

Media Release

The Hon Melissa Horne MP
Minister for Ports and Freight
Minister for Roads and Road Safety
Minister for Health Infrastructure



Friday, 6 June 2025

MORE FREIGHT THAN EVER GETTING TRUCKS OFF REGIONAL ROADS

The Allan Labor Government is rolling out more rail freight upgrades set to benefit producers and operators as longer, heavier and faster trains move more goods and take trucks off regional roads.

Three per cent more freight was carried on the V/line network this year than last financial year despite a smaller grain harvest.

Regional rail freight upgrades have seen a \$470 million investment since 2020, including the most recent \$103 million package in the *Victorian Budget 2025/26*.

A program to re-rail track, replace sleepers, lengthen passing loops and improve track geometry is almost complete on the Korong Vale to Manangatang line, one of Victoria's busiest grain corridors with a growing container train service from Ultima – complementing a major siding extension commissioned at Boort in February.

The additional works will allow trains to operate with heavier loads at higher speeds, cutting times as longer-trains carry greater loads for our domestic and export markets.

Korong Vale's passing loop has been lengthened to hold bigger trains which carry approximately \$1.3 million worth of produce and reducing reliance on our roads.

Works to connect a new grain terminal at North Shore are imminent and final planning is underway for a similar project to follow at Tocumwal, which will further increase volumes of grain moved by rail to port.

In April 2025, V/Line leased 10 N-Class locomotives to a private freight operator on a long-term agreement and they are now hauling freight across network to support the significant growth in grain and intermodal haulage.

Additional locomotives will enter lease arrangements later in 2025.

This initiative and major government investments are improving operational capacity and efficiency and supporting deployment of longer trains delivering benefits for primary producers and freight operators.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne

"Rail freight investments drive the movement of goods across the state – we're listening to and working with industry to focus on priority projects resulting in faster, longer and heavier trains."

"Delivering more capacity for longer freight trains with higher axle-loads that can carry more grain and containerised goods benefits farmers, operators and producers and takes more trucks off our roads."