



**SUBURBAN  
RAIL LOOP**

# **SRL East Business Disruption Mitigation Framework**

December 2022

## Verification Statement

Nation Partners Pty Ltd, in its capacity as Independent Environmental Auditor (IEA) for Suburban Rail Loop East (SRL East) (the Project) pursuant to the Environmental Management Framework (EMF) endorsed by the Minister for Environment and Climate Action, verifies that the Suburban Rail Loop Authority (SRLA) document, SRL East Business Disruption Mitigation Framework (Document #: SRLA-1931815985-327929; Dated: December 2022) complies with the conditions of the SRL approvals including the EMF, Environmental Performance Requirements (EPRs), Urban Design Strategy (UDS) and Public Open Space Framework (POSF) (as applicable to the verified document).

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## 1. Introduction

Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to shape the future liveability, productivity and connectivity of Melbourne. The 90-kilometre rail line will link every major rail service from the Frankston Line to the Werribee Line via Melbourne Airport, better connecting Victorians to jobs, retail, education, health services and each other.

SRL will be delivered progressively, with SRL East between Cheltenham and Box Hill connecting growing health, education, retail and employment precincts in Melbourne's east and south east.

SRL East (the Project) will deliver 26-kilometre twin tunnels and six new underground stations at Cheltenham, Clayton, Monash, Glen Waverley, Burwood and Box Hill. A new stabling facility will be located in Heatherton, near the start of the line to stable and maintain SRL's next generation energy efficient trains.

Suburban Rail Loop Authority (SRLA) is responsible for planning, developing and delivering the rail line, underground stations, supporting rail infrastructure and precinct planning for neighbourhoods around the SRL stations.

## 2. Purpose

The purpose of this Business Disruption Mitigation Framework (BDMF) is to outline SRLA's approach to managing and mitigating business disruption from the Project during construction.

The framework addresses:

- Disruption to business access for customers, visitors, suppliers and waste collection
- Management of amenity impacts on businesses
- Impacts on business operations from utility relocation or disruptions.

## 3. Scope

Requirements for managing and minimising impacts on businesses are outlined in the SRL East Environmental Management Framework (EMF) with specific Environmental Performance Requirements (EPRs) outlined in Appendix A – EPR compliance mapping.

In particular, the BDMF implements the requirements of EPR Business (B) 3 and EPR B4, informing the preparation of Business Disruption Mitigation Plans (BDMPs) by contractors to proactively engage with businesses and manage impacts within the Project Area and Eligibility Zone.

The BDMF applies to all phases of construction to commercial businesses (such as retail, industrial, corporation, limited liability company (LLC), or sole proprietorship) and non-commercial and non-residential entities (such as volunteer groups, not-for-profit organisations, schools, universities, hospitals and churches), whose properties are not required for the Project, but which may be adversely impacted due to SRL East construction works.

The application and scope of this framework does not preclude the provision of additional tailored support to commercial businesses or non-commercial entities on a case-by-case basis.

Figure 1 outlines relationship between the BDMF, the Business Support Guidelines and other relevant documents.

