

## VICTORIA 2026 STATE ELECTION

# What ALC is asking parties to commit to at the Victorian election

Six practical commitments to strengthen Victoria's supply chain logistics and freight transport network.

**240,000**

people employed across Victoria's supply chains

**440m**

tonnes carried in 2020-21

**908m**

tonnes expected by 2050-51

### ALC's position

ALC is not asking for a long list of new election projects. We are asking parties to close the gaps in Victoria's roads, freight rail, ports, terminals, industrial land and energy systems, while building the skilled workforce needed to operate them as one network.

SEPTEMBER 2026

## THE CASE FOR ACTION

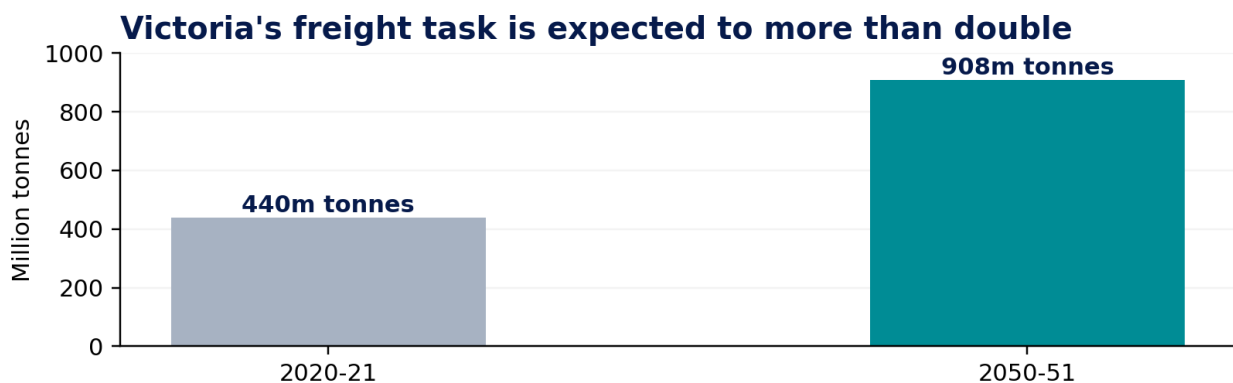
# Victoria's freight network needs to keep up with growth

**Victoria's freight task is expected to more than double, from about 440 million tonnes in 2020-21 to 908 million tonnes by 2050-51. Around 240,000 Victorians already work across the state's supply chains, and more skilled workers will be needed as the task grows.**

If the network falls behind, everyone pays for it. It affects the price and availability of goods, puts more pressure on local roads, costs businesses time and makes it harder for regional producers and exporters to compete.

The next Victorian Government will be responsible for roads, freight rail, ports, intermodal terminals and industrial precincts that only work properly when they are connected. Often, the problem is not a major project. It is a weak bridge, a poor last-kilometre connection, a difficult terminal interface, a planning restriction or a missing energy connection.

The Victorian Freight Plan 2025-30 gives the state a useful framework. The parties should commit to funding and delivering it, reporting openly on progress, and reinstating Infrastructure Victoria as a strong, independent source of long-term advice.



Source: Freight Victoria, Victorian Freight Plan 2025-30.

### What ALC is asking

We want every party and candidate to commit to six things: maintain freight-critical roads; lift freight rail use; fix connections around ports, terminals and logistics precincts; protect freight access, industrial land and independent long-term planning; secure reliable freight energy; and build a skilled workforce pipeline.

## OUR ELECTION PRIORITIES

# Six commitments that can make a practical difference

We have kept these priorities focused. Each one is about using existing assets more effectively, protecting the network Victoria will need, and ensuring that funding leads to a measurable result.

|    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 01 | <b>Put freight-critical roads first</b><br>Set up a Road Sustainability Fund that directs planned maintenance, safety and upgrade funding to the Principal Freight Network, bridges and first and last-mile links, in line with the Victorian Freight Plan 2025-30.                                                                                             |
| 02 | <b>Make better use of freight rail</b><br>Set out a staged and costed plan to increase freight rail use, with clear actions on new and retained volumes, reliability, access costs, gauge constraints and terminal connections.                                                                                                                                 |
| 03 | <b>Connect ports, terminals and logistics precincts</b><br>Fund smaller road and freight rail links around ports, terminals and industrial precincts. These links often determine whether major assets work as one network.                                                                                                                                     |
| 04 | <b>Plan housing and freight together</b><br>Make sure planning rules, including those for 20-minute neighbourhoods, protect freight access, industrial land, freight corridors and established 24/7 operations. Reinstate a strong, independent Infrastructure Victoria to keep long-term planning evidence-based and at arm's length from day-to-day politics. |
| 05 | <b>Secure freight energy supply and transition</b><br>Back depot and precinct charging, grid connections, renewable diesel and other lower-carbon fuels where they can be deployed at commercial scale and build greater resilience into major freight facilities.                                                                                              |
| 06 | <b>Build the workforce pipeline</b><br>Develop a four-year, industry-led supply chain workforce plan that links schools, TAFEs, universities and employers, expands practical entry and licensing pathways, and measures whether people complete training and stay in the industry.                                                                             |

### The standard ALC will apply

We will look for commitments that are specific, funded or properly costed, developed with industry and measured against outcomes such as road condition, service reliability, freight volumes, terminal access, delivery timeframes, training completion and workforce retention.

## PRIORITY 1 AND 2

## Maintain the network and use freight rail better

### 01 Put freight-critical roads first

Potholes need to be fixed, but that should be part of planned, preventative maintenance. Road funding should be based on economic, safety and network impact, not simply the number of repairs a government can announce.

