

# Media release



## FROM THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT

**DATE: Friday, March 14, 2008**

### **MILDURA RAIL FREIGHT UPGRADE CHUGS ALONG ON TRACK**

Motorists should prepare for road closures along the Midland Highway as works on the Mildura rail freight line continue between Geelong and Ballarat, Public Transport Minister Lynne Kosky, said today.

“The works form part of a \$73 million package, largely funded by the Brumby Government and will increase freight train speeds up to 80kmh and cut travel times from 14 hours to less than 10 hours between Mildura and Gheringhap, near Geelong,” Ms Kosky said.

“These important works will focus on creating a faster, more reliable rail link, allowing freight trains to run more efficiently.

“Almost every second sleeper along the 525 kilometre line will be replaced to ensure a high quality freight line for years to come.”

On March 29, the Midland Highway level crossing at Meredith will be closed and a 20 kilometre diversion route in place. Motorists should allow extra time when planning their journey.

Level crossing closures will be necessary and will occur at:

- Main Street (Yendon) level crossing from 6am Saturday 15 March to 6pm Sunday 16 March and
- Midland Hwy - Meredith level crossing from 6pm Saturday 29 March to 6pm Sunday 30 March.

The Brumby Government has allocated \$53 million to the project with the remainder of the \$73 million project is funded through the Commonwealth Government’s AusLink program.

The rail upgrade is being undertaken with gauge convertible sleepers and a

third rail is being added at level crossings which will allow for standardisation in future.

Approximately 28,000 sleepers have already been replaced between Gheringhap and Ballarat with an average of 1100 sleepers new sleepers laid every day

John Holland Rail is completing the works and will provide information about traffic diversions through advertising and road signs.

Ms Kosky said she was pleased with the level of support shown by the local community when level crossings were closed for the works.

“When approaching a level crossing, motorists should always expect a train in the area and slow down, obey the signs and be prepared to stop.”

For more information about the Mildura Rail Freight Upgrade, visit