



Submission The House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities

Inquiry into options for financing faster rail



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The following submission is made to the inquiry into options for financing faster rail being undertaken by the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport and Cities.

The list of potential fast rail corridors in the Australian Government's Faster Rail Plan does not include any corridors in Western Australia, and should be amended to include two corridors in this State: from Perth to Bunbury and Busselton, in Australia's south west; and from Perth to Kalgoorlie.

The South West Region has experienced rapid growth in recent years and a quality rail connection to Perth would complement other major state and federal projects, including the recent upgrade to the Busselton-Margaret River Airport.

Both Bunbury and Busselton have experienced growth well in excess of the national average, each with average annual growth rates of 1.9% per year over the past 10 years, as compared with the national average of 1.6% per year over the same period¹. This has resulted in rapid development and expansion of the two centres.

The existing TransWA rail service to Bunbury, the Australind, offers regular service but is slow compared with car travel and suffers from track capacity constraints from sharing the tracks with both freight trains, and with the Transperth Armadale-Thornlie line on the approach to Perth.

The Perth to Kalgoorlie corridor is currently served by the TransWA Prospector service. The Prospector service uses high quality rolling stock, capable of travelling at 200km/hr², but due to track conditions is required to travel at a significantly slower speed. The service also shares track with freight trains, significantly affecting reliability and travel times.

Targeted infrastructure upgrades could improve the travel time and reliability on these two services significantly. The Western Australian Government recently tendered for new rolling stock on the Australind route, and improved track conditions could take advantage of the modern new railcars.

¹ Author's calculations based on ABS catalogue 3218.0 Regional Population Growth, Australia, 2017-18, Table 2.

² Prospector product sheet, UGL.

https://uglcdn.ugllimited.com/Asset/cms/Passengerr_Product_Brochures/084_Prospector_ProductSheet_V6_WEB.pdf