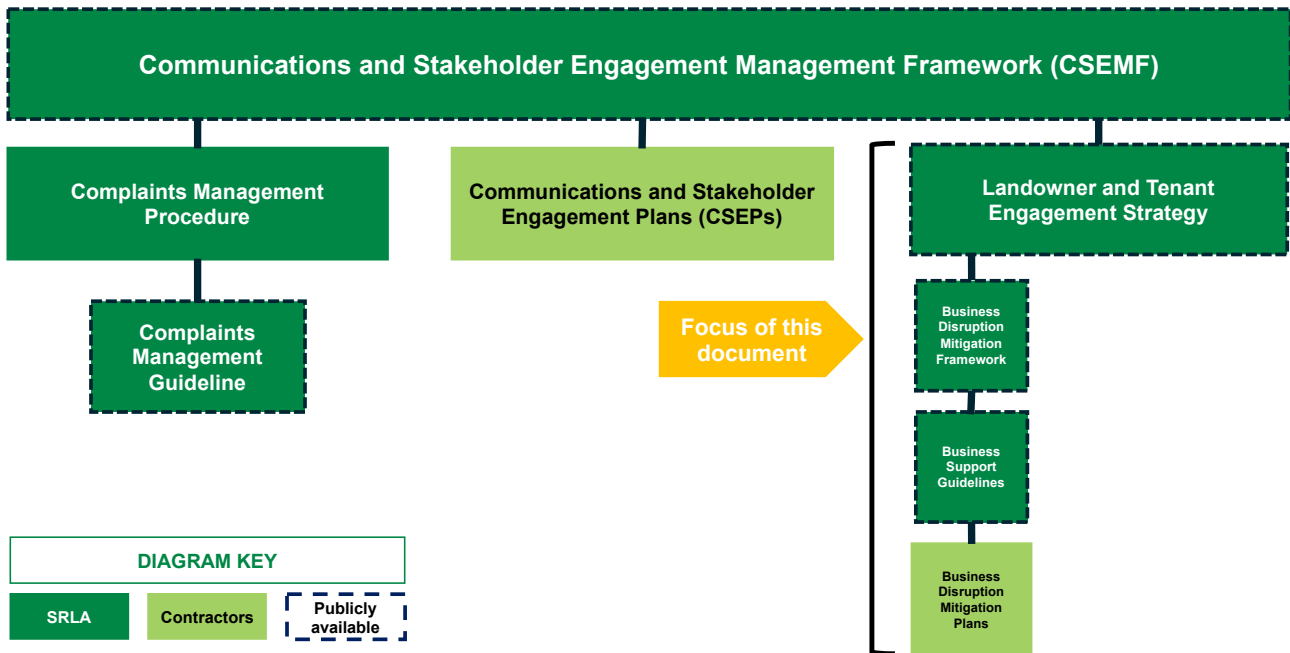


Figure 1: Related guidelines, plans and documents for SRL East

## 4. Recognising business impacts

While SRL East will ultimately deliver many benefits for businesses, particularly in the vicinity of the proposed stations, SRLA recognises that the construction of the rail infrastructure has the potential to have adverse impacts of a temporary nature on businesses close to these activities.

Impacts may include:

- Changes to amenity, such as noise, dust, vibration or lighting
- Changes to functionality of business equipment (e.g. electromagnetic interference)
- Street closures and changes to traffic conditions, car parking and property access
- Loss of visibility due to site fencing, hoarding or construction vehicles
- Loss of customers such as passing pedestrian traffic due to restricted access.

Due to the scale, duration and variable nature of the construction works during the construction phase of SRL East, and the need for some construction work to be undertaken outside normal working hours (7am-6pm on Monday to Friday and 7am-1pm on Saturday), residual impacts on businesses may occur. Residual impacts will be addressed through engagement and the implementation of specific support measures.

On-site construction mitigation measures will be explored and adopted where reasonably practicable, especially for outside of normal working hours, with reference to the EPA Publication 1834: *Civil construction, building and demolition guide* (November 2020).

## 4.1. Guidelines and references

The BDMF has been developed in accordance with the Victorian Small Business Engagement Guidelines.

The Victorian Small Business Commission (VSBC) has developed guidelines to help minimise the negative impact that disruptive infrastructure projects have on small businesses.

SRLA's approach to managing and mitigating business disruption during construction of SRL East is based on the processes outlined in the VSBC's *Small Business Engagement Guidelines*.

## 4.2. Business disruption mitigation plans

EPR B3 outlines the requirement for SRL East contractors to develop and implement BDMPs that comply with the BDMF and the SRL East Business Support Guidelines.

SRLA will work with the contractors to oversee the implementation of BDMPs and ensure the implementation of business support as outlined in the SRL East Business Support Guidelines.

Each BDMP will need to address:

- Measures as far as practicable to ensure construction traffic avoids sensitive commercial areas.
- Details of any changes to traffic and parking conditions and durations of change.
- A construction schedule developed in consultation with transport authorities, local councils and affected businesses to minimise cumulative impacts of this and other independent projects.
- A process for notifying customers of proposed changes to business operations such as access, operating hours and amenity, including the settling of suitable timeframes for notification prior to commencement of works that cause the change in business operations.
- Specific measures for supporting affected businesses during construction.
- Consideration of potential requirements for cleaning of streets, public areas, street furniture, commercial premises and shopfronts to mitigate any impacts of construction activities directly caused by the Project.

