



**Melinda Pavey**  
Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Monday, 28 May 2018

### **\$60 MILLION TO BOOST RAIL FREIGHT FOR THE NSW FOOD BOWL**

Over \$60.4 million is being invested into the Junee to Griffith line upgrade to improve efficiency for freight carriers and reduce costs for producers and consumers as part of the Fixing Country Rail Program.

In Leeton today, Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight Melinda Pavey said the upgrade of 174 kilometres of the Junee to Griffith line would allow heavier trains carrying up to 25 tonne axle loads to use this track.

“The increased axle loads will mean line speeds will increase from 50km/h to 80km/h,” Mrs Pavey said.

“This will cut delivery times, allow more goods to be transported by rail and reduce costs for producers and consumers.”

Member for Murray Austin Evans said the project upgrades include improving passing loops and sidings, renewing level crossings and strengthening bridge structures.

“This work will remove trucks from our roads, shifting more than 200,000 tonnes of freight onto the rail network,” Mr Evans said.

Member for Cootamundra Steph Cooke said the project would enable rail freight operators to use heavier locomotives to operate without a fuel carrying limitation.

“It’s just sensible investment, so producers and businesses in the Riverina will benefit from a more efficient and lower cost logistics chain, improving their domestic and international competitiveness, as well as create benefits to our consumers at the till of their local supermarkets,” Ms Cooke said.

The Fixing Country Rail Program aims to relieve bottlenecks by upgrading parts of the regional rail network which are constraining effective freight movement.

“This is a great win for the communities in the Riverina. Our roads will be much safer and will also mean capacity to expand our freight industry,” Mr Evans said.

Ms Cooke said the economic growth in areas like the Riverina relies on food, produce and raw materials, which feed and power NSW, being able to move to market efficiently.

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