AUTHOR: Ben Harvey SECTION: SUPPLEMENTS ARTICLE TYPE: NEWS ITEM AUDIENCE : 0 PAGE: 46
PRINTED SIZE: 1889.00cm² REGION: National MARKET: Australia ASR: N/A WORDS: 535
ITEM ID: 1245251572

07 OCT, 2026

IT'S ALL IN THE DELIVERY-

The Nightly

IT'S ALL IN THE DELIVERY

Road, rail, power, port and people: the Western Trade Coast needs all five fixed before a single hull is cut

BEN HARVEY

Licensed by Copyright Agency. You may only copy or communicate this work with a licence.

AUTHOR: Ben Harvey SECTION: SUPPLEMENTS ARTICLE TYPE: NEWS ITEM AUDIENCE : 0 PAGE: 46
PRINTED SIZE: 1889.00cm² REGION: National MARKET: Australia ASR: N/A WORDS: 535
ITEM ID: 1245251572

07 OCT, 2026

IT'S ALL IN THE DELIVERY-

The Nightly

The gritty heart of heavy industry in WA is in need of surgery.

The Kwinana industrial strip is facing its biggest transformation and the body representing its heavy hitters says road, rail, power and port capacity upgrades are needed at the wider Western Trade Coast — the name given to the industrial belt stretching south of Woodman Point.

Kwinana Industries Council chief executive David Harrison said the amount of investment planned over the next decade was "eye-watering" and cautioned that a business-as-usual approach would not cut it.

"As a State, and arguably a nation, we have never attempted to deliver this many projects of such size, scale and complexity at the same time, in the one area," Mr Harrison said.

"From AUKUS and defence industries, Westport — the new container port for WA — and new energy and advanced manufacturing projects, they are all coming to the Western Trade Coast."

The pressure point is the sprawling Australian Marine Complex that Canberra has anointed as ground zero for the country's biggest rearmament program since World War II.

Bechtel Infrastructure Australia is drawing up a master plan for the precinct, which will be the venue for construction of eight new Royal Australian Navy frigates, and sustainment of the AUKUS nuclear-powered submarine fleet.

On top of that, local shipbuilder and AMC tenant Austal has a $5 billion pipeline of landing craft contracts.

The Common User Facility at the heart of the complex is already booked out until the early 2030s. It will need to be reconfigured and partially relocated to make room for the defence expansion.

"The CUF is vital to many sectors of our economy," Mr Harrison said.

"The recent release of the defence precinct boundary is an important step. The next level of project delivery is needed."

Mr Harrison said the area's infrastructure was either at capacity, at end of life, or in need of upgrades before a single hull is cut.

Kwinana supplies most of WA's fuel, cement, bottled gas, bitumen and fertilisers, and any disruption to those supply chains would be felt Statewide.

He welcomed the widening of the Kwinana Freeway, Anketell Road upgrades, transmission and generation works, industrial land releases and port expansions already committed by the State Government, but said the watchword now had to be "delivery, delivery, delivery".

Workforce is the other looming bottleneck.

"Where will these workers with the right skills come from to deliver this wave of new projects?" Mr Harrison asked.

The KIC is pinning its hopes on the State Development Act, passed at the end of 2025, which made the Western Trade Coast WA's first declared State development area. Mr Harrison said the designation opened the door to a co-ordinated master plan, fast-tracked approvals, prioritised infrastructure upgrades and long-overdue clarity on buffer zones.

"While it is one of the most exciting periods of opportunity and investment in the history of the Western Trade Coast, we cannot afford a business-as-usual approach," he said.

"We need innovative thinking, nimble decision-making and a whole-of-government approach if we are to realise the full potential. It will need to be a genuine team effort."

Licensed by Copyright Agency. You may only copy or communicate this work with a licence.