

Fast Rail Business Case – Brisbane to Gold Coast

State/Territory: Queensland

Proposed AG funding: \$8.0 million

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project will develop a business case to determine the infrastructure and operational issues required to provide fast rail services from Brisbane to the Gold Coast. The business case will undertake an options analysis to determine the optimal rail solution, determine requirements for integration with the existing rail network, and provide patronage assessment, economic appraisal and funding and financial analysis.

Improving transport connections between our capital cities and their regional centres has the potential to support the economic and population growth of the regions. In particular, fast passenger rail links can strengthen economic ties and connect people en masse to housing, jobs, lifestyle amenity and services. The business case is expected to be jointly funded on a 50:50 basis with the Queensland Government, and/or the private sector.

PROBLEM DESCRIPTION

The major coastal tourism and lifestyle centre of the Gold Coast and its surrounding regions spans northern New South Wales to southern Queensland, south of Brisbane. This region has experienced some of the fastest population growth in the country at around 2.3 per cent per annum over the past 10 years. The Gold Coast and Tweed Heads collectively have a population of 662,700.

The Gold Coast has a thriving economy which has diversified from construction and tourism to a knowledge-based economic region with strengths in health, ICT, education, sport, marine and film production. The Gross Regional Product of the Gold Coast in 2017 was \$32 billion.

The Brisbane to Gold Coast rail line is approximately 89 kilometres. Passenger rail on this corridor is operated by Queensland Rail and takes approximately 1 hour and 20 minutes. The rail line is subject to strong growth in passenger demand, with infrastructure and operational constraints resulting in overcrowding of passenger rail services during peak periods.

Improvements in the capacity of the rail line between Brisbane and the Gold Coast would reduce overcrowding during peak periods and potentially help reduce congestion on the M1 Motorway. Journey times from Brisbane to the Gold Coast could also be significantly reduced.

PROJECT BENEFITS

- **Improve travel times and service reliability.**
- **Improve passenger rail services.**
- **Increase connectivity.**
- **Ensure forecast population-driven increases in travel demand are met.**