

Transport Works and Services Bill 1980

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

The Bill seeks Parliamentary sanction for expenditure of funds allotted to the Railways and for other services from the Works and Services Account for the 1980-81 financial year.

The components of the total estimated funds available to the Railways in 1980-81 compared with the 1979-80 allocations are as follows:

	1979-80 \$ M	1980-81 \$ M	Percentage Change
State Funds	35·189	40·075	+13·9
Commonwealth Grants and Loans	11·894	15·300	+28·6
Railway Funds	1·172	1·500	+28·0 (a)
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	48·255	56·875	+17·9
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(a) Railway funds available for capital works are derived from the sale of certain Railway assets, and consequently the figure shown in the above table for 1980-81 is an estimate.

As the Act must continue to operate until a new Act is passed and has received the Royal Assent—possibly late in 1981, provision is made in the Bill for sufficient authority \$128 445 000 to cover estimated expenditure up till 31 December 1981.

The 1981 Act, when it comes into operation, will automatically cancel the unexhausted provision in the 1980 Act.

Sub-items 101 to 113 of Item 1, 201 to 205 of Item 2 and 401 of Item 4 refer to annual provisions, i.e. continuing works and purposes on which expenditure is incurred year by year.

Sub-items 114 to 118 of Item 1 and 403 of Item 4 refer to specific works, each of which is estimated to cost \$100 000 or more.

Provision is also made in sub-item 402 of Item 4 to cover expenditure on any new line that may be authorized during the currency of the Act.

The sub-items listed under Item 3 are in respect of expenditure to improve urban services. These comprise both specific works and continuous programmes.

Sub-items 116 and 118 are being financed by loans from the Commonwealth under the National Railway Network (Financial Assistance) Act 1979.

An explanatory statement, setting out for each sub-item, actual expenditure during the 1979-80 financial year, proposed expenditure in 1980-81 and the proposed provision in the Bill, accompanies this Memorandum.

The following additional information is supplied for the assistance of Honourable Members in considering the various items and sub-items in the Bill:

ITEM 1—WAY AND WORKS

ITEM 2—ROLLING STOCK, EQUIPMENT, MACHINERY AND OTHER WORKS.

The sub-items listed under Items 1 and 2 relate in the main to works to be undertaken outside the urban area. Provision is made for proposed expenditure under the general headings of stations and yards, locomotive accommodation, signalling, track relaying, communications, plant and equipment, and wagon construction.

This expenditure will result in improved container handling facilities; upgraded and strengthened tracks; and construction of modern, high speed bogie wagons.

Other projects which will be carried out under these items, such as installation of flashing lights and boom barriers, and reconstruction of bridges will to a lesser extent also play a part in the overall plan to upgrade railways, but primarily fall into the category of works which increase safety factors, for road users as well as rail users.

Sub-item 105 and 507 include funds for boom barriers. While an allocation has been made in the Bill for boom barriers at level crossings, funds for these works and other grade separation projects are provided from the Transport Fund and do not appear in the Bill.

The progressive programme of provision for conversion of the high tension electricity supply for the Melbourne electrified lines from 25 to 50 Hz, because of discontinuance of 25 Hz supply from the Newport Power Station will be continued in this year.

Item 1 makes provision for the following specific projects:

Geelong Line: Duplication of Little River—Corio section.

Somerton: Provision of a bogie exchange centre.

South Dynon: Provision of an interstate container terminal.

Melbourne—Serviceton: Provision of centralized traffic control and crossing loops.

Work is continuing on duplication of the remaining single track section of the Geelong line.

Sub-item 113—Agency Works makes provision for works undertaken on behalf of other bodies where expenditure is funded from the Works and Services Account in lieu of the normal procedure which is to obtain advances prior to the commencement of work. The recoupment of costs is paid to the credit of the Consolidated Fund—Loan Repayments.

An allocation of \$4 400 000 has been made so that work can continue on 36 modern air-conditioned carriages for the Geelong and Ballarat lines.

ITEM 3—URBAN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

In accordance with the Government's policy to attract commuters to public transport, a programme of projects is being implemented to improve the standards of service for urban rail travellers. The Commonwealth Government is supporting the suburban train replacement programme.

Provision is made for expenditure on the following urban transport improvement projects:

- Construction of new suburban stations.
- Reconstruction of existing stations.
- Extension of automatic power signalling and amalgamation of signal boxes.
- Provision of automatic ticket vending machines.
- Caulfield—Mordialloc: additional track.
- Ringwood—Bayswater/Croydon: duplication.
- Provision of new suburban electric trains.
- Upgrading of blue suburban carriages.
- Altona Junction—Werribee: electrification.

The provision of additional tracks, together with the extension of power signalling, will permit additional peak-period services to be run on suburban lines, and improved services to outer areas.

Provision has been made for continuation of the suburban train replacement programme.

ITEM 4—RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION AND PROPERTY BOARD.

Provision is made in the Bill for the purchase of land for the Eastern Railway.

Funds are required to cover the estimated expenditure for reports, inspections and surveys, and the preparation of any necessary plans and estimates during the currency of the Act. Provision is made also to cover expenditure on any new line that may be authorized during the currency of the Act.

ITEM 5—OTHER SERVICES

Provision is made in the Bill under sub-items 502 and 503 for special assistance to municipalities and other authorities for road works and for the construction of pedestrian road overpasses near schools and other facilities.

Sub-item 504 provides for expenditure on the implementation of the Geelong Bike Plan, the preparation of a Bicycle Strategy Plan for Melbourne, and for various 'on-ground' projects throughout the State.

Sub-item 505 provides for a once only allocation to repay the Short Term Debt of the Westgate Bridge Authority and is part of a programme to place the Authority's finances on a sound basis.

An amount of \$600 000 is provided as a special grant to the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board to assist that Board's bus replacement programme.

