

# MEDIA RELEASE

## The Hon Anthony Albanese MP

Minister for Infrastructure, Transport,  
Regional Development and Local Government



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### Major Project Facilitation Status: Border Railway Project

In recognition of its potential as a nationally significant piece of infrastructure, I've granted Major Project Facilitation (MPF) status to the Border Railway Project being advanced by the Australian Transport and Energy Corridor Ltd (ATEC).

The proposed \$1 billion project would lay some 340 kilometres of standard gauge rail track, linking Moree to a newly constructed intermodal facility in Charlton, near Toowoomba, and servicing the coal projects in the region.

In the longer term, the proponents of this project envisage extending the line beyond Toowoomba all the way to the rapidly growing industrial city of Gladstone via the Surat Basin.

If given the final go ahead, this project would deliver significant benefits to regional communities across northern New South Wales and inland Queensland as well as to the broader national economy, including:

- More efficient transport connections;
- Improved access for local coal miners and agricultural producers to domestic and overseas markets;
- Less congestion on the existing coastal rail line; and
- Additional major freight terminals in regional Australia.

The ATEC is expecting to start construction on their Border Railway Project in late 2012, with a completion date of late 2014.

In less than three years, this Labor Government has granted or renewed MPF status for projects worth more than \$60 billion and the potential to create some 36,000 jobs across the critical sectors of infrastructure, mining and resources, and advanced manufacturing.

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### BACKGROUND

The Major Project Facilitation program is administered by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government.

Under the program, the Department provides the project with a facilitation service to achieve quick and timely assistance from the Australian Government. The service ensures:

- Access to information on government approval processes;

- All relevant government processes are coordinated, including those of state and territory governments, so that as far as possible they occur simultaneously and without duplication;
- Government agencies respond promptly to issues raised by the project proponent during the approval process; and
- Assistance in identifying and accessing government programs is provided.

MPF status does not imply any Government guarantee for the commercial success or otherwise of the project, nor does it absolve the project from meeting less than the full statutory and other requisite criteria of relevant approval processes.

Proponents may apply to the Minister for MPF status if their proposed project meets the following three criteria:

1. The project is of strategic significance to Australia:

- The project will significantly boost Australian industry innovation.
  - a) Increasing research and development (R&D) and commercialisation capability; and/or
  - b) A new application of skills and knowledge; and/or
  - c) Technology transfer; and/or
  - d) Cluster development.
- Or, the project will have significant net economic benefit for regional Australia, taking account of a region's investment needs.
- Or, the project's estimated investment exceeds A\$50 million or makes a significant contribution to economic growth, employment and/or infrastructure.

2. It requires Australian Government approval(s) in order to proceed and/or significant Australian Government involvement through, for example, federal programs.

3. It has sufficient financial resources to complete the Australian Government approval (s) process and has demonstrated commercial viability.

Further details on the program are available from the Major Project Facilitation Unit within the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government: GPO Box 594, CANBERRA, 2601 or telephone +61 2 6274 6684.

MPF Website: [www.majorprojectfacilitation.gov.au](http://www.majorprojectfacilitation.gov.au)

URL: [http://www.minister.infrastructure.gov.au/aa/releases/2010/July/AA429\\_2010.htm](http://www.minister.infrastructure.gov.au/aa/releases/2010/July/AA429_2010.htm)