

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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RETIRED V/LINE TRAINS TO GET MORE FREIGHT ON RAIL

The Allan Labor Government is giving retired V/Line trains a new lease of life hauling freight across Victoria after securing a long-term lease agreement that will grow Victoria's freight capacity.

V/Line has leased 10 N-Class trains to private freight operator, Southern Shorthaul Railroad, on a long-term agreement, where they will have a future hauling freight across network to support the significant growth in grain and intermodal haulage.

The increased numbers of trains available for freight transport on the network will improve operational capacity and efficiency as well as support the deployment of longer trains on the freight network.

V/Line led this program, giving the trains a new purpose which was supported by Freight Victoria, Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) and the Department of Treasury and Finance.

As more of V/Line's classic fleet trains are progressively replaced with modern VLocity trains, there's an opportunity for locomotives to be repurposed on the freight network.

Almost 1600 kilometres of Victoria's tracks are used to transport freight to port, which plays a critical role in supporting Victoria's rail freight.

The Labor Government has invested almost \$370 million in rail freight maintenance since 2020, giving industry the confidence to put more of their goods on trains – helping to take trucks off our roads.

The *Victorian Budget 2024/25* delivered \$104.3 million to grow freight on rail through a further package of targeted projects to deliver benefits for producers and industry, reduce truck movements on our roads and reduce emissions.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne

"With freight volumes expected to increase significantly in coming years, this initiative to repurpose passenger locomotives is an important step in getting more freight onto rail and off local roads."

"We look forward to seeing these locomotives out and about moving product to port, ensuring we continue to grow Victoria's rail freight business for generations to come."

Quote attributable to Minister for Public and Active Transport Gabrielle Williams

"This will provide a boost for the freight industry in Victoria, as we see our regional V/Line trains continue to service Victorians by moving freight across our state."