The Central Murray Regional Transport Forum is an initiative of:

FOCUS AREA: CONNECTING TO MARKETS

Priority Action

COMPLETION OF THE MURRAY BASIN RAIL PROJECT TO STANDARDISE AND UPGRADE THE MURRAY BASIN FREIGHT RAIL NETWORK

WHY IS THIS A PRIORITY?

The region is a nationally important and internationally respected producer of food and horticultural goods and other products such as mineral sands. Product is exported from the region to domestic and international markets using the region’s road and rail network.

Rail more efficiently delivers product over long distances in a single movement to port.

The project will better connect key freight centres in Victoria with domestic and export markets.

The project addresses three key problems for the region:

• Restricted access to Victoria’s major ports, which can undermine the international competitiveness of bulk products.
• Poor rail network performance, which can increase costs to business.
• Growing road freight movements, which can reduce community amenity.

PROJECT BENEFITS

An increase in axle loading will allow higher freight volumes to be transported by rail, allowing up to 500,000 more tonnes of grain each year and capturing approximately 20,000 journeys currently undertaken by trucks.

Improvements to the regional rail freight network are central to optimising the performance of regional and broader Australian supply chains, and providing efficient access to both export ports and domestic markets.

The benefits of the Murray Basin Rail Project include:

• Reduced costs for industry.
• Increased private investment.
• Improved efficiency and safety of the road network.

The project will benefit Murray Basin producers and pave the way for export industries to compete effectively in domestic and global markets.

The Murray Basin Rail Project will also benefit regional communities through increased business and employment opportunities.

RECENT ACTIVITY

$440 million has been committed from the Victorian Government and Australian Government:

• Stage One complete: Mildura and Hopetoun rail lines upgraded.
• Stage Two underway: Dunolly to Yelta, Murrayville to Ouyen and Maryborough to Ararat gauge conversion works.
• Stage Three: the Freight Rail Separation project will provide faster and more reliable freight paths by separating freight and passenger trains.

Future Stages: Maryborough to Manangatang and Sea Lake to Korong Vale will commence following completion of Stage Three.

NEXT STEPS

ADVOCACY:

Active support completion of the Murray Basin Rail Project.

Support and build on the benefits of the Murray Basin rail upgrades to encourage freight transported by rail from the region.

The Central Murray Regional Transport Forum is an initiative of:
THE CENTRAL MURRAY REGIONAL TRANSPORT FORUM

The Central Murray Regional Transport Forum (CMRTF) was established in 2010 to identify transport needs and challenges of the Sunraysia/Mallee region and advocate for improvement to the region’s transport network.

Comprising councillors and senior staff from the shires of Balranald, Buloke, Gannawarra, Murray River and Wentworth, and the rural cities of Swan Hill and Mildura; the CMRTF has developed a Strategy to clarify the region’s transport infrastructure needs and better position the region for the next stages of economic growth and social development.

PRIORITY ACTIONS:

- Construct a Mildura truck bypass
- Provide better access to tourism icons
- Invest in major highways
- Develop tracks and trails
- Complete a north west transport study
- Complete the Murray Basin Rail Project
- Define high productivity road networks
- Complete a horticulture supply chain study
- Increase Echuca and Swan Hill daily train services
- Complete an integrated transport and land use study
- Invest in local transport options
- Improve cross border efficiency
- Upgrade Murray River crossings
- Upgrade priority transport routes
- Improve the Calder Highway

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