Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

#vcci

Pillar 4

Invest in nationally coordinated enabling infrastructure



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Acknowledgement of Country

The Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation, of the lands on which the Victorian Chamber head office is located and extend this respect to all lands across the country.

We pay our respects to ancestors and elders, past and present, and support the continuation of cultural, spiritual and educational practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We endeavour to develop stronger and enduring partnerships with First Peoples and work together to achieve economic, social and cultural equity and prosperity across Victoria.

We are committed to honouring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.

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The scale of Australia's infrastructure pipeline is unprecedented. This should be our new normal but only for projects that are assessed as providing the greatest productivity and social impact uplift and have a well-developed business case.

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Business growth depends on reliable planning, infrastructure, and investment.

In our cities and regions, enabling infrastructure to facilitate further investment in housing and efficient movement of people, goods and services is critical. This also requires good-quality roads and rail lines and public transport services, schools, hospital, utilities, and green spaces. Federal investment in infrastructure must continue but through a more coordinated approach to this expenditure.

While we welcome the recent Independent Strategic Review of the Infrastructure Investment Program, it serves as a case in point for the need for clear parameters for assessing infrastructure projects based on national priority settings.

Infrastructure Australia's role needs to be elevated so all projects are assessed against a long-term national priority assessment prior to inclusion on the Infrastructure Priority List. While this assessment needs to be independent, it is important that state transport priorities are considered.

The Federal and Victorian Governments need to coalesce around the delivery of strategic freight priorities given the competitive advantages of our ports.

Australia needs an investment plan that outlines a shared vision for a national freight system, which must include industry and should incorporate rail freight connectivity to intermodals or ports and good-quality road networks that can support the movement of trucks.

Similarly, the Federal and State Governments should focus on delivery of road upgrades that target and remove bottlenecks between key precincts and their markets. This would improve the reliability and performance of the rail freight network to make the best use of the Inland Rail project.

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Relatedly, the Victorian Chamber reiterates calls for Federal Government investment to create a rail connection to Melbourne Airport and connections between Avalon Airport and the Geelong line. The airports and the Port of Melbourne operate within significant industrial freight precincts, and it is essential that they be protected from the encroaching urban sprawl.

It is well accepted that, as a nation, we are not delivering the necessary housing supply to meet the demands of our current and future population. Business has a deep and abiding interest in the housing market both through the provision of supply and to ensure availability of well-located services and affordable housing for workers.

The decade-long infrastructure boom, especially in public transport projects in capital and major cities, must not be squandered. These developments will provide the impetus for new housing and employment.

The Victorian Chamber supports the Government's taxation changes to make build-to-rent housing more attractive for investment and supports further changes to catalyse the investment needed to deliver the Government's ambitious target of 1.2 million dwellings over the next five years.

Fixing the nation's planning system is a critical success factor. If we are to achieve the housing target set by the Federal Government, then restrictive zoning that prevents more housing supply in areas that are in demand and in proximity to jobs and services must be removed. Relatedly, there must be a fast-track approach to development applications to allow for investment decisions to proceed with a level of certainty and efficiency.

As the Federal Government proceeds to undertake this work, it should also draw on the expertise from the superannuation industry to encourage more private capital in our nation's priority infrastructure projects, including in build-to-rent and address disincentives to that investment.





Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

The Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI) is the largest and most influential not-for-profit business organisation in Victoria, informing and servicing more than 85,000 members and clients across the State.

Through our policy and advocacy work, professional development courses, workplace relations and consulting services, we help thousands of businesses every year to improve workplace performance and achieve business growth and success.

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