

# Media Release

**The Hon Melissa Horne MP**

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

Minister for Ports and Freight

Minister for Local Government

Minister for Suburban Development



Tuesday, 12 July 2022

## WORKS COMPLETE ON SEA LAKE LINE FOR ANOTHER BUMPER HARVEST

The Andrews Labor Government is continuing to improve an important freight route in north-west Victoria to benefit freight operators and farmers ahead of another bumper harvest.

Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne today visited the GrainCorp terminal in Berriwillock, which plays a crucial role in moving thousands of tonnes of grain to port and will benefit from the completion of upgrade works on the Sea Lake line.

The works have been carried out to improve the condition of the track and reduce the risk of infrastructure faults which can delay grain loading.

Works have included the installation of more than 170,000 new sleepers, the addition of over 30,000 tonnes of ballast to the track, maintenance on more than 8,000 rail joints and improvements to shunters' paths and rail sidings.

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

The Government's \$83 million freight improvement Covid-19 stimulus package also invested \$22 million on the Sea Lake line, replacing 67,000 broad-gauge timber sleepers, upgrading more than 3000 rail joints and four level crossings.

It also saw speed restrictions removed to the GrainCorp terminal at Berriwillock, and grain terminals in Sea Lake and Nullawil to boost reliability and capacity and remove more trucks from local roads.

One-million tonnes of grain valued at \$400 million was moved to port by more than 530 bulk grain trains on the V/Line freight rail network from July 2021 to April this year from 29 active grain sites, including Berriwillock.

An average 650-metre long fully loaded grain train carries approximately \$880,000 worth of grain and is equivalent to 50 loaded trucks.

The *Victorian Budget 2022/23* will deliver a further \$181 million for critical maintenance works on the regional rail freight network to improve its competitiveness and support the growing freight task that is vital to regional economies and our supply chains.

In addition, a further \$3.5 million has been allocated to extend the Mode Shift Incentive Scheme (MSIS). The MSIS supports more than 170 freight industry jobs at intermodal terminals in regional Victoria and removes the equivalent of 28,000 truck trips from the state's roads every year.

### Quotes attributable for Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne

*"We're continuing to support our freight operators and farmers by completing these works on the Sea Lake line – ahead of what is expected to be another bumper harvest."*

*"The works are all about making it safer, faster and easier for freight operators and farmers to keep transporting thousands of tonnes of grain to port."*

**Media contact:** Sarah Vanin 0410 982 745 | [sarah.vanin@minstaff.vic.gov.au](mailto:sarah.vanin@minstaff.vic.gov.au)

**Quote attributable to Member for Northern Victoria Mark Gepp**

*“We’ve completed these works on the Sea Lake line just in time for another bumper harvest – benefiting our freight operators and farmers right across the area.”*