

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



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KEEPING THE RAIL FREIGHT NETWORK MOVING

The Victorian Government is supporting jobs and improving an important freight route in the state's North West, with V/Line crews starting work on replacing nearly 39,000 sleepers on the Rainbow to Dimboola line.

The sleeper replacement program is part of an \$83 million investment in regional rail maintenance through the *Building Works* stimulus package.

More than 50 V/Line staff and contractors will be involved in the works to replace old sleepers with a combination of new concrete and timber sleepers.

Along with the sleeper replacement program, crews will also replace ballasts and complete resurfacing work to further improve the condition of the track and keep freight trains moving. The works have been scheduled to minimise the disruption to freight services.

This project complements work completed on the 66-kilometre section of track earlier this year, which saw a \$1 million investment enable work to replace 5,000 sleepers to support the reopening of the line in April.

Since reopening, 38 return freight services have used the line to transport more than 100,000 tonnes of grain, taking about 5,700 freight trucks off our roads.

In response to the coronavirus crisis, the Victorian Government is investing \$2.7 billion in the *Building Works* stimulus package, to support projects and jobs across Victoria and drive the economic recovery.

Workers continue to follow Department of Health and Human Services guidelines to ensure important projects can safely progress during this time.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne

"This investment will help improve our freight network and ensure we are continuing to support farmers and freight operators at a time when they need it the most."

"We're continuing to maintain and improve the network, taking extra steps to allow projects like this to continue safely and help keep track workers, suppliers and contractors working."

Quotes attributable to Member for Western Victoria Jaala Pulford

"This upgrade will provide easier and more efficient ways for farmers to transport their goods ahead of what is expected to be a bumper grain harvest."

"The line has already been put to good use since re-opening in April, and this investment will make it even better."