



ABSTRACT

Collaboration in action on Australia's largest freight infrastructure project

Inland Rail is a 1,600-kilometre freight rail network connecting Melbourne to Brisbane through regional areas of Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland. As one of Australia's most ambitious infrastructure projects, it requires extensive collaboration across jurisdictions, disciplines, and communities to succeed. Once completed, Inland Rail will enhance Australia's freight and supply chain capabilities by linking existing freight routes across rail, roads, and ports—supporting national growth and boosting freight capacity in regional areas. This will create new business opportunities and strengthen economic resilience. The project involves upgrading approximately 1,000 km of existing track—while keeping current rail services operational—and constructing around 600 km of new track. Spanning three states, 29 local government areas, numerous Traditional Owner lands, and over 30 major rivers, Inland Rail presents a complex planning and delivery challenge. In this presentation, Wayne Window will explore the challenges and opportunities Inland Rail faces as it progresses through construction, and the broader implications for large-scale infrastructure projects. He will discuss the effectiveness of planning and environmental assessment systems, issue resolution, and the establishment of implementation frameworks that meet the expectations of the Australian government and communities. Inland Rail's adaptive and collaborative approach addresses a wide range of issues common to major infrastructure projects, including biodiversity impacts and offsets, flooding and hydrology, cultural heritage, land use conflicts, social impact management, and stakeholder engagement. By working transparently with agencies, regulators, and communities, Inland Rail is not only delivering a resilient freight backbone but also demonstrating how collaboration can lead to enduring, positive outcomes.

WAYNE WINDOW
Senior Infrastructure
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Planner

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Collaboration is essential for delivering complex, multi-jurisdictional infrastructure projects
2. Adaptive planning enables resilience and responsiveness
3. Building social license through meaningful engagement with stakeholders.

SPEAKER BIOGRAPHY

Wayne Window is a senior infrastructure and environmental planning professional with over 25 years of experience delivering complex, multi-jurisdictional projects across Australia. As Environment Manager at Inland Rail, Wayne leads the strategic planning and environmental approvals for one of the nation's most significant freight infrastructure programs. Wayne's career spans both public and private sectors, with a strong focus on environmental impact assessment, land use planning, and regulatory compliance. He is known for his collaborative leadership style and his ability to navigate complex planning frameworks while building strong relationships with communities, Traditional Owners, and government stakeholders. Wayne is passionate about delivering infrastructure that not only meets technical and regulatory requirements but also leaves a lasting positive legacy for the regions it serves.