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## MEDIA STATEMENT

### Inland Rail forges ahead with landmark agreement

A group representing Australia's largest rail freight operators and infrastructure owners today welcomed a landmark agreement between the Australian and New South Wales governments to advance construction of the Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Rail project.

Freight On Rail Group (FORG) of Australia Chair Dean Dalla Valle said this was a historic day for regional communities, rail operators, freight companies, exporters and businesses.

"Inland Rail runs right through the spine of regional communities on the eastern seaboard of Australia – it will become a 'corridor of commerce' linking regional towns and businesses to the major ports of Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne and beyond to global markets", said Mr Dalla Valle.

FORG members contribute more than \$11 billion to Australia's economy each year, employ almost 20,000 people, operate 1,600 freight locomotives and manage 23,000 kilometres of rail track.

Mr Dalla Valle said moving bulk freight by rail is safer, more efficient and cleaner than road – a typical freight train hauling cargo containers removes up to 60 B-double trucks off the road, while rail freight produces 16 times less carbon pollution per tonne kilometre than road.

"I congratulate the Australian and NSW governments for getting on with the job of building critical rail freight infrastructure at a time when we need to lift the productive capacity of our nation to remain competitive in global markets", said Mr Dalla Valle.

Mr Dalla Valle said the long-term commercial success of Inland Rail depends on efficient links to and from the ports of Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane.

"As a prime example, duplication of the Port Botany Freight Line – as part of the Sydney Gateway project – is critical to help reduce bottlenecks and constraints on Sydney's shared passenger and freight rail network," said Mr Dalla Valle.

FORG has also called on the Australian Government to continue to support the roll-out of advanced new train control technology on the future Inland Rail.

"As a country we need to get better at 'sweating existing and new infrastructure' – innovative technology gives us this ability," said Mr Dalla Valle.

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