

**CENTRAL WEST  
TRANSPORT  
NEEDS STUDY  
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

# **CENTRAL WEST TRANSPORT NEEDS STUDY**

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

---

### **INTRODUCTION**

Located west of the Blue Mountains, the Central West of New South Wales (NSW) contains major towns and centres including Bathurst, Orange, Parkes, Wellington, Lithgow, Forbes and Cowra. The region has an existing freight and commuter road and rail network that services both population and industries focused on agriculture, mining, food processing, manufacturing, tourism and retail. The Central West is one of NSW's most diverse regions and benefits from being in close proximity to the major population and market centres of the greater Sydney area. Major regional facilities include airports, Charles Sturt University and an extensive range of tourist attractions. Good transport links between the region and greater Sydney, Port Botany, Port of Newcastle and Port Kembla are important for state and national economic development.

The Australian Government has committed funds for a study of transport needs of the Central West. The study focuses on the transport needs of the local government areas forming the Central West Regional Organisation of Councils (CENTROC). (It should be noted that an Inland Rail Alignment Study is also currently being undertaken by the Australian Rail Track Corporation.) The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government (Department of Infrastructure) and the RTA will jointly manage the study which will evaluate the appropriateness of existing land transport networks in meeting the short and long term transport needs of the Central West. It shall identify potential transport solutions capable of being delivered in the short term, as well as a series of strategic initiatives to meet the identified transport needs over the longer term. It is anticipated that the study will identify and assess options to enhance transport connections linking the Central West to greater Sydney, Port Botany, Port of Newcastle and Port Kembla to support state and national economic growth. The study will be submitted to Infrastructure Australia for consideration in its National Infrastructure Audit.

### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of the study is to:

- Identify passenger and freight land transport needs in the study area over the next 25 years;
- Review current performance of the land transport network, including tourism links, in the Central West and its connections to greater Sydney, Port Botany, Port of Newcastle and Port Kembla and identify current deficiencies and challenges that may be anticipated in the future;
- Consider, as part of the review above, the need to enhance rail services between Bathurst and other towns in the Central West and Sydney for passengers and freight;
- Consider the role of major centres with respect to the provision of future inter-modal terminals;
- Identify land transport strategies to meet passenger and freight needs over the next 25 years, in particular, the need to improve freight access between the Central West and greater Sydney, Port Botany, Port of Newcastle and Port Kembla;
- Identify a list of potential proposals to deliver these strategies and assess the relative benefits of each proposal based on strategic engineering, environmental, economic and cost assessment in meeting the identified long term transport needs of the study area.

- Identify a priority list of proposals capable of being delivered in the short term (say within 5-years), as well as a series of strategic initiatives to meet transport needs over the longer term (say 6 to 25 years).

## **STUDY AREA**

The study should consider the area covered by CENTROC. The local government areas involved are Bathurst Regional, Blaney, Boorowa, Cabonne, Central Tablelands Country, Cowra, Forbes, Harden, Lachlan, Lithgow, Mid- Western Regional, Oberon, Orange, Parkes, Weddin, Wellington and Young. It should also consider links across the Blue Mountains to greater Sydney, Port Botany, Port of Newcastle and Port Kembla.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The role and responsibilities of the key project participants are as follows:

### *Project Client*

The Australian Government is funding the study and will act as the Project Client. The study will be submitted to Infrastructure Australia for consideration in its National Infrastructure Audit.

### *Project Steering Committee*

A Project Steering Committee will be established to oversee the study and will be chaired by Department of Infrastructure and include senior officers from the Department of Infrastructure, Department of Premier and Cabinet, the RTA and Ministry of Transport as members.

### *Project Manager & Project Team*

The Department of Infrastructure and the RTA will jointly manage the study. A Project Manager from the RTA will engage a consultant to undertake the study and manage its progress to satisfactory completion for submission the Australian Government. The Project Manager will work with a Project Team comprising support staff from the Department of Infrastructure, Ministry of Transport, the RTA and the selected consultant.

### *Council Reference Group*

A Council Reference Group will be established to ensure appropriate input to and engagement with key local stakeholders. Members of the Council Reference Group will include CENTROC members from Bathurst Regional, Blaney, Boorowa, Cabonne, Central Tablelands County, Cowra, Forbes, Harden, Lithgow, Mid-Western Regional, Oberon, Orange, Parkes, Weddin, Wellington and Young Councils, as well as Hawkesbury and Blue Mountain Councils and the NSW Department of Planning.

### *Community Outreach Program*

The Project Team will undertake an extensive Community Outreach Program by writing to a wide range of stakeholder groups seeking their input at stakeholder workshops focusing on land transport issues in the study area.

## **KEY OUTPUTS**

The key outputs from the Central West Transport Needs Study will be:

1. A description and summary of the short and long term transport needs of the Central West including linkages to Port Botany, Port of Newcastle and Port Kembla;
2. Strategies and proposals to address these land transport needs that consider other broader state-wide and national strategies; and
3. Realistic, practical, economic and feasible proposal priorities for land transport capable of implementation in the short term, as well as more strategic initiatives that will need to be pursued over the longer term.

A final study report would be completed by 15 November 2008 for submission to the Federal Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government so that it can be submitted to Infrastructure Australia by the end of November 2008.

## **OTHER STUDIES**

The Study should consider other major transport infrastructure studies and projects including, but not limited to:

- Draft AusLink Dubbo to Sydney Corridor Strategy
- Bells Line of Road Corridor Strategy
- North-South Rail Corridor Study
- Current upgrade of the Great Western Highway
- NSW Ports Growth Plan
- Twice the Task – A Review of Australia’s Freight Transport Tasks

## **CONSULTATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS**

In undertaking the study Commonwealth, State, Local Government Agencies and other key stakeholders should be consulted beyond the Community Outreach Program. Relevant stakeholders include, but are not limited to:

- Mayors (or their representatives) of CENTROC, Blue Mountains and Hawkesbury Councils
- Central NSW Area Consultative Committee
- Local State and Federal Members of Parliament
- Australian Rail Track Corporation
- Sydney Port Corporation
- Newcastle Port Corporation
- Port Kembla Port Corporation
- NSW Department of State and Regional Development
- Central Western Regional Development Board
- Bells Line Expressway Group

All consultations with Commonwealth, State and Local Government Agencies are to be attended by the Project Manager, unless prior agreement to the contrary is confirmed.

A study website will also be established to ensure stakeholders have access to key reference documents, terms of reference, study brief and study updates.

## **REPORTING**

The consultant will provide information about the progress of the study through a monthly progress report to the Department of Infrastructure and RTA and regular meetings with the

Project Steering Committee. This progress report will also serve as the basis for the Project Manager to make monthly claims for payments.