

# Media Release

The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC

Minister for Agriculture

Minister for Regional Development

Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council



Friday, 29 April, 2016

## HELPING FARMERS GET GRAIN FROM Paddock TO PORT QUICKER

The Andrews Labor Government is helping farmers get grain from paddock to port faster with an \$8.5 million infrastructure investment in VicTrack sidings.

The funding upgrade, part of the Labor Government's Agriculture Infrastructure and Jobs Fund (AJIF), will result in an additional 500,000 tonnes of grain per year being transported by rail – reducing annual road maintenance and accident costs by about \$2.2 million.

This is a significant contribution to GrainCorp's \$85 million *Project Regeneration*, involving the upgrade of train loading infrastructure and sidings at 16 primary grain sites in Victoria and three in southern New South Wales.

The Government is upgrading the state's infrastructure, diversifying our grain export performance and ensuring grain and cereal crops in northern Victoria get to port more efficiently.

Victoria exported \$1.36 billion in grains in 2014-15 and this new initiative will significantly boost our grain export potential in the years ahead.

Through construction of the track sidings and greater export efficiencies this project will create jobs for regional Victorians and ease the burden on our rural roads.

Currently, rail carries only about 50 per cent of our grain to the Port of Geelong, and 20 per cent to the Port of Portland.

This \$8.5 million investment by the Government will address lost time and poor train utilisation caused by slow train loading facilities at country sites, and inefficient track layouts at most sites that require excessive shunting.

Through the Government's investment in *Project Regeneration* sites will see upgrades at Warracknabeal, Beulah, Ouyen, Manangatang, Yarrawonga, Donald, Yelta, Wycheproof, Quambatook, Rainbow, Dunolly, Murrayville, Boort, Piangil, Oaklands, Murtoa and Nhill.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Agriculture Jaala Pulford

*"The Andrews Labor Government is determined to get Victorian grain moving to our ports quicker, make our country roads safer and growing the export potential of our farmers."*

*"Project Regen will complement investments we have made in regional infrastructure to ensure our primary produce can reap transport driven productivity growth, including \$220 million for the Murray Basin Rail Project."*

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Public Transport Jacinta Allan

*"This investment will create 240 jobs and has supported significant private sector investment in our freight network."*

*"The Andrews Labor Government is investing in Northern Victoria to get product to port more efficiently, supporting farmers, their families and our regional economy."*