



Australian Government

**BUILDING OUR FUTURE**

# Major Project Business Case Fund

## Fast Rail Business Case – Melbourne to Albury/Wodonga

**State/Territory:** Victoria

**Proposed AG funding:** \$8.0 million

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project will develop a business case to determine the infrastructure and operational requirements to provide fast rail services from Melbourne to Albury/Wodonga. 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 funded on a 50:50 basis with the Victorian Government, and/or the private sector.

### PROBLEM DESCRIPTION

The twin Murray River cities of Albury and Wodonga are a regional service and education hub for the surrounding regions in New South Wales and Victoria. Situated between Sydney and Melbourne, Albury-Wodonga has a population of 92,200 with average annual population growth of 1.3 per cent over the last decade.

Albury-Wodonga has good potential for further economic and population growth as the centre of a major diversified regional and agricultural economy in south east Australia. The Melbourne to Albury-Wodonga rail line is 305 kilometres. Passenger rail on this corridor is operated by V-Line and takes approximately four hours from Melbourne to Albury-Wodonga.

Fast rail services between Melbourne and Albury-Wodonga would provide people with a viable alternative to private transportation in the corridor, facilitating an increase to passenger rail patronage by exploring opportunities to significantly reduce travel times.

### PROJECT BENEFITS

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