

MEDIA RELEASE

Good advice falls on deaf ears, says Radley de Silva of Infrastructure Australia's Victoria recommendations

TUESDAY, 27 MARCH 2018

"Infrastructure Australia's annual *Infrastructure Priority List*, released today, remains consistent with Master Builder's view that the East West Link is an urgent need for our rapidly growing state," Radley de Silva, CEO Master Builders Victoria, said. "The studies have been done, the advice is sound, but it falls on deaf ears."

"When it comes to critical infrastructure, Victoria suffers in political a stalemate," Mr de Silva said.

"If we are to actually solve our significant infrastructure problems, we need to follow the recommendations of independent agencies tasked with advising on our urban development challenges," Mr de Silva said, "not tolerate wasted time, money and wheel-spinning for political jockeying."

"The strenuous recommendation is to build the East West Link within five years," he said. "Name it what you will, and parse it into as many sections as you like, but get it done."

"This independent advice takes the long-term view of Victoria's and Australia's populations as unified communities who need to live and work together, not ones that are divided along party lines," he said.

"Infrastructure Australia Chair Julianne Alroe is spot on when she explains that these recommendations take the long view, allowing us to look past election distractions to find evidence-based solutions to problems that become more nettlesome every day," Mr de Silva said.

"If top-tier 'near-term' recommendations like the East West Link can't be agreed upon for action, then what hope do we have of addressing lower-ranked but still crucial urgencies, like a Melbourne airport rail link?" he said.

"There is sad irony that recommendations made by such independent bodies—done for the benefit of all—don't carry more weight," Mr de Silva said. "Everyone suffers that waste of research and data."

"If the best aspects of Melbourne and Victoria are to thrive instead of wither, we need to see critical infrastructure projects not just pitched and planned, but made shovel-ready," he said. "That means transportation infrastructure as well as schools, aged-care centres and hospitals."

"We certainly need a building and construction minister who can spearhead the delivery of critical projects and the necessary work force to deliver on the building needs of our fast-paced population growth."

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