

SEATS REPORT – FEBRUARY 2018

South Gippsland and Bass Coast Local Transport Forum

Transport for Victoria facilitated the first meeting of the South Gippsland and Bass Coast Local Transport Forum at Inverloch 23 January 2018. The forum was the first held in the south western part of Gippsland and covered the South Gippsland and Bass Coast Shires with centres of Wonthaggi, Leongatha, Korumburra, Inverloch and Phillip Island. There were about 30 attendees representing a wide spectrum of the local community such as; local councils, education, health, disabled, SEATS and the South & West Gippsland Transport Group a local transport advocacy group.

The local representatives in attendance were very positive about exploring a number of options to improve local transport, acknowledging that the traditional provision of public transport could not accommodate many in the community.

The forum focussed on the issues currently being experienced by the local community identifying the needs of people who are unable to use private or public transport.

It was also raised that there is a need to better understand the “big picture” and to investigate longer term plans to accommodate the growth in population, tourism and promote economic growth. Some of these thoughts have been captured and will be a matter for further discussion at future forums.

Gippsland Logistics Precinct

The State Government has committed \$10 million from the Regional Jobs and Infrastructure Fund for Latrobe City Council to develop the Gippsland Logistics Precinct (GLP) and associated supply chain improvements.

The GLP is a 72 ha site generally consisting of vacant paddocks located adjacent to the Gippsland rail line at Morwell. Latrobe City Council is progressing with stage 1 development to get the site “market ready”.

The Victorian Government provided \$4.8 million to upgrade the spur line to the Australian Paper Maryvale Mill’s terminal and also upgrade the terminal to make it operate more efficiently. The terminal is open to third parties and provides an opportunity to grow rail freight.

Regional Roads Strategy

Victoria’s regional roads support key industries like agriculture, freight and tourism and connect people to places delivering services including health, education, employment, retail, and recreation.

There has not been a regional roads strategy for over 20 years. We need a strategy for regional roads in the short, medium and long term that will move Victoria away from ad hoc road network improvements, towards a more coordinated approach to network planning and investment and where roads and rail work together to get people and goods where they need to go.

To help identify and meet the needs of regional Victorians, the Victorian Government is developing a Regional Roads Strategy and Action Plan that will set out priorities for the regional road network, guiding planning and investment for the short, medium and long term.

The strategy will help plan, manage, build and maintain an efficient, integrated and safe road network for regional Victoria. At the same time, the Victorian Government is developing the Victorian Freight Plan. Submissions have been received and the strategy is expected to be completed in the coming months.

Supply Chain Study for Sand and Hard Rock

The Victorian government has investigated the long term supply of earth resources for Melbourne and its urban growth areas. This material is critical for both the construction industry (concrete) and transport (road) industries. This work forecasts suggest that all current sources of earth resource within Melbourne will be exhausted by 2050, and future supplies will be generated and transported from quarries up to 150km from Melbourne.

Early indicators suggest Gippsland will be the source for up to 34% of Melbourne's needs, meaning up to 24 million tonnes per annum will need to be transported from its source in Gippsland to its destination in Melbourne and suburbs. Transport for Victoria Gippsland staff are developing a Supply Chain Study to understand how this material will be transported, and if by road what infrastructure investment could be needed.

Princes Highway Corridor Strategy

The Australian Government announced a \$5 million Princes Highway Corridor Strategy to guide investment priorities for major freight and tourism corridor

The Australian Government will fully fund a strategy to establish Princes Highway priority upgrades between Sydney and Port Augusta.

Federal Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Darren Chester has committed \$5 million in federal funding with an intention of developing a 10 year program of works across three states.

Quotes from the media release

“This strategy will prioritise short, medium, and long term projects across the corridor to help the individual states and Australian Government identify future funding priorities,” Mr Chester said.

“We need to work across state borders to develop a corridor plan for the Princes Highway which is a critical link for regional visitor economies, agriculture, energy, the timber industry and local traffic.

“In Victoria, sections of the Princes Highway have been deemed to be the highest risk sections of road in the state.

Regional Network Development Plan

- The Regional Network Development Plan sets out a plan of action across the short, medium and long term to deliver improvements to Victoria's regional public transport network.
- Regional Rail Revival Gippsland will contribute to the delivery of the following Regional Network Development Plan's rail service outcomes by 2030:
 - Minimum 20-minute peak frequencies to Traralgon
 - Minimum 40-minute off-peak frequencies to Traralgon
 - Five return services Monday to Friday to Bairnsdale.
- The first stage to achieve 40-minute off-peak frequencies has been funded.

Regional Rail Revival Gippsland

- The \$1.57 billion Regional Rail Revival program is a joint initiative of the Australian and Victorian governments and will upgrade stations, signalling and track across Victoria.
- Regional Rail Revival is a once in a generation investment that will deliver major upgrades to every regional passenger line in Victoria and create over 1,000 jobs.
- As part of Regional Rail Revival, the \$530 million investment in the Gippsland Line will support delivery more frequent and reliable services and create hundreds of jobs.
- Melbourne Metro Rail Authority (MMRA) is responsible for the delivery of the Regional Rail Revival program on behalf of the Victorian Government.
- MMRA is currently undertaking the necessary due diligence to ensure this project meets the transport needs of commuters and communities along the Gippsland line.
- The project scope includes:
 - Level crossing upgrades
 - Track duplication between Bunyip and Longwarry
 - Additional platform at Bunyip, Longwarry, Morwell and Traralgon stations
 - Upgrading drainage at Morwell River
 - Track duplication between Traralgon and Morwell
 - Track duplication extension near Moe east towards Traralgon
 - Extending the Morwell crossing loop
 - Signalling upgrades and removal of stabling facilities at Traralgon
 - Replacement of the Avon River Bridge

Cranbourne – Pakenham line upgrade

- A massive upgrade to power, signalling and communications systems is currently underway along the entire length of the Cranbourne and Pakenham lines.
- Gippsland passengers will see benefits from the upgrade, the first of its kind to span the entire length of a metropolitan train line.
- Some equipment on the line dates back as far as the 1950s. This comprehensive overhaul will lead to a huge improvement in reliability and performance for all train services using the line – including Gippsland services.
- In the last 12 months, more than 200 faults affected or were caused by signals on the Cranbourne/Pakenham line, resulting in many hours of delays to passengers.
- These works are also essential to prepare Melbourne's busiest rail corridor for the introduction of the new bigger, longer High Capacity Metro Trains.

- As part of these works more than 70 kilometres of overhead power lines will be rebuilt, 20 substations will be built or upgraded, and a section of track in South Dandenong will be duplicated. Platforms will also be extended at 13 stations to accommodate the longer High Capacity Metro Trains.

Regional Rail Connectivity

- The successful testing of mobile signal repeaters has been undertaken and the rollout has begun for the \$18 million Regional Rail Connectivity Project, which will improve mobile coverage for passengers along the Traralgon rail line.
- The Victorian Government is partnering with the three major mobile carriers – Telstra, Vodafone and Optus – to construct up to 35 new mobile towers as part of the project. These towers will be combined with cutting edge in-train technology to significantly improve coverage for passengers.
- Trains will begin to be fitted with the technology from early next year and the entire VLocity fleet will have a booster on board by the end of 2018.