BDMPs must be consistent with the SRL East Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Management Framework (CSEMF) and contractor Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Plans (CSEPs), which will be developed early to inform business impact assessments (see sections 5 and 6 of this document for more information).

## 5. Business communication and engagement approach

SRLA's engagement framework recognises that project progress and decision-making are enhanced through engagement with communities and stakeholders, including residents, businesses, government and other interested parties and groups.

SRLA is committed to working closely with businesses in each of the SRL East precincts and along the SRL East alignment that may be impacted by the Project.

## 5.1. Overarching engagement principles

SRLA and its contractors will plan and undertake all communications and engagement activities in line with four key principles and related goals outlined in Table 1.

**Table 1: Engagement principles and goals**

Principle	Goals
<b>Transparent</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We clearly communicate project scope and decision-making processes to those potentially impacted by the Project.</li> <li>We articulate the elements of the Project that can be influenced by feedback and explain why elements are fixed and the reasons for this.</li> <li>We close the loop with stakeholders and the community so they can see how their feedback has been considered.</li> </ul>
<b>Inclusive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We make the effort to ensure that all stakeholder and community groups are included in the Project.</li> <li>We consider how we can remove barriers to participation and provide reasonable time and resources to support meaningful participation.</li> </ul>
<b>Timely</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We engage early and at all stages of the Project, ensuring information is provided to stakeholders and communities as the Project develops.</li> </ul>
<b>Meaningful</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We clearly articulate the scope and objectives of engagement to communities and stakeholders, including the engagement promise (level of contribution sought) and how feedback will be used.</li> <li>We ensure appropriate timelines and resources are provided to ensure all stakeholder groups and communities can meaningfully participate.</li> </ul>

## 5.2. Communicating and engaging with businesses

The SRL East CSEMF outlines tools and techniques SRLA and its contractors will use to communicate and engage with communities and stakeholders, in line with best practice engagement outlined by the IAP2. Section 7 of the CSEMF outlines project-wide and precinct-based tools and techniques as well as tailored approaches for diverse groups.

EPR SC2 outlines the requirement for SRL East contractors to develop and implement CSEPs for each of the project work packages. CSEPs are required to ensure clear and transparent communication with key stakeholders, including local businesses, throughout each stage of the Project.

Each CSEP is required to outline how the contractor will engage with stakeholders and communities, including relationships with business owners and operators and how and when engagement will occur.

CSEPs are required to be updated to reflect the progress of works and emerging issues and will be subject to review and periodic auditing by an Independent Environmental Auditor (IEA) and SRLA.

Further information about CSEPs is available in section 6.1.1 of the SRL East CSEMF. Contractor CSEPs as required by EPR SC2 must include a tailored and proactive approach to engaging with trader associations and businesses affected by construction, outlining:

- Regular and timely reporting of design and construction activities and key projects timelines
- Provision of adequate and advance notice about changes to traffic and parking conditions and duration of impact.
- Timely provision of relevant information, including responses to issues raised by the group.

- Regular reporting and monitoring of business community feedback, impacts and discussion of mitigation measures and their effectiveness.
- Measures to effectively engage with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) business operators and owners.
- Annual surveys to assess visitation impacts on businesses, including surveying stakeholders such as customers and visitors to Clayton, Glen Waverley and Box Hill undertaken by SRLA.

### 5.3. Business engagement measures

Business engagement measures that may be applied include:

- (1) **Works notifications** – used to disseminate advance information about the works to businesses and to provide early warning of high impact activities (notifications could be provided electronically or in hard copy).
- (2) **SMS notifications** – as an adjunct to the works notifications.
- (3) **Individual meetings/briefings and doorknocks** – used to inform businesses directly about the anticipated impacts and the mitigation measures being implemented.
- (4) **Phone calls** – used to inform businesses directly about the anticipated impacts and the mitigation measures being implemented.
- (5) **Case management** – to provide an additional level of support for businesses that are significantly impacted over an extended period, including a single point of contact and regular, tailored engagement.
- (6) **Local government engagement** – regular engagement with relevant councils to help inform management of business impacts.

