

## Community Consultative Committee (CCC) – Annual Report

<b>CCC project name:</b>	<b>Albury to Illabo Inland Rail Project (A2I)</b>	<b>Reporting period:</b>	<b>2022 &amp; 2023</b>
<b>Independent chairperson:</b>	<b>Garry West</b>	<b>Proponent contact:</b>	<b>Andrew Garratt (Stakeholder Engagement manager A2P)</b>

### 1. Executive summary / introduction

Inland Rail is the largest freight rail infrastructure project in Australia and is a 1,700km fast freight backbone providing transit times of less than 24 hours for freight trains from Melbourne to Brisbane. The Albury to Illabo project is one of 13 individual projects and is 185km of existing rail corridor from the VIC/NSW border to Illabo in regional NSW. While the project will use existing rail lines, enhancement or modifications to some structures such as footbridges and road bridges, signal structures, aerial cables and level crossings to create the height and width required for double-stacked freight trains. The project was declared State Significant Infrastructure (SSI) and a scoping report was lodged with the NSW Department of Planning, Industry & Environment (DPIE) early 2020 and the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) were issued by DPIE on 14 October 2020. The Minister for Planning will make a decision on the project's approval. The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment determined the project does not require assessment and approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and is a non-controlled action. The project was subsequently declared 'Critical State Significant Infrastructure (CSSI) in March 2021. This declaration didn't change the approval pathway, but it allows for some preconstruction activities to progress with approval, such as utilities work, surveys and investigations, or storage of materials in existing rail facilities along the alignment. The Final reference Design was completed in October 2021.

The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) was released for public exhibition and comment by the NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) on 17 August 2022 and closed on 28 September 2022. In all, 155 submissions were received from the general public, community organisations, business groups, along with Government Departments, agencies and local councils.

Dr Kerry Schott AO was appointed by the Australian Government in October 2022 to undertake an Independent Review of Inland Rail. The Review findings were released in April 2023 with the Government agreeing to the 19 recommendations in full or in principle. In line with the Government's response to Dr Schott's review, Inland Rail Pty Ltd was established as a subsidiary of ARTC with its own board to govern the delivery of

the inland rail project effective 1 July 2023. The Government has prioritised construction of the projects south of Parkes, confirming the route and providing funding.

In April 2023, the DPE directed Inland Rail to provide a Preferred Infrastructure Report (PIR) that further assesses traffic and transport, noise and vibration, and air quality. A Response to Submissions Report (RTS) was prepared that includes an analysis of the issues raised in the submissions and how they have been addressed. Both reports were placed on public exhibition by DPE from 15 November to 6 December 2023, to allow all stakeholders to read and comment on the new information and project matters of interest. The EIS approval is anticipated in May 2024 at which time a Notice to proceed will be issued.

On 23 June 2023 Inland Rail awarded the construction contract to Martinus Rail for the A2I and Stockinbingal to Parkes (S2P) projects. Major construction cannot commence on the A2I section until all NSW government environmental approvals are received. The project is scheduled for completion for mid-2027.

2. A Community Consultative Committee (CCC) was formed under the NSW DPE CCC Guidelines early 2021 with two sub-committees being established to ensure true community representation and local knowledge. One sub-committee covers the project's enhancement sites within the local government areas of Albury City and Greater Hume Shire. The other sub-committee covers the local government areas of Lockhart Shire, Wagga Wagga City and June Shire. The CCC has a DPE appointed Independent Chairperson, community representatives, key stakeholder groups and local government representatives and is attended by the project team senior managers and support staff.

Please provide a high-level summary of key issues, actions, outcomes and CCC activity over the reporting period.

### 3. CCC activities over last 2 years:

- The CCC sub-committees met twice during 2022 and twice during 2023 for face-to-face meetings and updates being provided by the project team. Attendance at these meetings were consistently strong from the appointed representatives providing feedback on issues of concern.
- The Inland Rail presentations at each meeting provide comprehensive projects updates including on community engagement, environmental studies, land acquisition processes and project design activities. These presentations are uploaded to the Inland Rail website at the same time CCC minutes are uploaded.

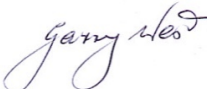
- Observers from Transport for NSW and the Commonwealth Infrastructure Projects Division were present at most CCC meetings and were able to provide relevant clarifications on specific issues.

#### 4. Key issues

- Wagga Wagga bypass request was raised in CCC meetings and submissions to the EIS public exhibition. The Australian Government deemed the bypass was not in scope at this time, but will be considered as train volumes grow, potentially on a 10-15 year horizon after full implementation of Inland Rail.
- Level Crossing operations and delay impacts to emergency services.
- Operation noise and vibration impacts, particularly to vulnerable groups.
- Disruption to rail business caused by construction impacts.
- Property impacts, particularly property values.

#### 5. Focus for next 12 months:

- Review submissions to public exhibition of the PIR & RTS.
- Post approval monitor detailed design development and construction activities.

Signature of chairperson:	
Date:	9 January 2024