

# Jacobs Supports Irish Rail on the Largest Coastal Protection Scheme in North-Western Europe

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larnród Éireann Irish Rail has awarded Jacobs the commission for detailed design and planning services, including environmental assessments and statutory submissions for the East Coast Railway Infrastructure Protection Projects (ECRIPP) program.

ECRIPP is required to defend long sections of the essential Dublin to Rosslare coastal rail line from coastal erosion and flooding for the next 100 years.

ECRIPP will be the largest coastal protection scheme in North-Western Europe.

The South-East railway carries DART and mainline services and runs for 104 miles (168 kilometers) to Rosslare. Just under half of the route length (47.8 miles or 77 kilometers) runs adjacent to a coastal or estuarine environment making it vulnerable to the impact of climate change. ECRIPP is planned to defend the railway infrastructure and boost coastal resilience in the face of a changing climate with its associated rising sea levels.

The frequency of track washout, where the sea has eroded the land supporting the railway, along with wave overtopping onto the tracks, has increased in the last 20 years. These incidents have had significant impacts on performance and safety as well as major losses of land and habitats.

Options such as breakwaters, beach nourishment, onshore revetment strengthening, and other interventions will be subject to detailed design and modelling in the first phase of the program. Irish Rail expects the projects to be completed as separate cells in stages within seven years.

“Our studies have identified that in the last 20 years there have been more storm events than there have been in the last 100 years, thereby increasing and accelerating the erosion rates and the climate change impacts,” says Irish Rail Infrastructure Program Manager, Aidan Bermingham. “Without this project we would just be fixing it all the time and that incurs problems such as getting access to land. There is a risk there would be pockets where the embankment would become unstable, and we would never let it get to that stage.”

Jacobs is a global leader in delivering coastal resilience projects, that are cost effective and put sustainability at the core of decision making. Around the world, Jacobs delivers major **transportation** projects as part of integrated infrastructure solutions that encompass transport planning and modelling, environmental solutions, intelligent mobility, connected vehicle and other emerging technology to full project life cycle transport infrastructure management.

Dom Lynch, Jacobs Vice President Buildings & Infrastructure Ireland, said: “Our support will focus on environmentally-led design, with careful attention to the environmental sensitivities of the local area.

“Climate change is having a dramatic impact on the transport route and local area. Protecting the Dublin to Rosslare coastal line will build long-term resilience and preserve vital connectivity, local economies, and communities, while benefiting the next generation.”

*Photo credit: Jacobs*