



**BUDGET
2025**

THE GROWTH BUDGET

Investing in Infrastructure

Hon Chris Bishop
Minister for Infrastructure
20 May 2025

Upgrades to improve rail reliability

Train commuters and businesses moving goods around the country will see more reliable rail services, thanks to the Government's investment of \$604.6 million for rail upgrades and renewals through Budget 2025, Rail Minister Winston Peters and Transport Minister Chris Bishop say.

"The funding provides \$461 million to maintain and renew the rail freight network, and \$143.6 million to replace and upgrade the Auckland and Wellington metropolitan rail networks, and will deliver a more productive, efficient and reliable rail network that supports economic growth and productivity," Mr Peters says.

"We want railways to succeed for this country – rail freight backs our business, and business backs our cities and provinces.

"Rail currently moves 13 per cent of national freight and a quarter of New Zealand's exports, complementing our road freighters' short-hauls by doing the heavy-haul weights, the long-distance runs, and being the efficient clearing house so coastal ports can handle more export ships.

"The Rail Network Investment Programme for 2024-2027 is now funded, meaning maintenance, network operations, asset renewals and modest improvements are funded. "This programme replaces decades' old bridges, culverts, and other assets with infrastructure to last for generations to come, and provides the bedrock for growth by the commercially-funded freight operations to move our goods.

"We have a legacy for rail freight and this builds on it. The Northland line is upgraded from Swanson to Whangārei, new locomotives and shunts are arriving, new wagons are serving customers and more are being assembled in Dunedin, and rail ferries are being secured on the Strait," says Mr Peters.

The Government is also funding critical network renewals in Auckland and Wellington. "Metro rail investment in Auckland and Wellington will improve the level of service for passengers by addressing overdue and critical renewals work," Mr Bishop says.

“A backlog of overdue renewals has made services less reliable, with commuters experiencing ongoing disruption in recent years. Piecemeal network maintenance has increased overall costs and has not delivered the high-performing metro rail service that our cities need to flourish.

“The poor state of our metro networks has flow-on impacts for performance. For example, temporary speed restrictions are often needed as a safety precaution, leading to increased travel times and disrupting service schedules.

“The Budget investment in metro rail will continue to support delivery of modern networks that are more reliable, can be efficiently maintained, ease congestion on the busiest parts of the network, and allow for increased future demand. It will also ensure a better experience for commuters who already make 24 million journeys on the networks each year.

“Auckland Council and Greater Wellington Regional Council will also need to meet their fair share of costs to deliver the services we want for metro rail.”