

Media Release

Ms Mary-Anne Thomas MP
Minister for Regional Development
Minister for Agriculture



Thursday, 17 February 2022

UNLOCKING POTENTIAL AT THE WODONGA LOGISTICS PRECINCT

The Andrews Labor Government is powering up its support for Wodonga, to build its strength as a logistics hub between Australia's two biggest cities, backing a plan to expand training for drivers of robotics and autonomous vehicles.

Minister for Regional Development Mary-Anne Thomas today visited the Wodonga TAFE to announce \$450,000 in new funding through the *Infrastructure Fast Track Fund* to plan for the expansion of its driver and forklift training facility.

Wodonga TAFE is based at the Logistics Precinct where work is well underway on the Wodonga Gas Gate project, supported by a further \$2.6 million from the Labor Government's *Bushfire Tourism and Business Fund*.

The gas gate project is tapping into the main high pressure gas line running from Sydney to Melbourne and will deliver a consistent supply of natural gas for industries at the site, encouraging new businesses to set up. Up to 40 jobs have been created throughout the manufacturing and construction phases.

The gas gate project complements Wodonga TAFE's ambitions to support more workers into jobs in freight, logistics and heavy vehicle industries through the expansion of its specialist training facility. The new grant will enable the TAFE to fast-track a detailed business case to support its vision.

Under the proposal, key industries from defence to health would bring specialist vehicles and related technology to Logic Park to test, prove and train drivers to use them, enabling Wodonga to become a national leader in the delivery of critical skills for industry.

Located just off the Hume Freeway, the Wodonga Logistics Precinct is already a crucial hub for supply chains who need to distribute goods nationally. The precinct also has direct access to Murray Valley Highway providing links to Adelaide and key freight hubs around the Murray-Riverina area.

The precinct is already home to major businesses including a Woolworths distribution centre which supports 400 local jobs and XLAM Australia's cross laminated timber plant which has created 54 local jobs. The gas gate project will enable the growth of businesses from food production, waste, pharmaceutical and construction to technology.

The *Investment Fast Track Fund* is part of the Government's flagship \$156 million *Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund*, which helps businesses create more jobs in regional Victoria, supports community projects and helps councils build the infrastructure locals need. Information about the *Fund* is available at rdv.vic.gov.au/rjif.

Quote attributable to Minister for Regional Development Mary-Anne Thomas

"The expansion of Wodonga TAFE and its plans to expand training will unlock new potential in the Wodonga Logistics Precinct and boost jobs growth across the region."

Quote attributable to Minister for Training and Skills Gayle Tierney

"Our world-class TAFE and training sector plays such an important role in meeting industry demands, both locally on the border and right across Victoria, through initiatives like this one."

Quote attributable to Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes

"Planning for the expansion of the Wodonga TAFE is essential to support the opportunities for specialised training for the vehicles of the future."

Media contact: Nadia Dimattina 0438 701 306 | Nadia.dimattina@minstaff.vic.gov.au