Support for business owners and operators from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse backgrounds will be included in communication and engagement activities using interpreters for discussions carried via phone calls, meetings and doorknocks, and translation of works notifications and works update materials as required.

## 6. Monitoring and supporting businesses

Prior to construction, and/or its contractor/s will engage with businesses to better understand their individual circumstances, identify opportunities to reduce impacts and identify support measures that best suit their business needs

During construction, SRLA will also undertake inspections to monitor contractor compliance with the BDMF and Business Support Guidelines and conduct annual surveys to assess visitation impacts on business, including surveying customers and visitors to activity centres.



## **6.1. Monitoring business impacts**

SRL Contractors will develop localised BDMPs that include specific measures for supported affected businesses and assess impacts on businesses across the SRL East alignment.

This will involve:

- Defining the areas of impact and the businesses within each area
- Determining the scale of the impact on each business
- Developing a business impact report for each business.

Contractors will be required to monitor the effectiveness of business mitigation and support measures. This will require regular inspections of works and annual surveys of affected businesses to assess the effectiveness of mitigation measures and determine whether further mitigation or support measures are required.

## **6.2. Business support measures**

Business support measures relevant to each site will be applied by SRLA's contractors described in Table 2 on page 9. SRLA may also choose to apply some or all of these measures in partnership with, or in addition to, its contractors.

SRLA will also undertake inspections to monitor compliance with relevant guidelines and plans. Contractors will regularly report to SRLA on the delivery and uptake of mitigation and support measures.

**Table 2: Outline of business support measures**

<b>Business support measures</b>	
<p><b>Promotion</b></p> <p>A range of marketing and promotional activities to encourage awareness and patronage of businesses located in proximity to construction sites. Examples include advertising, flyers, online and social media promotion (including digital marketing campaigns with a destination marketing and retail attraction focus), digital and physical wayfinding, discounts, special offers, incentives and competitions for local shoppers and consumers, and provision of alternative business car parking if access or use of property has been changed as a result of works.</p>	<p><b>Activation</b></p> <p>Activation of an area to create a unique experience that encourages patronage of businesses located in proximity to construction sites. Examples include mobile stores, pop-ups, window displays (promoting local products), street fairs and street art, creative use of construction infrastructure and hoarding, community celebrations, events and giveaways aligned to project milestones (e.g. station precinct works) that utilise local businesses (free coffee voucher from participating cafes) and leveraging existing festivals or theme based/holiday events (e.g. Lunar New Year celebration, Eid, Easter).</p>
<p><b>Partnerships</b></p> <p>Opportunities for SRLA and its appointed contractors to partner with local councils, trader groups and associations, events, festivals, and tourism organisations to raise awareness of businesses and encourage patronage, seek opportunities for co-sponsorship or in-kind support or encourage businesses to apply for grants. SRLA may also look to partner with councils on street wide and precinct enhancement.</p>	<p><b>Business plans</b></p> <p>Opportunities for businesses to develop a Business Plan prior to construction activities commencing. This opportunity is provided to improve understanding of a business and to assist in ensuring that the appropriate level of business support measures are provided. Where appropriate, support in preparing a financial baseline may form part of the Business Plan development process. The process for developing business plans will be through a case management approach allowing it to be tailored to different types of businesses.</p>
<p><b>Upskilling</b></p> <p>Opportunities for businesses to participate in educational and support programs run by organisations including Small Business Victoria and local councils. These programs support businesses through skills development (such as online and digital commerce), business mentoring, succession planning and marketing.</p>	<p><b>Targeted or bespoke support</b></p> <p>May be offered to highly impacted and disrupted businesses, with this additional level of assistance to include practical measures such as access to financial planning services and/or assistance, individual business signage and canopy replacement, marketing (e.g. business cards, social media), window washing and footpath cleaning.</p>
<p><b>Financial baselines</b></p> <p>Offers to businesses to prepare a financial baseline prior to construction commencing to assist in assessing the impacts of construction on business activity.</p>	

## Appendix – EPR compliance mapping

The following table details how this BDMF responds to the specific requirements of the relevant EPRs.

