

Media Release

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



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BARNES GRAIN TERMINAL TO GET TRUCKS OFF REGIONAL ROADS

The Allan Labor Government is moving more grain to port and reducing the reliance on trucks on our regional roads by connecting the Barnes Junction grain terminal to rail for the first time in 30 years.

Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne today visited the new grain terminal connection at Barnes, 15km north of Echuca, which will soon see freight trains moving bulk grain for domestic and export markets.

A four-kilometre section of the previously closed Moulamein Line will allow for the new terminal to begin operating – this follows a \$10 million upgrade of the Echuca-Barnes-Deniliquin freight corridor which was completed in late-2023.

Plans for construction of a hardstand will eventually enable loading of containerised goods from the region to also be moved south by rail.

The Barnes upgrade is a boost to Victoria's freight rail system that plays a vital role in transporting regional produce to port and a further signal to industry that the broad-gauge freight network is important and growing.

The Government has invested \$368 million since 2020 in rail freight maintenance to grow volumes on rail through targeted projects, which are delivering benefits for producers and industry and reducing truck movements on our roads.

This connection will support longer, faster, heavier trains moving more goods by rail across a more resilient network, improving reliability and efficiency for producers and operators.

V/Line is responsible for the maintenance of more than 3,500 kilometres of rail track across the state, used by passenger trains and freight operators. This includes freight only lines from Echuca to Barnes and Deniliquin, and from Strathmerton to Tocumwal.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne

"It's pleasing to see the progress at this new terminal, which is going to deliver more freight on rail – a win for farmers, operators and regional producers."

"As the first new grain terminal connected to the state's rail freight network in 30 years, this is a significant milestone and there are more to come which will grow rail-freight volumes from paddock to port."