

# Media Release

**The Hon Melissa Horne MP**

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

Minister for Ports and Freight

Minister for Fishing and Boating



Friday, 2 October 2020

## MAJOR WORKS TO KEEP FREIGHT MOVING IN GIPPSLAND

The Victorian Government is supporting hundreds of jobs and investing in one of regional Victoria's busiest freight lines, with upgrades to the Maryvale rail siding in Gippsland.

Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne said the \$3.5 million works will ensure products from Australian Paper's Gippsland mill will continue to be sent by rail for years to come.

Sleepers and ballasts will be replaced and ground resurfacing work will take place as part of the upgrade, which will make it more efficient to access domestic and international markets.

The work will support the jobs of the 900 Gippsland residents directly employed by Australian Paper, by ensuring a frequent train from the mill can connect to the Gippsland line and run to Melbourne.

It will reduce ongoing maintenance expenditure and keep rail freight as a cost-effective option for the mill, which produces printing paper and packaging materials.

Procurement for the project will begin early next year and construction is expected to begin shortly thereafter.

The work follows the installation of an automated signalling system in Morwell to help freight trains connect with the main Gippsland line, replacing manual processes and helping trains better integrate with the rest of the network.

The Maryvale siding works are part of an \$83 million upgrade of critical rail freight infrastructure as part of the Government's economic response to the coronavirus pandemic.

The investment will support the ongoing modal shift from road to rail, which is helping businesses and farmers access key domestic and international markets.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne

*"This important upgrade will ensure Victoria's busiest regional rail freight train continues to run and will support the jobs of 900 Gippsland workers."*

*"We're keeping rail freight cost-effective and helping businesses like Australian Paper access key domestic and overseas markets."*

### Quotes attributable to Member for Eastern Victoria Harriet Shing

*"This major investment in rail is great news for Gippsland because it will mean Australian Paper can continue to remain competitive and efficient."*

*"This work comes adds to the significant improvements to the signalling system in Morwell, which have already been completed - making it easier than ever to move freight through Gippsland."*