



National Trunk Rail Pty Ltd  
ACN 168 063 643

## NTR Endorses Competitive Process for Inland Rail

6 May 2016

Private sector inland rail proponent National Trunk Rail (NTR) has endorsed the Federal Government's decision to have the Department of Finance oversee a market testing to assess the private sector's interest in delivering and financing the inland rail project.

NTR Chairman, Martin Albrecht AC welcomes the market testing prior to any commencement of land acquisitions. "This sequence will ensure that there is competition that delivers the very best outcome for this nation building project," Mr Albrecht said.

However, Mr Albrecht cautioned that "the benefits of private sector innovation and investment will only be realised if the terms of reference for the market testing allow for alternatives to the benchmark ARTC proposal. Only with broad terms of reference can the full innovation and appetite of the private sector be unleashed" adding that "through the taxpayer funded work to date, Government has a benchmark to compare the potential value-add through partnership with the private sector."

NTR is in strong agreement with Infrastructure and Transport Minister Darren Chester's assessment that the project will be a positive catalyst for agricultural, resources and new industries accessing the east coast transport corridor which is responsible for 75% of the nation's GDP.

Mr Albrecht added "An efficient 21<sup>st</sup> century transport logistics supply chain is critical to realising the benefits from Australia's recently negotiated free trade agreements. Indeed this project will provide an incredible transformation to national productivity and leave the country with a valuable legacy for over a hundred years. The opportunity to the project is now."

The Federal budget provided \$594 million for pre-construction work to be undertaken after the market testing process was completed. The outlay will be through the Government owned Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC), and become government equity in the project.

"If NTR is successful, we would welcome the Government as an investment partner through ARTC in our project. Together we can ensure inland rail delivers true modal transformation of the nation's most important transport corridor."

Mr Albrecht rejected claims that the announcement in the budget further delayed the delivery of inland rail. "On the contrary, by making sure that the private sector has an opportunity to participate, a more innovative solution can be delivered in the shortest possible timeframe. NTR can deliver this project within 6 years of approvals, well ahead of the benchmark ARTC delivery timeframe of 10 years."

**ends**

**About NTR:** The National Trunk Rail group ([www.nationaltrunkrail.com](http://www.nationaltrunkrail.com)) combines decades of engineering, economic and policy experience among its members. Besides Mr Albrecht, it also includes former Queensland Rail CEO Vince O'Rourke, former CEO of Queensland Investment Corporation Dr Doug McTaggart, and former Director-General of the Queensland Department of the Premier and Cabinet Jon Grayson.

Suite 2, Level 1, 5 Gardner Close  
Milton Qld 4064

**T** +61 7 3512 5602    **F** +61 7 3512 5656