



PRIME MINISTER

EARLY START TO PORT OF BRISBANE RAIL LINK

Brisbane will become a major sea freight transfer centre serving much of eastern Australia and the South Pacific within five years, Prime Minister Paul Keating predicted today.

Mr Keating's statement was backed by Federal Land Transport Minister, Bob Brown, who said that a major study had estimated that a standard gauge rail link to the Port of Brisbane would generate new business employing 3100 people and would inject more than \$224 million into the Queensland economy over 10 years.

Mr Keating and Mr Brown were commenting on the Federal Government's decision to release \$30 million of *One Nation* money immediately as a Commonwealth contribution to the 21 km link from the Port at Fisherman Islands to the existing standard gauge railway line at Dutton Park.

The new National Rail Corporation will contribute \$10 million to the project, with the Queensland Government meeting the remainder of the \$90 million estimated cost.

Mr Keating and Mr Brown said the Commonwealth contribution was conditional upon the link meeting stringent environmental standards.

The Commonwealth would also allocate \$9 million as an initial payment towards the \$82 million upgrading of the Brisbane-Sydney railway line. The *One Nation* money will be used to replace several bridges and place new sleepers along deficient sections of the standard gauge track in Northern New South Wales. Proposals would be submitted soon for the remainder of the \$82 million earmarked for this corridor.

The aim of this spending is to encourage shipping lines wanting to minimise steaming times and shorten costly port delays to choose Brisbane as a regular stopover, particularly if goods can be transferred interstate by a more efficient Australian rail freight network.

'The Port of Brisbane rail link will connect Brisbane directly into a rail grid running to all mainland state capitals, while improvements on the Brisbane-Sydney line will reduce rail travelling time to about 16 hours, the same time as road transport takes to make the journey', Mr Keating and Mr Brown said.

'Likely national benefits include increased speed and reliability of freight transfer, lower costs to freight forwarders and consumers and greater competitiveness in Australia's trade-exposed sectors through the major ports.

'At present, the port is served by a Queensland Rail narrow gauge freight line. Interstate freight traffic to or from the port must be trans-shipped to or from the standard gauge line at the Acacia Ridge goods yards using either road or narrow gauge rail.

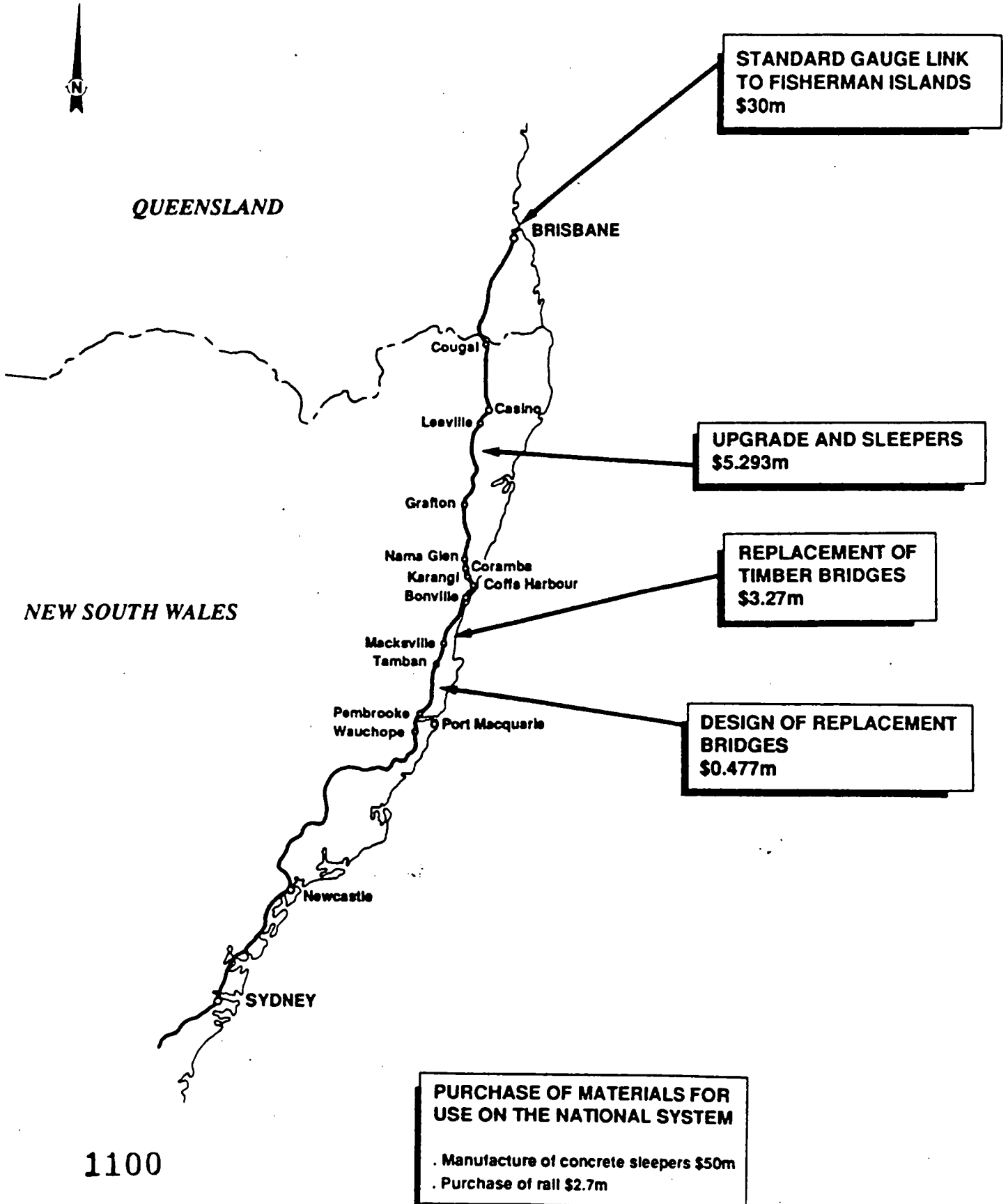
'This is an inefficient method of operation, as interstate freight transported by rail beyond Brisbane must be double-handled'.

Mr Keating and Mr Brown said the *One Nation* investment in the Brisbane-Sydney rail corridor and Port of Brisbane link would increase rail's share of the transportation task down the New South Wales coast from 35 per cent to 45 per cent.

The Dutton Park-Fisherman Islands standard gauge link is planned to follow an existing suburban rail corridor through Brisbane's southern suburbs. Construction is expected to generate employment for about 750 people in 1992-93 and 1993-94. The line is expected to be completed in 1995.

For more information, contact Richard Desmond (06) 274 7306

ONE NATION EARLY START PROJECTS SYDNEY TO BRISBANE



STANDARD GAUGE LINK TO FISHERMAN ISLANDS
\$30m

UPGRADE AND SLEEPERS
\$5.293m

REPLACEMENT OF TIMBER BRIDGES
\$3.27m

DESIGN OF REPLACEMENT BRIDGES
\$0.477m

PURCHASE OF MATERIALS FOR USE ON THE NATIONAL SYSTEM

- . Manufacture of concrete sleepers \$50m
- . Purchase of rail \$2.7m

QUEENSLAND

NEW SOUTH WALES