

# Media Release

**The Hon Jacinta Allan MP**

Leader of the House

Minister for the Coordination of Transport – COVID-19

Minister for Transport Infrastructure

Minister for Suburban Rail Loop



Saturday, 31 October 2020

## EVANS ROAD OPEN AND 39 LEVEL CROSSINGS GONE

Tens of thousands of people in Melbourne's south-east will have faster and safer journeys and easier access around their community with the Victorian Government's removal of the state's 39<sup>th</sup> level crossing at Evans Road.

The new road bridge is now open to traffic after crews removed the congested level crossing and restored a vital road connection for Lyndhurst, Lynbrook and Cranbourne West, which have been split by the rail line for fifteen years.

Since Evans Road was closed at the level crossing in 2005, road users have taken huge risks travelling across the rail line or taking extremely time-consuming detours. With the road reopened and the crossing gone, these communities are now reunited and safer than ever to travel across.

The new 620-metre road bridge was built using 135,000 tonnes of compacted earth, 450 tonnes of Australian-made steel and more than 3,000 cubic metres of locally sourced concrete. The project supported regional jobs with more than 750 concrete retaining wall panels supplied by GBG Concrete based in Sale.

Work will continue around the Evans Road site over the coming months to plant more than 46,000 trees, shrubs and grasses, creating green space for the community to enjoy.

Evans Road is the first crossing to go as part of the Government's \$1 billion Cranbourne Line Upgrade, which by 2025 will see every single crossing removed between Cranbourne and the city, along with fully duplicating the track to allow trains to run every ten minutes on the Cranbourne line.

A construction blitz later this year will see works ramp up as crews work to upgrade critical power and signalling infrastructure that will allow trains to run on the duplicated line between Dandenong and Cranbourne.

To enable this work, buses will replace trains between Dandenong and Cranbourne from Thursday 26 November to Wednesday 2 December. On the weekend of 28 and 29 November and some weeknights, buses will also replace trains from Caulfield to Cranbourne to allow for additional Metro Trains maintenance works.

The new Merinda Park Station will soon begin to take shape with the eastern platform canopy installed and excavation of the station underpass starting. A 600-metre rail bridge over Greens Road – the next level crossing to be removed on the line – will also start to rise from the ground over coming months.

The Cranbourne Line Upgrade, Metro Tunnel and new high-capacity trains will together create capacity for 121,000 extra passengers every week on the Cranbourne and Pakenham lines during peak periods – that's 45 per cent more peak capacity.

Strict protocols continue to be in place on all Major Transport Infrastructure Authority worksites to protect the health and safety of workers and the community, consistent with the advice from the Chief Health Officer.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan

*"Getting rid of the Evans Road crossing is the first step in our massive Cranbourne Line upgrade – removing every single level crossing and duplicating the line to get people in the south-east home safer and sooner."*

*"With 39 level crossings now gone, we're well ahead of schedule and we're not slowing down – works are underway on 20 crossing removal projects right now to bust congestion right across our city."*

### Quote attributable to Member for Cranbourne Pauline Richards

*"Finally the communities of Lyndhurst, Cranbourne West are reunited after 15 years – with Evans Road back open and a safe, quick connection between these suburbs restored for tens of thousands of Victorians."*

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