- Establish a Road Sustainability Fund for state road maintenance and renewal, with a clear share for the Principal Freight Network and the local roads that connect to it.
- Use the objectives of the Victorian Freight Plan 2025-30 to prioritise pavement rehabilitation, bridge strengthening, High Productivity Freight Vehicle access, flood resilience and first/last-mile connections.
- Publish an annual freight-corridor condition and performance scorecard.
- Show how much major road programs spend on freight-critical routes and what that money delivers.
- Work with councils where local roads provide the only practical connection to a port, terminal, distribution centre or production region.

### 02 Make better use of freight rail

Maintenance matters, but it is only part of the job. The government should also show how much additional freight is being carried by rail and whether those volumes will remain once support ends.

- Adopt a four-year freight rail utilisation plan developed with infrastructure managers, above-rail operators, ports, terminals and freight customers.
- Use targeted access-charge relief and support for new services where it can bring commercially sustainable freight volumes onto rail.
- Expand mode-shift support where it can keep freight on rail over the longer term.
- Work through strategic gauge, first and last-mile and terminal interface constraints using staged, costed business cases.
- Publish measures of service reliability and freight rail use, not just maintenance completed.

#### Measure the outcome

Assess freight rail support against the tonnes and containers moved, services started, services still running after support ends, reliability and the number of equivalent truck trips avoided.

## PRIORITY 3 AND 4

## Connect freight hubs and make planning work in practice

### 03 Connect ports, terminals and logistics precincts

Major assets can be held back by relatively small gaps around them. A targeted co-investment program would help fix the links between major projects and the wider network.

- Create a focused co-investment program that can quickly fund approach roads, intersections, rail sides, signalling, staging areas and terminal access.
- Prioritise the Port of Melbourne and key logistics and industrial precincts including Somerton, Altona, Dandenong South, Beveridge and Truganina/WIFT, alongside regional freight hubs.
- Protect freight capacity and operating access while longer-term terminal and precinct plans are developed.
- Draw on Commonwealth, local government and private co-investment where possible.

### 04 Plan housing and freight together

Victoria needs more housing and more liveable communities, but those communities still need to be supplied. Planning rules should not prevent heavy vehicles from servicing neighbourhoods or place new constraints on established freight and industrial operations.

- Require planning instruments to take the objectives of the Victorian Freight Plan 2025-30 into account.
- Make sure 20-minute neighbourhood and activity-centre policies allow for freight access, loading, servicing and waste collection.
- Strengthen protection for State Significant Industrial Precincts, freight corridors and their connections to the Principal Freight Network.
- Apply a clear agent-of-change principle around established 24/7 freight operations, supported by effective buffers and building design.
- Coordinate power, water, roads and freight rail when new strategic industrial land is brought forward.
- Reinstate and strengthen Infrastructure Victoria as an independent statutory body. If its advice, powers or accountability need improvement, fix them, but keep long-term planning at arm's length from day-to-day political decisions.

#### Independent planning matters

Victoria needs a strong, independent body to test long-term infrastructure priorities, publish its evidence and hold governments to account for their response. Infrastructure planning should serve the state's long-term needs, not the political interests of the government of the day.

## PRIORITY 5 AND 6

## Secure reliable energy and build the workforce pipeline

### 05 Secure freight energy supply and transition

Different freight tasks need different energy solutions. Electricity will suit some operations; renewable diesel and other lower-carbon liquid fuels will suit others. Government support must reflect how the industry operates and cannot compromise reliability or resilience.

- Help fund depot and shared precinct charging, grid connections and network upgrades that can otherwise stop viable projects.
- Support commercial-scale renewable diesel and other lower-carbon fuels for freight tasks that are hard to electrify.
- Build energy resilience into major ports, terminals, distribution centres and freight precincts.
- Require industry to co-invest so public funding attracts private capital and backs projects that can scale.
- Report what is deployed, how it performs and the benefit to supply chains. Pilot numbers alone are not enough.

### 06 Build the workforce pipeline

Victoria's growing freight task needs a skilled workforce across road, freight rail, ports, terminals, warehousing and logistics. Government cannot fill every vacancy, but it can work with industry to build a reliable pipeline.

- Develop a four-year Supply Chain Workforce Plan with industry, unions, TAFEs, universities and training providers, covering immediate shortages and future needs.
- Fund industry-designed training in automation, digital systems, heavy vehicle maintenance and safety-critical roles.
- Expand apprenticeships, traineeships, paid placements, driver training and licensing, with better access in regional Victoria.
- Attract and retain more women, young people, First Nations people, veterans, career changers and culturally diverse communities.
- Publish annual results for enrolments, completions, employment and retention, not just training places announced.

#### The choice of parties

Victoria's freight task is growing quickly. Parties should commit to maintaining freight-critical roads, increasing freight rail use, connecting terminals, protecting industrial land, restoring independent planning, securing reliable energy and building the workforce pipeline.

## About the Australian Logistics Council

The Australian Logistics Council is the national peak body for Australia's supply chain logistics and freight transport industry. We advocate for policies and investment that make Australia's supply chains safer, more productive, more efficient and more sustainable.

### Sources and policy context

- [Freight Victoria - Victorian Freight Plan 2025-30: Victoria Delivers](#)
- [Infrastructure Victoria - Policy evidence for more housing options in Victoria](#)
- [Australian Logistics Council - Submission on Victoria's draft 30-year infrastructure strategy](#)
- [Victorian Government - Safer roads and fixing potholes our priority](#)
- [Liberal and Nationals - 2026 road maintenance commitment](#)