



CANBERRA
BUSINESS COUNCIL

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MEDIA RELEASE

ACT MUST STAY ON TRACK TO SECURE HIGH SPEED RAIL

The ACT Government has been very successful in getting High Speed Rail (HSR) on the national agenda and must continue to push for a HSR corridor linking Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane via Canberra and Newcastle, according to Canberra Business Council.

“Canberra Business Council has been a long-time proponent of an east coast HSR route that links Canberra and the surrounding regions to other major capital cities such as Sydney and Melbourne,” Canberra Business Council CEO, Chris Faulks said.

“In fact, CBC played a key role in the ACT Government’s decision to include High Speed Rail as a national priority in its bid to Infrastructure Australia.

“The ACT Government has been a great supporter of High Speed Rail as it clearly recognises the benefits it offers Canberra and the region. However, now that the Federal Government is seriously looking at developing an east coast HSR corridor, we cannot become complacent.

“Phase 1 of the High Speed Rail Study conducted by the Federal Government showed the feasibility of an east coast rail corridor. During Phase 2 we must make sure the Federal Government is focused on implementation of HSR.

“The ACT must continue to lobby for introduction of a HSR and ensure the proposed route best serves the people of the region. It is great the ACT Government is taking such an active role on the High Speed Rail Reference Group where these types of issues are being discussed.

“During this phase, the ACT Government must provide evidence of the benefits HSR will provide to ensure that if the Federal Government decides to build the corridor in a staged approach it recognises the Canberra-Sydney corridor as a priority and the most cost effective section to build first.

“In countries where this infrastructure is already in place, it has stimulated regional investment, spending and employment growth. High speed rail will encourage business and population migration outside of our major cities.

“The HSR Study has shown that most demand for high speed rail transport will come from outside of the major urban centres, with travel to Canberra, the Gold Coast and regional areas expected to account for 77 per cent of trips.

“Canberra Business Council believes a high speed rail connection between Sydney and Canberra will also delay the need to build a second Sydney airport as Canberra Airport could operate as an overflow airport for both domestic and international flights. This will potentially save billions of dollars in infrastructure spending and help defray the cost of the High Speed Rail network.

“It is estimated the HSR link between Canberra and Sydney will cost between \$10-25 billion and a second Sydney Airport could cost as much as \$15 billion.”

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