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Industry welcomes Melbourne Airport Rail Link news

Accommodation Australia has welcomed news the Melbourne Airport Rail Link has been cleared for construction, following the resolution of an impasse between the State Government and Melbourne Airport and agreement that an above ground rail option will be constructed by 2033.

Accommodation Australia (Victoria) General Manager, Dougal Hollis notes this long-anticipated infrastructure is much needed, particularly given Melbourne Airport's Master Plan reflects completion of the construction of a third runway by 2030 that will significantly increase flight and passenger capacities.

"Melbourne Airport is projected to be Australia's busiest by 2031, while the adjacent Tullamarine Freeway is expected to reach capacity within the next 12 years. Additional transport options will be critical to reduce related congestion and provide enhanced entry and exit experiences for travellers moving through our state."

Mr Hollis expressed the importance of having the project built without further delay, adding, "It's imperative the State and Federal Government now agree to terms on fully funding the project, given cost estimates reflect that \$3b of the expected \$13b project cost currently remain unfunded."

AA National Chair, David Mansfield said Melbourne's Airport Rail Link will provide "a 'long overdue' alternative transport option, as daily passenger numbers are forecast to grow from 100,000 currently to 201,000, inside the next 20 years."

This news comes as a project mediator contended the project remains "important and necessary" but should be constructed above ground unless a compelling business case for an underground option could be made. Having initially preferred underground construction, Melbourne Airport has agreed to adopt the above ground option to ensure the project comes to fruition.

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