

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



Tuesday, 14 June 2022

UPGRADE WORKS COMPLETE ON THREE FREIGHT LINES

Freight operators and farmers will benefit from the completion of upgrade works on three freight lines in north-west Victoria.

Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne said the works have been carried out on the Mildura, Sea Lake and Manangatang lines to improve the condition of the track and reduce the risk of infrastructure faults which can delay grain loading.

The works included the installation of more than 170,000 new sleepers, the addition of over 30,000 tonnes of ballast to the track and maintenance on more than 8,000 joints between pieces of rail.

The works also involved operating specialised machinery along the entire length of the Manangatang line to improve the surface of the track along with the section of track between Korong Vale and Dunolly, which Manangatang and Sea Lake line trains share.

Staff walkways were also improved to make it easier to access different parts of the train during loading, and 15 sidings where trains load product across the lines were upgraded. The works now also pave the way for 29 kilometers of temporary speed restrictions to be removed on the Manangatang line, slashing travel times for freight trains by 20 minutes.

The Andrews Labor Government has invested more than \$50 million in track improvements across north-west Victoria's freight lines over the past two years – making it safer, faster and easier for freight operators to load product onto trains and for farmers to transport their goods.

Mildura line freight trains carry fruit, wine, grain and peas, while the Sea Lake line carries grain and the Manangatang line carries grain, containerised hay and wine from Ultima.

A typical 650-metre long fully loaded grain train carries approximately \$880,000 worth of grain and is equivalent to 50 loaded trucks, reducing heavy vehicle movements on local roads.

The works were completed as part of the V/Line's program of infrastructure improvements across the regional rail network.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne

"We're improving the freight network and ensuring we're continuing to support our freight operators and farmers by completing these works across the Mildura, Sea Lake and Manangatang lines."

"The works have improved the track along the lines – making it safer, faster and easier for freight operators to load product onto trains and for farmers to transport their goods."