

BPA 2023-2024 AGM Report BALINGUP RAIL GROUP ('BRG') SUMMARY BRIEFING NOTE
BRG Feasibility Study for Zero Emissions High-Yield Tourist and Commuter Rail Service Bunbury-Bridgetown

PURPOSE OF THE BRG FEASIBILITY STUDY:

Originally a BPA-initiated brief to the BRG (commenced 2018), the main purpose of the BRG feasibility study is to add to the overall case for the recommissioning of the Greenbushes to Bunbury rail line for the carriage of freight, now under consideration through a joint study commissioned by the WA State Government and Talison Lithium.

The BRG feasibility study has provided evidence that tourist and commuter passenger services on a recommissioned line with extensions to Bridgetown are both feasible and profitable. The study identifies and quantifies expanded employment and economic growth across the whole South West and is transformational in nature. With the potential start of a new rail tourism industry for the South West, the study has shown that there are also significant environmental, social and safety benefits. See under **Outcomes of the Study** below.

The initial BPA brief of addressing strategies to reduce the number of trucks on the road (removal of up to 200 B Double truck movements daily through Balingup for the next 30 year, total of at least 2.19 million truck movements passing through Balingup and all towns between Greenbushes and Bunbury) and exploring the feasibility of a tourist service has been met. In providing credible and industry-tested projections, the BRG has demonstrated such services are feasible and viable and are actually profitable. A special Balingup community presentation by the BRG is scheduled to take place at 11.00am on Friday 1 November 2024 in the Balingup Town Hall.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:

- **Appointment of Linqage International:** providing international and national business case development rigour and experience commensurate with the BPA brief.
- **Integrated transport policy approach** – leveraging maximum economic, social, environmental and safety benefits from existing and planned land, sea and air transport services and infrastructure.
- **Asset Based Community Development Principles** – building and leveraging off the capability of regional people, the region's built and environmental assets and the unique configuration of towns, villages and attractions along the route of the rail line.
- **Extensive community, local government and industry consultation:** Busselton, Bunbury, Boyanup, Donnybrook, Balingup, Bridgetown, Manjimup, Nannup and Perth Metropolitan Area.
- **Acknowledging historical precedents on the South West railway line (freight and tourist):** Such services had operated from 1891 until the early 2000s.
- **Advocating the use of zero emissions technology:** Leadership in decarbonisation of the transport sector.

OUTCOME OF THE STUDY:

a) Projected Costs

Cost of upgrading the track from Greenbushes is estimated at \$46.875 M, four zero emissions battery railcars, based on repurposed surplus rollingstock, are estimated at \$32 M, cost of quick recharging stations at Bunbury and Bridgetown are estimated at \$2 M, and the cost of new and refurbished stations is \$12 M (total \$92.875m).

b) Projected Economic, Social, Environmental and Safety Outcomes

Analysis indicates that patronage on the line would initially be in the order of 167,000 per annum and grow over a ten-year period to 283,000 per annum. At that time, the railway operation would directly and indirectly contribute over \$72.2M annually to the local economy and support over 499 direct and indirect jobs. The Benefit Cost Ratio of 5.7 is derived from Present Value Benefits of \$1.045B over 30 years and Present Value Costs of \$182.2M using a discount rate of 7%. Using data from the Australasian Railway Association's Value of Rail Report 2020, the Zero Emissions tourist and commuter railway in the first ten years, will reduce CO2 emissions by over 18,012 tonnes, reduce the cost of motor accidents by over \$26 million, and provide health benefits in excess of \$17 million.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

2023-2024 expenditure by the BRG is attached. Talison has committed a further \$17 500 to the study bringing total expenditure to \$75 500. The BRG raised the total amount from industry and local government contributions apart from a \$5 000 grant and \$5 000 loan from the BPA. The BRG has paid back the \$5 000 loan to the BPA. In-kind contributions from BRG members are estimated to be in excess of \$250 000 as all professional expertise, travel across the South West and to Perth as well as accommodation on multiple occasions over five years were met by BRG members with no reimbursement for any associated costs in delivering the report.

Balingup Rail Group 23/24

Incoming

Date	Received from	Amount
7-Jul	Talison	25000.00
21-Jul	Shire Bri-Gre	5000.00
27-Jul	Shire Dbk-Bal	5000.00
10-Aug	Shire of Dardanup	5000.00
30-Aug	City of Bunbury	5000.00
26-Oct	Shire of Capel	5000.00
13-Dec	BRG Future's Fund grant (Trust fund)	5000.00
13-Dec	BRG Future's Fund loan (Trust fund)	5000.00
Totals		60,000.00

Outgoing

Date	Paid to	Amount
14/21 Dec	Lanegold Pty Ltd Linqage (BRG)	14300.00
28-Feb	Nelson's Bridgetown (BRG funds)	285.00
8-Feb	BREC (BRG funds)	488.00
8-Feb	EHB Holdings (BRG funds)	200.00
12-Apr	Shire of Manjimup (BRG funds)	36.00
12-Apr	Lanegold Pty Ltd Linqage (BRG)	14300.00
30-Jun	Repay BPA Future's Fund loan amount	5000.00
Totals		34,609.00

Monthly Summary:

Funds received	\$ 60,000.00
Outgoing funds	\$ 34,609.00
BRG available funds	\$ 25,391.00