MEDIA RELEASE
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MITEZ: Rail incentives are a welcome step, but freight reform must continue.

MITEZ has welcomed Queensland Rail's freight incentives as a positive step towards more competitive transport across the Mount Isa to Townsville corridor, while calling for continued action on freight costs, infrastructure and service reliability.

Discounted access charges for fuel freight on the Mount Isa Line are now available, with the Rail Freight Container Incentive Scheme set to commence on 1 January 2027.

MITEZ Chief Executive Officer Maria James said freight and transport logistics remained a top advocacy priority for the organisation.

"MITEZ has consistently advocated for lower freight costs and greater use of the Mount Isa Line to support existing industries, attract new volumes, invite investment and strengthen regional supply chains," Ms James said.

"These incentives are welcome, but more work is needed to deliver competitive end-to-end freight costs, practical loading and unloading infrastructure, and reliable services that meet industry needs.

"MITEZ applauds the Queensland Government's Queensland Freight Delivery Plan 2026 and its commitment to tangible actions that improve freight productivity and reliability. Delivering these outcomes will require collaboration between government, Queensland Rail, above-rail operators, logistics providers and industry to overcome barriers across the supply chain and turn the Plan's commitments into practical benefits for regional businesses and communities," Ms James said.

"Competitive freight costs are essential to the viability of our regional industries and their ability to grow."

The fuel incentive could deliver savings of up to $50,000 per full fuel train, according to Queensland Rail.

The forthcoming container scheme will support eligible new containerised freight moving onto rail. It will run from 1 January 2027 until 31 December 2029, with eligible customers able to receive rebates for two years—the full applicable rebate in their first year and half that amount in their second year.

Queensland Rail lists first-year rebates of up to $280 per eligible loaded container between Townsville and Mount Isa, and $230 between Townsville and Cloncurry. Eligibility includes a minimum annual volume of 250 twenty-foot equivalent units.

Fuel containers are excluded from the container scheme and are covered by separate fuel freight incentive arrangements.

Ms James encouraged businesses to use the lead-up to January to assess their options.

“These measures give producers and freight customers an opportunity to speak with Queensland Rail and their freight providers about where rail could work within their supply chains,” she said.

“Turning incentives into additional freight on rail will require coordination between customers, rail operators and terminal providers.

“MITEZ will continue advocating for a coordinated road and rail network that supports industry growth, reduces pressure on our highways and strengthens the resilience of our corridor.”

Businesses can register interest in the container scheme or discuss eligibility with Queensland Rail at RFCIS@qr.com.au.

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