Rt Hon Winston Peters

Minister of Foreign Affairs
Minister for Racing
Minister for Rail

Todd Valster, General Secretary, Rail and Maritime Transport Union
Carl Findlay, National Secretary, Maritime Union of New Zealand
Helen McAra, General Secretary, New Zealand Merchant Services Guild
Jacqui Roberts, National Secretary, Aviation and Marine Engineers Association

Dear Union Leaders

The Government has released Budget 2026. We wanted to take this opportunity to thank your members for their work supporting the improved performance in Rail, and to share the results for Rail too.

Today, we have secured:

- $1.075 billion for the 2027-2030 Rail Network Investment Programme. This is the first time a government has fully funded a three-year programme up front to put rail on the same sure footing as many other infrastructure types.
- $107 million for the next year of metropolitan infrastructure works in Auckland and Wellington, continuing our commitment to year-by-year fix these networks while minimising disruption to commuters.

These investments align with the strategy I set when last responsible for Rail. It follows our investment of $1.7 billion in new rolling stock, $300 million for mechanical depot upgrades, six years of Rail Network Investment Programmes totalling billions, and $1.7 billion to secure the future of the Interislander rail ferries.

Our focus is on the network because transport infrastructure is publicly funded – just as State Highways are funded through a combination of taxpayer contributions and user charges. KiwiRail's freight operations, ferry operations, and passenger operations are all paid for through the revenue it earns from its customers.

In recent times, we have seen a real improvement in schedule reliability at KiwiRail. This, combined with being price competitive, is critical to attracting volume to rail. Your success here will be New Zealand's success, but it takes continued effort, a focus on value for money, and doing what you say you will.

Once again, we have held up our end of the bargain to underpin success for Rail. A strong future for your company, its members, and in turn for New Zealand.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely



Rt Hon Winston Peters
Minister for Rail

Copied. Sue Tindal, KiwiRail Chair; Peter Reidy, KiwiRail CEO

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