



The Hon Anthony Albanese MP

Minister for Infrastructure,
Transport, Regional Development
and Local Government
Leader of the House

Reference: 00848-2009

09 FEB 2009

The Hon Simon O'Brien MP
Minister for Transport and Disability Services
13th Floor, Dumas House
2 Havelock Street
West Perth WA 6005

Dear Minister

Simon,

As part of the Nation Building and Jobs Package announced by the Prime Minister on 3 February 2009, the Government is providing \$50 million in 2008-09 and \$100 million in 2009-10 to accelerate the installation of boom gates and other active rail crossing control mechanisms at high risk level crossings throughout Australia. This funding will be provided under the new Boom Gates for Rail Crossings program under the Nation Building Program.

I am pleased to advise you that the Australian Government has allocated \$14.07 million (capped) to Western Australia, split \$4.69 million in 2008-09 and \$9.38 million in 2009-10. To ensure timely disbursement of this money to projects, Western Australia will be required to provide proposals back to the Commonwealth by 27 February 2009. I therefore ask that you provide a list of the proposed projects, up to the respective capped allocations, for 2008-09 and 2009-10 by end February 2009. I also seek your commitment to ensuring that projects are undertaken without undue delay.

The list of proposed projects should be based on a robust safety assessment using the Australian Level Crossing Assessment Model along with other recognised standards and risk mitigation strategies. The proposed treatment at each crossing will need to demonstrate an effective and efficient use of Australian Government funds, providing for the greatest value at the lowest cost.

For each project, details will need to be provided in relation to the proposed treatment, the location of the rail crossing (using GPS co-ordinates) and details of the required funding.

In developing your list of proposed projects, I would urge you to ensure that there is an equitable distribution of funds between national network road, and state and local road rail level crossing upgrades.

The funding is available for active protection measures at rail level crossings including funding for the costs associated with basic infrastructure and the cost of connecting infrastructure to the power grid. Funding will also be available for costs associated with any road geometry changes to improve sighting distances if it is integral to enable the effective and most beneficial installation of active protection measures.

The funding cannot be applied to upgrade existing signalling technology, changes to road geometry where it is not integral to the installation of active protection measures or to projects involving grade separations.

Any savings on particular projects will be available for use on other approved projects and/or new projects subject to the agreement of the Australian Government. Any cost overruns will need to met by Western Australia.

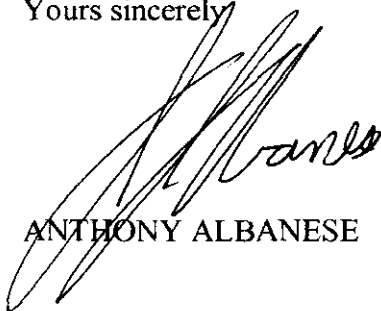
The Australian Government funding is only for projects which install active protection measures at rail level crossings. In light of the timeframe involved, there is opportunity for States to prioritise projects that are ready to commence immediately. Given the Australian Government funding is only available for active protection measures, I seek your agreement to ensure Western Australia does not shift current funds for rail level crossings away from its existing program. Any freeing up of funds for rail level crossing safety improvements, as a result of the Australian Government's contribution, is to be used to undertake other rail level crossing safety measures, including protection measures that do not fall under the parameters of the Australian Government's funding requirements.

For the installation of new active protection measures at rail level crossing projects, the Australian Government's allocated funds will be available to meet 100 per cent of the costs (no contributions are to be sought from other parties including local government).

You will be required to provide regular reports of expenditure on both Australian Government funded projects and projects funded from your State's own source revenue. My department will liaise directly with your department early next week in relation to the specific information requirements for your submission as well as the ongoing reporting requirements for this program.

I seek your agreement to the conditions outlined in this letter and I look forward to working with you on this important safety initiative.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anthony Albanese', is written over the printed name. The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial 'A'.

ANTHONY ALBANESE