

Media Release

The Hon Jacinta Allan MP

Deputy Premier

Minister for Transport Infrastructure

Minister for Suburban Rail Loop

Minister for Commonwealth Games Delivery



Thursday, 28 July 2022

PROGRESSING WITH THE MURRAY BASIN RAIL PROJECT

Local producers are benefiting from the completion of early works on the Ouyen to Murrayville line, as part of the Murray Basin Rail Project.

Works included the removal of heat and speed restrictions along the 109-kilometre Ouyen to Murrayville Line – to boost safety and improve reliability.

More than 57,000 sleepers were also replaced as part of the works, along with the addition of 30,000 tonnes of ballast and adjusting track, enabling the line to remain open when temperatures reach 33 degrees.

Track upgrades have been underway on the Ararat to Maryborough Line since May, as part of the next stage of works on the project and followed significant planning, design and industry consultation.

Deliveries for the 160 kilometres of 47-kilogram rail that will be installed between Ararat and Maryborough also began in late April and will continue through to September. More than 40 workers have already upgraded 20 kilometres of track, with these works targeted to be completed by the end of the year.

The upgrades to a higher standard of track will enable all types of freight trains to operate with heavier loads, increasing load capacity for all wagons by 15 per cent – to 21 tonne axle loading.

Works will enable 49 weekly return train paths on the Murray Basin network, up from the current 28 paths – an increase that will remove around 20,000 truck trips off regional roads each year.

Construction is continuing a 300-metre siding in the Donald Yard to provide improved operations for freight trains and wagons to be stored when not in use. In a sustainability boost for the project, the sleepers used for the siding will be recycled plastic composite sleepers, supplied by Mildura-based business Integrated Recycling.

Trackside drainage at Donald will also be improved, including underneath the Borung Highway level crossing. The Merbein siding extension works will begin in the coming months, allowing for the stabling of a 1200-metre train off the mainline to help increase capacity for rail freight users in the region.

Design work and procurement is also underway on further upgrades, including new crossing loops and sidings, improvements to Maryborough junction and signalling upgrades.

The Murray Basin Rail Project will support 1,000 direct and indirect jobs during delivery, and provide a major boost to the transport industry, agricultural sector and regional communities. More information about the project can be found online at [regionalrailrevival.vic.gov.au](https://www.regionalrailrevival.vic.gov.au).

Quote attributable to Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan

“It’s great to see early works complete on the Ouyen to Murrayville line – which will improve safety, capacity and reliability of services and better connect local producers to our major ports.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne

“These works and our investments across the freight network mean heavier and faster trains, bringing costs down for our primary producers and exporters and making it easier to get products to market.”

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