



## Hon Melissa Horne MP

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation  
Minister for Ports and Freight  
Minister for Fishing

1 Spring Street  
Melbourne Victoria 3000 Australia  
GPO Box 4356  
Melbourne Victoria 3001  
Telephone: +61 3 8392 8020  
DX: 210292

Ref: MH201451

Paul Zalai  
pzalai@ftalliance.com.au

Dear Paul

I'm pleased to inform you the Victorian Government has announced a \$126.5 million regional rail network upgrade, as part of its economic response to the coronavirus crisis.

This includes a \$90.5 million maintenance blitz across regional Victoria on passenger and freight lines to replace sleepers, maintain ballast and renew level crossing equipment on key parts of the network.

A total of \$83 million will be invested directly into Victoria's freight-only network to deliver critical upgrades and support the ongoing modal shift from road to rail, reducing costs and ensuring producers have access to key domestic and international markets.

Regional freight lines are critical in supporting the movement of grain, rice, hay and other exports from farms, silos and storage around the state. Maintaining these lines ensures the ongoing viability of agriculture and freight in Victoria.

Victorian farming communities and exporters will benefit with upgrades to freight lines including:

- Korong Vale to Inglewood
- Dunolly to Inglewood
- Dimboola to Rainbow
- Murtoa to Hopetoun.

Almost 400 kilometres of critical rail freight infrastructure will be upgraded during the works, ensuring farmers can transport their grain, rice, hay and other exports more efficiently.

Upgrades to the shared passenger and freight rail line between Sunbury and Bendigo will benefit both local farmers and commuters.

The Victorian Government is also committed to supporting our regional exporters and making rail freight more cost effective through the Mode Shift Incentive Scheme (MSIS). We've committed \$4 million to ensure the continuation of the MSIS for a further 12 months until 30 June 2021.

Over the past five years we've also invested more than \$20 million to make rail freight more cost effective and transport goods to port sooner. The MSIS has removed the equivalent of 28,000 truck trips off Victorian roads and is just one of the projects to shift more freight by rail.

The Victorian Government continues to plan and deliver priority projects including on-dock rail at the Port of Melbourne, the Port Rail Shuttle Network initiative, a new crossing loop at Boorcan, a refurbished crossing loop at Murchison East, and planning for new intermodal terminals at Truganina and Beveridge.

For further information please contact Praveen Reddy, Executive Director, Freight Victoria, Department of Transport on 8392 6196.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Melissa Horne', written in a cursive style.

**Hon Melissa Horne MP**  
Minister for Ports and Freight

21 July 2020