

3 October 2012

## Road and rail improvements recommended for the Illawarra

Major investments in roads, rail and freight networks to support the economic growth of the Illawarra and South Coast are among the key recommendations in the State Infrastructure Strategy released today.

Infrastructure NSW has outlined more than \$3.5 billion worth of priority projects for the region in the 20-year Strategy helped to guide infrastructure investment by the NSW Government.

Key projects recommended for Government consideration include:

- Over \$500 million on mainline acceleration program to shorten travel times between Wollongong and Sydney for rail passenger commuters with a one hour express (0-5 years)
- \$3 billion connecting the F6 to the Sydney Orbital, which benefits Wollongong and South Coast by reducing travel times for residents and business people who need to drive to Sydney (10-20 years)

Infrastructure NSW Chief Executive Paul Broad said Wollongong was 80km from Sydney yet express services takes 90 minutes, which limits the size of the commuter market.

"In our view, the new NSW Trains should have a one hour journey time from Wollongong to Sydney as one of their core operational objectives," Mr Broad said.

"While the Illawarra escarpment prevents true high speed operation, we believe operational changes, including tighter timetabling, will deliver time savings but without major expenditure.

"Once these gains have been achieved, other higher cost improvements could be considered to increase speeds. These measures could include signalling upgrades, new track work and rolling stock. "The emphasis in the early stages would be on operational changes, including tighter timetabling and fewer intermediate stops, to deliver faster journeys.

"Faster trains to the Illawarra would support population growth in the region as part of strengthening the region's economy."

Infrastructure NSW also further supports a series of key freight rail developments to support the expected growth of Port Kembla that would be delivered federally or by the private sector comprising:

- Incremental upgrades of Moss Vale to Unanderra freight line, estimated to cost around \$125 million for the Australian Rail Track Corporation to deliver (5-10 years)
- Construction of the Maldon to Dombarton rail line to provide an improved link to Port Kembla as a longer-term project to be funded by the private sector (10-20 years)

These priority projects are in addition to existing Government plans to upgrade the Princes Highway.

The State Infrastructure Strategy 2012-2032 is Infrastructure NSW's independent advice to the NSW Government on the priority infrastructure investments and reforms required to drive productivity and economic growth.

The Strategy's recommendations have been provided to the Government for its consideration in developing plans for infrastructure investment. For further information, the Strategy can be found on [www.insw.com](http://www.insw.com)

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