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*Cooma and Monaro Progress Association works to promote the economic  
development and social wellbeing of the region*

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## **COOMA AND MONARO PROGRESS ASSOCIATION CONCEPT PLAN FOR CANBERRA TO EDEN RAILWAY**

# **Submission on NSW FREIGHT POLICY**

This submission by Cooma and Monaro Progress Association (CMPA) responds to the Freight Policy Consultation Paper published online by the NSW Government, dated April 2024.

NSW Freight Policy is recommended to include a railway to Eden for inland produce exports.

The four-part *Concept Plan for Canberra to Eden Railway* (C2E), 2018, by economist and engineer Edwin Michell, has been grown from the beginning by CMPA. During this growth, CMPA has had fruitful meetings with the ACT Government, encouraging consultation with the Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council, and strong support from the Snowy Monaro Regional Council.

The recommended export railway now includes the NSW Government's design from Yass to the northern border of ACT, as incorporated in the Commonwealth Railways design report, 1969, for Canberra to Yass railway (C2Y). The report, digitised and released 2023 by National Archives, includes a gradient maximum of 1 in 75 and where practicable a radius minimum of 800 metres. Details can be adapted for electrification, for double stacked containers on freight trains at a speed of 115 km/hr, and for tilting passenger trains at a speed of 160 km/hr. A diagram indicating the rail route to Eden is appended. CMPA supports as eligible the Fastrack Australia (FA) possible route from the proposed Canberra station near Canberra airport towards Cooma. The support extends to the point where that route would merge with the Canberra (Kingston) end of the C2E line. Thereby C2E would connect smoothly with C2Y. The FA route is shown in their Report, *High Speed Rail for Canberra*, 2023. For Melbourne, C2Y would provide timely access by rail to Canberra. With a high speed railway via Gunning, resilience would be achieved.

For Eden Port a masterplan would also be timely. This should be facilitated by hydrodynamic studies which would have informed modern developments – the Naval and Multipurpose wharf,

the Cruise Ship Terminal, and the Wave Attenuator. The masterplan may include seabed excavation and breakwater works. The NSW South East Regional Plan for 2036 identifies the Port of Eden as: the third deepest natural harbour in the Southern Hemisphere, making it ideal for large vessels.

The railway would relieve congestion on approaches to Port Botany.

Documents substantiating this submission are published, with electronic versions in the State and National libraries. The documents are accessible by: [nla.gov.au](http://nla.gov.au), scrolling down slightly, and keying in: Cooma and Monaro Progress Association. The documents, also presently in, and in addition downloadable from, [coomansw.com.au](http://coomansw.com.au), are:

- Concept Plan for Canberra to Eden Railway, 2018
- Concept Plan for Canberra to Eden Railway, Part 2 - Preliminary Estimate, 2018
- Concept Plan for Canberra to Eden Railway, Part 3A - Financial Cost / Benefit Analysis, 2018
- Concept Plan for Canberra to Eden Railway, Part 3B - Socio-Economic Cost/Benefit Analysis 2018
- Review of Feasibility Study, 2021 (includes the Study Summary)
- Reviews of Feasibility Study, Edwin Michell, 2021
- Planning Submission, [serving also as a progress record] June 2023
- Economic Evaluation of the Proposed Canberra to Eden Railway, R J Nairn, 2024.

The C2Y design report, 1969, is at:

<https://RecordSearch.naa.gov.au/scripts/AutoSearch.asp?O=I&Number=5508053> pages 18-51.

The C2Y economic evaluation, 1971, is at: [https://www.bitre.gov.au/sites/default/files/report\\_001.pdf](https://www.bitre.gov.au/sites/default/files/report_001.pdf)

The Economic Evaluation of C2E by R J Nairn found benefit-to-cost ratios (BCRs) of 1.3, 1.4, and 1.5. The Reviews by Edwin Michell had found a BCR of 1.4. The Feasibility Study had found BCRs of 0.04 and less. While the Study had remained closed, CMPA trusts this submission may be examined, and is cordially ready to provide clarifications by telephone and email.

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**Acknowledgements:** In growing the Concept Plan for C2E, CMPA has used the work of contributors who have fulfilled career roles as follows:

Edwin Michell, engineer, economist, and author

R J Nairn FIEAust, engineer and leading international transport economist

Colin S Mellor MIEAust, engineer and leading international transport economist

Richard Hopkins FIEAust, leading international road and aerodrome engineer

Dale Budd, engineer, political staff chief, and railway specialist

Nicholas Kilpatrick, freight trains manager and metallurgist

Luke Williamson, leading port economist.

