



Media Release

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Urgent action needed to keep Perth moving

RAC says Western Australia is facing an on-going challenge in responding to increasing congestion, with new figures predicting that congestion will cost WA a record \$16 billion in lost productivity by 2031.

RAC Senior Manager Policy and Research Anne Still said the Infrastructure Audit Report has painted a worrying picture for WA, but it wasn't too late to safeguard the State's future.

"We've seen the warning signs for several years and we are now hearing alarm bells – the findings of the National Infrastructure Audit is an opportunity to take stock and identify priorities," Ms Still said.

"This analysis has found the cost of congestion to the State's productivity is expected to rise from an estimated \$2.1 billion by 2020, to \$16 billion by 2031, making Perth roads the most congested in the country, and ahead of both Sydney and Brisbane.

The report found without Government action, at both the State and Federal levels, the Mitchell Freeway, Tonkin Highway and Graham Farmer Freeway would be between 96 and 82 per cent full.

The Leach, Canning and Roe Highways, as well as the Kwinana Freeway and major rail lines, have also been predicted to buckle under the pressure of record congestion levels.

"Seven of the nation's 10 most congested roads, including the top four, will be in Perth. The other three will be in Sydney."

Last week's report comes after the State's Auditor General released a report in March this year, which highlighted that the State does not have the capacity to manage traffic congestion effectively and backed moves to shift focus to the management, rather than construction, of the road network.

This State needs a strong plan to tackle congestion and this must comprise a range of solutions. Making the road network work harder and smarter, including through low-cost solutions, is just one component, we also need to see the expansion of the public transport network, better cycling infrastructure and new approaches to land use and transport planning.

"In 2011 we knew that by 2031 Perth's public transport network would need to carry twice as many people as it does now but despite this the Airport – Forrestfield Link is our only committed rapid transit project, with MAX Light Rail having been postponed. Accelerated investment in public transport, including by the Federal Government, is critical to ensure WA remains productive."

In addition to naming MAX Light Rail as the State's top transport priority, RAC has also called for the Australian Government to invest \$300million in the deployment of intelligent transport solutions to ensure

we maximise the benefit of investment that has already been made in the network and to move WA into a better position to benefit from advancements in vehicle autonomy.

As a longer term solution, more also needs to be done to decentralise workplaces to activity centres outside of the CBD, providing jobs closer to where people live.

“We know congestion is impacting productivity and is taking a toll on commuters and business, it’s a problem is not going away without intervention.”

The RAC’s full report on WA’s Employment Self Sufficiency can be found on the [RAC website](#).

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