

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



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GETTING MORE REGIONAL VICTORIAN PRODUCE ON TRAINS

Rail and grain terminal operators have joined forces to maximise the benefits of major Andrews Labor Government infrastructure upgrades underway on the broad-gauge rail freight network.

Track upgrades will soon be underway in Gheringhap near Geelong as part of the Labor Government's \$181 million investment to deliver infrastructure improvements that increase the safety and efficiency of the regional freight network.

The Gheringhap works will reopen a passing track, paving the way for longer 800 metre freight trains to run from the Sea Lake and Manangatang lines to the Port of Geelong, while also allowing 800 metre trains coming via Melbourne from the Piangil, Deniliquin and Tocumwal lines to reverse and access the port for the first time.

Upgrades are already underway across the state as part of the investment including construction of a major rail bridge at Barakee on the Sea Lake line and upgrades to the siding tracks at several grain terminals.

Track improvements were also completed on the Piangil line in recent weeks and on the Tocumwal line earlier in the year which have allowed trains with 20 tonne axle loads to run on the lines.

Future works include replacing 40 kilometres of rail in the busy shared freight corridor between Dunolly and Inglewood, sleeper replacements on the Deniliquin and Geelong-Ballarat lines, and upgrades to more terminal sidings.

Transport companies and rail operators will work together to understand the operational requirements needed to best run each terminal as each freight line and terminal is different and will benefit from upgrades in different ways.

V/Line, rail freight operator Pacific National and bulk grain handling companies GrainCorp and Cargill Australia signed a Memorandum of Understanding to form the Grain Rail Improvement Plan (GRIP) Working Group at Gheringhap today, to outline their commitment to finding the optimum ways to use the rail freight network.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne

"Our investment in the rail freight network is a crucial step in making it easier for farmers to get their produce to market and to make the roads safer by reducing the amount of trucks needed to carry freight."

"Victoria's rail freight network is diverse and getting the best out of it will take a co-ordinated approach which is why I'm thrilled to see industry coming together to commit to improving the system."

Quote attributable to Member for Geelong Chris Couzens

"These key improvements in Gheringhap will result in both safer roads for local drivers and the boost for producers that they need."

Quote attributable to Klaus Pamminger Chief Operating Officer GrainCorp

“Rail freight working groups like this are crucial to bridging the knowledge gap and guiding government infrastructure planning and delivery, to make real and meaningful improvements to the supply chain. It’s an important step forward in the industry’s efforts to inform an efficient future strategy for the network.”

Quotes attributable to Grant McDougall, GM Commercial, Cargill Australia

“Cargill commends the Government on establishing an industry working group to ensure commercial players have input into increasing the efficiency and utilisation of the V/Line rail network.”

“Increasing rail axle loads, rollingstock lengths and rail speeds on the rail network will ensure rail is a competitive option for land transport of grain in Victoria to the benefit of growers and local communities.”

Quotes attributable to Pacific National Managing Director and CEO, Paul Scurrah

“The Government’s \$181m investment and the consultative working group was a great example of Government and private industry working together to increase the volumes of grain on trains.”

“Rail delivered strong ESG benefits and transporting more bulk grain by trains will reduce the number of trucks on country roads, improving safety and reducing emissions in regional transport networks.”