

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



Thursday, 9 December 2021

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF FREIGHT IN VICTORIA

Work on brand-new rail infrastructure at the Port of Melbourne is now underway to improve freight efficiency, keep up with rising demand and move more than 160,000 truck trips from Victorian roads onto rail every year.

The Andrews Labor Government approved the \$125 million Port Rail Transformation Project to make rail transport at Australia's busiest port more competitive by cutting the cost of last-mile travel and reducing truck congestion at the port gate.

The Port of Melbourne has been working to ensure that the port supply chain is operating as efficiently as possible throughout the pandemic, following a 14.6 per cent increase in containers coming through the port in the 2020/2021 financial year compared to 2019/2020.

Delivering a boost to local exporters and the economy, the new rail infrastructure will help importers move containers to distribution centres around Melbourne more efficiently.

The works will also include a new rail terminal that interfaces with the East Swanson Dock container terminal. Port of Melbourne figures estimate the works will support around 150 full-time jobs throughout the delivery of the project.

Improving rail access to the port is a legislated condition of the Port of Melbourne lease following privatisation in 2016 and is vital to improving freight efficiency and encouraging more freight onto rail.

WSP and Seymour Whyte Constructions undertook early project planning with site investigations earlier this year. The project is set for completion in 2023.

The Government is also continuing to improve the efficiency of freight movement through initiatives including the \$58 million Port Rail Shuttle Network.

Shifting from road to rail will also rely on intermodal terminals, which is why this project invests in connections to terminals at Altona, Dandenong South, and Somerton. The Government is also working with the Commonwealth to deliver new terminals in Melbourne's north and west.

Planning has already begun for the Western Intermodal Freight Precinct at Truganina that will take 2,000 trucks a day off our roads.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne

"We know freight volumes are going to double by 2050 – the Port Rail Transformation Project is going to make a significant impact on moving trucks off Victorian roads and onto rail to ensure more efficient freight."

"Both road and rail freight are key to getting goods where they need to go – this project is just one critical piece of the puzzle to improve efficiency across the supply chain."

Quote attributable to Port of Melbourne CEO Saul Cannon

"We are excited to see this project coming out of the ground. Port of Melbourne is committed to investing in rail infrastructure to move more freight by rail."

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