

# North Coast Line Action Plan

Estimating the impact of travel time savings and reliability on mode choice to prioritise infrastructure investment

**LOCATION**

Queensland

**CLIENT**Department of Transport and  
Main Roads

TRANSPORT ECONOMICS

**Background**

The Queensland Department of Transport and Main Roads was seeking an understanding of how best to position the North Coast Rail Line. Specifically, a 10-year program of infrastructure and service initiatives was required. The focus of these initiatives was to address corridor deficiencies, improve the reliability and resiliency of the corridor, increase rail capacity, and improve the overall efficiency of rail operations.

The purpose of the plan was to build on the Moving Freight Strategy by investigating various upgrade which improve safety and efficiency. These ranged from major, whole-of-corridor upgrades to minor works in known areas of deficiency. This was the case for both passenger movements and freight services on the corridor.

**Our role**

NineSquared was engaged by the Department of Transport and Main Roads to develop an action plan that would inform investment decisions on Queensland Rail's North Coast Line freight network. This plan looked to prioritise investment along the North Coast Line for the next ten years. This involved a detailed assessment of freight, both for rail and for road (i.e. the Bruce Highway).

NineSquared reviewed more than 150 projects and their impact on mode choice along the entire North Coast Line. These projects covered factors such as travel time savings and reliability (e.g. flooding). The cost of these time savings and reliability improvements were monetised in an economic context to assess the impact on mode choice. The mode choice analysis predicted the potential shift away from road towards rail if each of the respective packages of works were delivered.

This process required engagement with various stakeholders, including TMR freight experts, Queensland Rail and the project team engineers.

Following the completion of this analysis, a range of projects were recommended in the short-term, medium-term and longer-term. Where projects were identified as being low cost and high impact, further investigations were recommended in the short term. Projects which required greater investment were recommended for further analysis where there were demonstrated benefits.

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