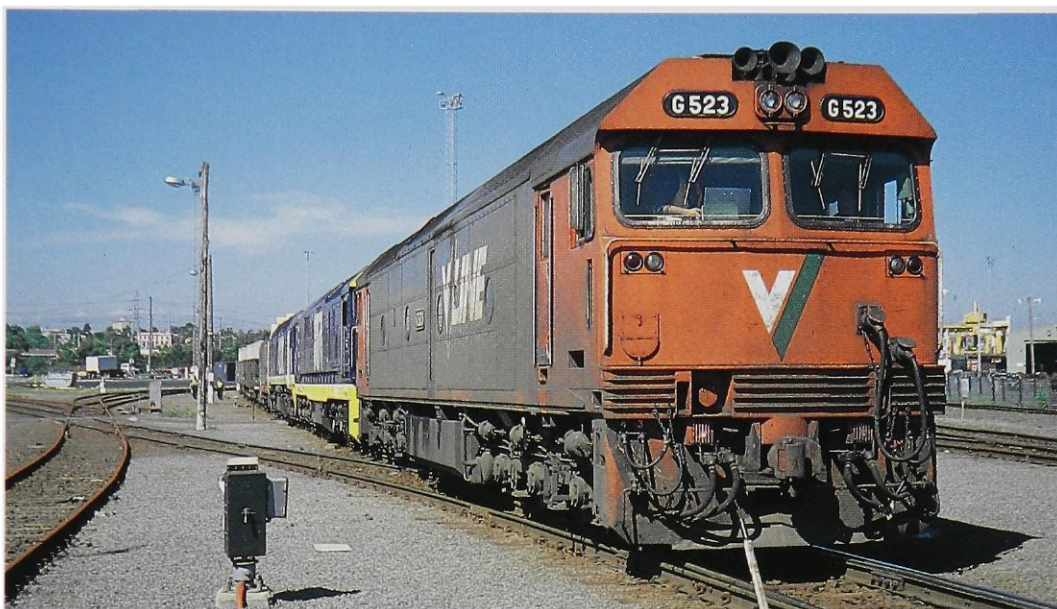


DIRECTION 2

Build on Melbourne's strengths as an international transport, production and communications hub

A locomotive at the Dynon rail yards. The completion of the standard gauge line from Brisbane to Perth via Melbourne early in 1995 reinforced the city's status as the hub of the national rail network.



In the 21st century, fast and efficient transport and communications will be more important than ever to economic success. These factors will also be critical to our quality of life. Melbourne's success in developing high-value export industries – the key to future job growth – will largely be determined by our capacity to exploit the city's trading links with both Australia and the Asia-Pacific region.

Melbourne's pivotal position in the national rail network, its excellent intrastate and interstate highways, its curfew-free airport and its port – the largest in the southern hemisphere – have already made it the national freight transport hub.

The city's extensive arterial road network and fixed rail transport system facilitate the movement of people and goods within the metropolitan area and between Melbourne and regional Victoria.

To take advantage of these national and international connections, our ports and airports need to become more accessible and efficient. They must be part of an integrated transport system supported by state-of-the-art communications between users, operators and ancillary services (see Figure 4).

This will have the additional advantage of giving Melburnians and visitors better access to business and leisure facilities within the metropolitan area and beyond. A more efficient transport system will reduce travel times, energy consumption, congestion and pollution.

The Victorian Government is committed to improving the performance of Melbourne's transport system and lowering costs to transport users by:

- integrating the management of freight transport with the ultimate aim of providing a seamless intermodal service between any point in Melbourne and any point in the world
- improving road, rail, sea, air and communications links from metropolitan and regional production areas to national and international markets
- investing in public transport to increase personal mobility, reduce congestion and make Melbourne's assets more accessible
- ensuring that all transport services are customer-focused and conform to the world's best practice.

Integrating the management of freight transport

More and more Melbourne enterprises depend for their prosperity – and indeed their survival – on exports. Land-use and transport planning both need to reflect this fact.

The increasing mobility of capital and production resources, the willingness of buyers to source components from all corners of the globe and the widespread adoption of just-in-time manufacturing techniques have made efficient transport, storage and distribution an essential requirement for a successful urban economy.

Firms competing in international markets can gain a significant competitive advantage if they can utilise efficient transport connections between trade gateways and existing production areas.

The efficient movement of freight to, from and around Melbourne is vital to the city's economic well-being. New road works in Sunshine show the way forward.



The Port of Melbourne is the largest in the southern hemisphere. It serves much of south-eastern Australia.



The *Freightway Melbourne* strategy was released for public comment in July 1995. Currently being considered by the Government, it deals with the city's transport system as an integral part of the production chain. It foreshadows a number of initiatives intended to make the transport system even more responsive to the needs of industry. These include:

- reforms to the management of Melbourne Airport and Avalon Airport
- improvements to Melbourne Airport, with special emphasis on facilities for perishable freight and access from the Western Ring Road
- management reforms and infrastructure improvements (including road and rail links) to make the Port of Melbourne Australia's lowest cost port – the Port of Melbourne Authority has already announced it will reduce port authority charges by 33 per cent over three years.

Freightway Melbourne also proposes the integrated management of freight hub zones and inter-connecting corridors based on Melbourne's ports, airport, rail terminals and national highways. The idea is to encourage freight-related development, simplify logistics, smooth the flow of export traffic and expedite the movement of other goods. The strategy explores several options for increasing productivity within this network. It also proposes measures to attract industry investment to hub zones and corridors. These include targeting land-use zonings, streamlining planning approvals, fast-tracking investment facilitation, managing land to maximise its productivity and developing multimodal freight interchanges.

Most importantly, *Freightway Melbourne* proposes a boost to Melbourne's trading and transport infrastructure to capitalise on the city's role as the freight gateway to the nation. The end result would be an integrated multimodal system with better links between different forms of transport – a system capable of moving freight further, faster, for less.