



# PRIME MINISTER

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## MAINLINE RAILWAY UPGRADING PROGRAMME

The Prime Minister, Mr Fraser, announced today that action was under way to implement the Government's policy undertaking to fund a programme for the upgrading of Australia's mainline railways.

The Prime Minister said that he had written to the Premiers of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia inviting them to join in a Commonwealth/State programme for upgrading their State railways that are part of the national railway network.

This assistance of about \$70 million over 5 years, beginning 1978/79, was foreshadowed in the supplementary statements to the Policy Speech.

At a meeting of the Australian Transport Advisory Council in December 1976 the Commonwealth asked the States to submit proposals for financial assistance.

"The examination by the Government of the projects submitted supports the view that there are critical areas in railways operations where efficiency and the capacity of the railways systems as a whole will be greatly enhanced by strategic investment," Mr Fraser said.

There will shortly be discussions between the Commonwealth Minister and State Transport Ministers on the details of the offer.

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