

## COASTWIDE

# One-hour fast train to Sydney

## INFRASTRUCTURE NSW RECOMMENDATION

Denice Barnes

A ONE-HOUR express service for rail commuters between Gosford and Sydney within a decade and work to start on the F3-M2 link within five years were key recommendations in the new NSW infrastructure plan.

The 20-year guide to government investment was released on Wednesday by Infrastructure NSW.

It recommended a \$1 billion program to accelerate mainline rail speeds to create a one-hour trip between the coast and Sydney within the first 10 years.

INSW chief executive Paul Broad said: "The Central Coast is now part of Greater Sydney from an economic perspective, and it is important that there are good infrastructure links to enable Central Coast residents to get to jobs in Greater Sydney and to enable business and freight activity."

### BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE

THE strategy developed by Infrastructure NSW is independent advice to the state government and provided to the government for consideration.

Premier Barry O'Farrell has committed the government to at least one major project recommended in the strategy, a freeway linking the M5 and M4 to Sydney Airport, setting aside \$1.8 billion.

He said while the existing lines would never be able to be adapted to a true high-speed operation because of the topography, a target average speed of 80km/h was achievable.


He said Sydney-Newcastle travel was slower than the pre-World War II Newcastle Flyer steam train.

"Getting the trip time down from Gosford to Sydney would be a massive improvement for commuters and it is achievable," Mr Broad said.

He said INSW also placed a high priority on the F3-M2 link, advising work should start within five years.

"In our view is it among the highest priority road infrastructure projects with private sector funding," he said. "This is an important missing link for eastern seaboard freight movement and a solution is needed to ease congestion for commuters and freight businesses."

He said the most likely solution would be private sector funding and an unsolicited proposal was being assessed by Infrastructure NSW and other government agencies.

 **Are the priorities right – or even achievable?**  
[expressadvocate.com.au](http://expressadvocate.com.au)