth

Melbourne Airport currently handles around 28 per cent of Australia's international air freight and remains Australia's leading air freight export gateway. The third runway project will support future capacity, improve reliability and strengthen Victoria's international connectivity.

Victoria should continue supporting the delivery of Melbourne Airport's third runway and associated freight infrastructure to ensure exporters maintain efficient access to global markets.

Unlock Avalon Airport's Freight and Ecommerce Potential

The Victorian Freight Plan identifies Avalon Airport as a growing freight gateway with the potential to become a significant logistics hub. Recent developments, including international ecommerce and freight investments, reinforce Avalon Airport's potential role as a complementary freight gateway supporting Victoria's trade future.

Outcome

A freight gateway network that supports future trade growth, export competitiveness and investment across Victoria.

COMMERCIALLY COMPETITIVE RAIL

Turning Strategy into Freight Volumes

Both the Victorian Freight Plan and Victorian Rail Freight Plan recognise that future freight growth cannot be accommodated by road transport alone and that rail must play a greater role in Victoria's freight future.

The challenge now is implementation.

Close the Cost Gap Between Rail and Road

The Victorian Freight Plan specifically recognises the need to improve rail competitiveness and work towards closing the cost gap between rail and road movements.

FTA/APSA supports practical initiatives that improve rail's commercial competitiveness and encourage greater utilisation of rail freight services.

Deliver Successful Port Rail Shuttle Network Outcomes

The Port Rail Shuttle Network has the potential to reduce congestion, improve productivity and increase rail utilisation. The focus should now be on achieving long-term commercial success and strong utilisation outcomes across metropolitan terminals.

Improve Freight Path Reliability and Network Performance

Industry feedback during preparation of the Rail Freight Plan consistently identified operational reliability, network access and freight path certainty as critical factors influencing investment decisions and long-term utilisation of rail services. [

Outcome

A rail freight network that is reliable, competitive and capable of supporting Victoria's growing freight task.

PRODUCTIVITY, TRANSPARENCY AND INVESTMENT CONFIDENCE

Supporting Efficient Supply Chains

Victoria's freight advantage depends on more than infrastructure.

It also requires efficient operations, freight corridor protection, industrial land availability and transparent supply chain performance.

Protect Freight Corridors, Precincts and Industrial Land

The Victorian Freight Plan highlights the importance of protecting industrial land, freight corridors, ports, airports and freight terminals from encroachment. Long-term planning protections provide confidence for investment and support Victoria's ongoing competitiveness.

Strengthen Supply Chain Transparency

FTA/APSA supports ongoing efforts to improve freight performance reporting, port performance monitoring and supply chain data visibility. Better information supports evidence-based decision making and improves freight productivity.

Recognise Victoria's National Freight Role

Victoria's freight infrastructure serves more than Victorian businesses.

For Tasmania in particular, the Port of Melbourne functions as a critical gateway to domestic and international markets. Around 99 per cent of Tasmania's freight moves by sea, making efficient Bass Strait shipping connections and Victorian freight gateways essential to Tasmania's economy.

FTA/APSA encourages the Victorian Government to work with industry, the Port of Melbourne, Tasmanian stakeholders and the Australian Government to ensure that infrastructure planning, regulatory settings and cumulative supply chain costs support efficient trade flows across Bass Strait and beyond. This should include a review of the cumulative impact of port-related charges and fees on interstate supply chains and Tasmanian shippers.

Support Freight Innovation and Digitalisation

The Victorian Freight Plan identifies opportunities to improve freight productivity through better data, technology, innovation and supply chain digitisation. Continued collaboration between government, industry and technology providers will support more efficient freight outcomes.

Outcome

An efficient, productive and future-ready freight network that supports investment, jobs and economic growth.

FTA/APSA'S THREE PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT

1. Future Freight Gateways

Progress Webb Dock freight access planning, support Melbourne Airport's third runway and unlock Avalon Airport's freight and ecommerce potential.

2. Commercially Competitive Rail

Turn rail freight strategies into measurable freight growth through greater competitiveness, reliability and utilisation.

3. Productive and Efficient Supply Chains

Protect freight corridors and precincts, improve transparency and support innovation across the Victorian freight network.

Supporting Victorian Trade.

Strengthening Supply Chains.

Delivering Economic Prosperity.

A strong freight network supports exporters, importers, manufacturers, regional communities and consumers. By focusing on future freight gateways, commercially competitive rail and productive supply chains, Victoria can maintain its position as Australia's freight and logistics capital.