



Rail, Tram and Bus Union

PRESS RELEASE

Date: Wednesday 12 May, 2010

BUDGET 2010: DAWN OF A NEW ERA FOR RAIL INVESTMENT

The Federal Government's \$1 billion investment in rail infrastructure would help address the looming freight transport crisis and heavily congested roads according to the Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU).

RTBU National Organiser Bob Nanva today said a projected growth in freight movements around Australia would cripple the road network if investments weren't made to make rail competitive.

"Experts have forecast the total amount of freight moving around Australia to double in coming years, so this \$1 billion shot in the arm for the rail freight network couldn't come soon enough.

"Road congestion is already a massive problem in our cities – imagine what things would be like if the amount of freight on our roads doubled.

"Our cities would grind to a halt if the government hadn't made this massive investment in rail in an attempt to shift a greater proportion of freight off our roads."

Mr Nanva said the Federal Government's budget announcement would provide a huge boost for businesses and long-suffering motorists.

"A national review of Australia's export performance found that many businesses were struggling to stay afloat because of infrastructure problems, particularly with rail freight," Mr Nanva said.

"By making the rail industry competitive once again, businesses will now be able to move their goods and services around the country safely and efficiently.

"The budget is also a huge win for long-suffering motorists that are increasingly spending more time stuck in traffic rather than at home with family."

Mr Nanva called on the Federal Opposition to do the right thing by businesses and families by immediately passing the government's budget measures.

"Families and businesses, including mining companies, have been crying out for more investment in rail infrastructure, and this budget delivers it in spades.

"We're calling on the opposition to pass these budget measures immediately so that the first sod can be turned on these vital infrastructure projects as soon as possible.

"By refusing to pass these measures, the opposition would be sending a very clear message that it's not in favour of seeing the dawn of a new era for rail freight after many years of neglect – including 11 years under the former Howard Government."