



# GETTING HIGH SPEED RAIL MOVING

## 21<sup>st</sup> century transport in the new economy

Connected. Clean. Fast.

After decades of waiting, the time for an investment into east coast high speed rail is now. The Greens will kick start this future-proofing infrastructure project, with a \$1.5 billion investment to establish a central coordinating authority, complete environmental assessments and begin rail corridor reservations.

High speed rail between Australia's eastern mainland cities is a nation building project that will transform how we move around the country and will be central to the shift to a clean economy. High speed rail's time has come, but Australia needs courage and vision to get it moving.

Not only would high speed rail provide a zero carbon alternative to flying between our major east coast cities, it would better connect up our cities with our regions.

This project will create thousands of jobs in both metropolitan and regional Australia, provide opportunities for regional growth corridors to take the pressure off our urban fringes and inject decades worth of direct investment into regional communities.

Every continent except Antarctica and Australia is operating or developing High Speed Rail. It is a standard mode of travel for those living in Europe, Japan and China. North America is set to join them with a high speed rail service currently under construction in California.

### > INVESTMENT TO KICK-START HIGH SPEED RAIL

Once complete, the High Speed Rail will stretch 1748 kilometres linking 16 major cities and regions all the way from Melbourne to Brisbane.

**The Greens have announced a \$10 billion commitment to public transport<sup>1</sup>. From this, we will commit \$1.5 billion to get east coast fast rail on track.** This investment will:

- Fast-track intergovernmental agreements and legislation to get high speed rail moving.

<sup>1</sup> [greens.org.au/public-transport](http://greens.org.au/public-transport)

- Establish a dedicated High Speed Rail Authority (HSRA) to develop and manage the project. The Authority would be responsible for:
  - Preparing a detailed financing and investment plan for the project;
  - Determining the final rail corridors in conjunction with the relevant state and local governments;
  - Securing ownership of those routes and confirming the development and operation plan of the project through an inter-governmental agreement.
- Kick-start the Authority's work, including securing ownership of the rail route<sup>2</sup>.
- Commence a comprehensive environmental impact assessment.

### > SMART USE OF BORROWING TO FUND INFRASTRUCTURE

The Greens have a plan to set up an Australian Infrastructure Bank facility<sup>3</sup>, which will provide a long-term revenue plan and decouple long range infrastructure financing from the annual budget cycle. Instead of having public money tied up in lazy and speculative investment — particularly the housing market — the Greens want to redirect spending towards the new economy.

The Infrastructure Bank provides a plan to finance infrastructure projects like High Speed Rail, including funding for key

<sup>2</sup> The total land cost component for the east coast High Speed Rail Network was estimated at approximately \$6 billion (in \$2011). *High Speed Rail Study – Phase 1*, Australian Government, 2011

<sup>3</sup> [greens.org.au/infrastructure-bank](http://greens.org.au/infrastructure-bank)

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components like initial land reservation and acquisition and a comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement.

The proposed High Speed Rail Authority would be required to investigate a variety of sources of funding for the full project cost, however our funding commitment allows for the initial investment to establish and commence the Authority's work.

## > BUILDING FAST RAIL FOR AUSTRALIA

The Greens are the only party with the long-term vision to start work on the proposed routes along Eastern Australia now<sup>4</sup>:

**Line 1:** Sydney to Melbourne (2 hours 44 mins) comprising of Canberra to Sydney (1 hour) and Melbourne to Canberra (2 1/2 hours).

**Line 2:** Sydney to Brisbane (2 hours 37 mins) comprising of Sydney to Newcastle (40 mins); and Newcastle to the Gold Coast and Gold Coast to Brisbane.

The commissioned phase two report laid down a plan for rolling out the High Speed Rail Project in several stages<sup>5</sup>. The Greens will implement the accelerated timetable envisaged in the report. The preliminary requirements are preparing an investment plan, mapping the most appropriate routes, securing those rail corridors through agreement with the states and submitting a suite of comprehensive environmental assessments.

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<sup>4</sup> All proposed routes, timetables and construction schedules can be found in *High Speed Rail Study - Phase 2 Report*, Australian Government, 2014

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*