No.	Environmental Performance Requirement	Section reference
<b>Primary EPR</b>		
B3	<p><b>Prepare and Implement a Business Disruption Mitigation Plan</b></p> <p>1. Prepare an overarching Business Disruption Mitigation Framework (BDMF) in accordance with the Victorian Small Business Engagement Guidelines (produced by the Victorian Small Business Commission) to outline the approach to manage and mitigate business disruption from the Project to the extent reasonably practicable.</p> <p>The BDMF must address disruption to business access for customers, visitors, suppliers or waste collection and management of amenity impacts on businesses.</p>	<p>This document responds to the requirement to prepare a BDMF.</p>
	<p>2. Develop and implement localised Business Disruption Mitigation Plans (BDMP) that comply with the BDMF and the SRL Business Support Guidelines. SRLA will work with the contractors to oversee the implementation of the BDMP and ensure the implementation of business support as outlined in the SRL Business Support Guidelines, with particular emphasis on:</p> <p>(a) Promotion and marketing to encourage patronage of businesses in proximity of construction sites.</p> <p>(b) Targeted or 'bespoke' support to highly impacted and disrupted businesses to enable businesses to overcome detrimental effects on business health.</p> <p>(c) Ensuring businesses receive adequate notice of construction works and phases, including estimated timeframes/programs.</p> <p>(d) Making financial planning services and/or assistance available to highly impacted and disrupted businesses.</p>	<p>Section 4.2</p> <p>Each Contractor is to prepare a BDMP relevant to their scope of works that complies with this BDMF.</p>
	<p>3. Include the following in the BDMPs:</p> <p>(a) Measures as far as practicable to ensure construction traffic avoids sensitive commercial areas.</p> <p>(b) Details of any changes to traffic and parking conditions and durations of change.</p> <p>(c) A Project construction schedule developed in consultation with transport authorities, local councils and affected businesses to minimise cumulative impacts of this and other independent projects.</p> <p>(d) A process for notifying customers of proposed changes to business operations such as access, operating hours and amenity, including the settling of suitable timeframes for notification prior to commencement of works that cause the change in business operations.</p> <p>(e) Specific measures for supporting affected businesses during construction.</p> <p>(f) Consideration of potential requirements for cleaning of streets, public areas, street furniture, commercial premises and shopfronts to mitigate any impacts of construction activities directly caused by the Project.</p>	<p>Section 4.2</p> <p>Each Contractor is to prepare a BDMP relevant to their scope of works that complies with these requirements.</p>

4. Ensure SRLA and the appointed contractor work with businesses to minimise impacts to business operations from utility relocation or disruptions and to mitigate the impact or any business disruption.	Section 2, 5 & 6
5. NOTE: The measures set out in the overarching BDMF and location-specific BDMP are in addition to the implementation of noise, vibration, EMI, air quality, urban design, traffic and social impact related EPRs.	Noted

#### **Related EPRs**

B4	Undertake proactive business engagement	Section 5.2 & 6 Refer to Figure 1 – Related guidelines, plans and policy documents for SRL East
	<p>1. Develop and implement a tailored and proactive approach to engaging with trader associations and businesses affected by construction, as part of the communications and stakeholder engagement plan developed for SC2.</p> <p>a) Regular and timely reporting of design and construction activities and key projects timelines</p> <p>b) Provision of adequate and advance notice about changes to traffic and parking conditions and duration of impact.</p> <p>c) Timely provision of relevant information, including responses to issues raised by the group.</p> <p>d) Regular reporting and monitoring of business community feedback, impacts and discussion of mitigation measures and their effectiveness.</p> <p>e) Measures to effectively engage with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) business operators and owners.</p> <p>f) Annual surveys to assess visitation impacts on businesses, including surveying stakeholders such as customers and visitors to Clayton, Glen Waverley and Box Hill.</p>	
B4	2. Ensure each of the Clayton, Glen Waverley and Box Hill centres has a dedicated Business Liaison Manager (or similar) to enable continuity and access to advice as appropriate.	Section 5.2 & 6