

Questions taken on notice and further information agreed to be supplied at the hearings

Portfolio:	Minister for Ports and Freight
Witness:	
Committee member:	Mr Richard Riordan MP
Page/s of transcript:	

Relevant text:

In relation to the Victorian Freight Plan which includes \$4 Million funding for a one year extension of the Mode Shift Incentive Scheme, can you explain why this scheme has only been funded for one year?

Answer:

Rail freight is generally competitive with road transport, but in the case of freight delivered by rail to the Port of Melbourne, the inefficiencies associated with handling containers at the port put rail at a significant disadvantage. The Mode Shift Incentive Scheme (MSIS) has been designed primarily to address this limitation. Government will consider further extensions to the MSIS on an annual basis as the port rail strategy is finalised and delivered.

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Relevant text:

If the aims of Victorian Freight Plan are to be met and the number of trucks on roads is reduced, why is this fund only funded on a year-by-year basis?

Answer:

Rail freight is generally competitive with road transport, but in the case of freight delivered by rail to the Port of Melbourne, the inefficiencies associated with handling containers at the port put rail at a significant disadvantage. The Mode Shift Incentive Scheme (MSIS) has been designed primarily to address this limitation. Government will consider further extensions to the MSIS on an annual basis in the light of port rail progress.

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Relevant text:

How can freight operators who rely on this incentive to make rail affordable for customers, have confidence to grow the amount of freight moved on rail if this is only funded on a year by year basis.

Answer:

Rail freight is generally competitive with road transport, but in the case of freight delivered by rail to the Port of Melbourne, the inefficiencies associated with handling containers at the Port place rail at a significant disadvantage. The Mode Shift Incentive Scheme (MSIS) has been designed primarily to address this limitation. Government will consider further extensions to the MSIS on an annual basis as the port rail strategy is finalised and delivered.

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Prior to the election the former Minister made an announcement regarding expenditure from this fund, allocating \$16.2 million to connect a facility at Somerton and \$9.5 million to connect a facility at Altona to the Port-Rail Shuttle Network. Why is funding for those projects not included in this budget?

Answer:

Funding for these connections is included in the \$58 million Total Estimated Investment for the Port Rail Shuttle shown on page 79 in Budget Paper 4.

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In relation to the proposed Port of Melbourne dockside rail plan, have you spoken with stevedore companies DP World, VICT and Patrick about this plan? If so, on what date(s) did those meetings occur?

Answer:

The Port's Rail Transformation Proposal is being assessed by the Department of Transport before its advice is considered by the Government. Several stakeholders have contacted myself and my Department to express their views on the proposal.

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Relevant text:

Can you provide a list of bridges and the locations that have been earmarked for upgrade under this funding program?

Answer:

The Keeping Freight Moving program provides \$5.7 million for the restoration and maintenance of Barham-Koondrook Bridge over the Murray River and \$5 million for West Gate Bridge.

The program also includes \$5.9 million announced in the 2018-19 Budget for priority bridge strengthening to manage the risk of load restrictions.

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Is there any specific target for these bridge upgrades – for example is the aim to upgrade more bridge's to be able to carry high performance freight vehicles? Please list specific target for each bridge upgrade.

Answer:

The program will manage the risk of load restrictions and ensure that the bridges will continue to meet current vehicle loads and volumes, as well as the growing needs of the local and travelling community into the future.

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Committee member:	Mr Sam Hibbins MP
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Relevant text:

What is being undertaken to secure a South Eastern location, for the Port Rail Shuttle?

Answer:

Salta Properties, the owner of the south east Melbourne, Dandenong South Inland Port was invited to participate in the Government's Port Rail Shuttle Network Initiative Request For Proposal process. Salta later withdrew from this process, citing concerns with the requirements of the process and that they were unable to lease suitable land from the Port of Melbourne to operate a port rail terminal.

Government continues to assess options and plan freight train paths for freight rail terminals in Melbourne's south east.