

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
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## RACV and VTA say “Missing” North East Link must be built now

The peak representative groups RACV and the Victorian Transport Association (VTA) have joined forces to call on the Victorian Government to build the North East Link as a matter of urgent priority.

Both bodies say the North East Link - the “missing link” in Melbourne’s ring road system - is long overdue and will dramatically help reduce the cities crippling traffic congestion problems.

RACV General Manager Public Policy, Brian Negus said completion of the Metropolitan Ring Road from Greensborough to East Link has long been RACV’s top priority road transport and infrastructure project. This project is a critical part of RACV’s overall road and public transport agenda to improve liveability and economic development for all Victorians.

“RACV and VTA are calling on the State Government to make the North East Link the state’s priority new road infrastructure project.

“Successive Governments have dragged their heels on this critical road link and Melbournians in the north-east have had enough of the frequent traffic grid lock.

“Apart from reducing congestion, the North East Link will provide a significant boost to freight productivity by directly connecting the freight centre around Dandenong and the agricultural centres in Gippsland with the Hume Freeway, the new fruit and vegetable market in Epping, and other interstate corridors.

“This missing link in the Ring Road system is a vital piece of infrastructure and is a road of national significance that should be a top priority to attract Commonwealth funding.

“The State Government has no excuse not to move now and get this project started to relieve the frustrating congestion in the north-east and beyond,” Mr Negus said.

The VTA represents more than 800 freight and logistics operators and CEO Peter Anderson says it too has long called for successive State Governments to complete the Metropolitan Ring Road.

“Freight operators have an urgent and genuine need for a better connection between the Metropolitan Ring Road and East Link because they need to safely and efficiently move goods between customers and suppliers in the north and south east of Melbourne.

“What we have now is a dangerous and unsustainable situation where heavy vehicles are forced to navigate residential streets to get between the Ring Road and the Eastern Freeway and on to East Link because they have no alternative.”

Mr Anderson said a knee-jerk plan for night curfews on trucks on key north-south roads in the area has made the situation worse for freight operators.

"Because of the curfews we are seeing more trucks on these roads during the morning peak, which presents safety risks and adds to congestion. Curfews have served to put more trucks on the road during the day."

Mr Anderson said construction of the North East Link would resolve congestion and also resident concerns about heavy vehicles in the area.

"We would expect a significant reduction in truck traffic on surrounding suburban roads by as much as 40 per cent. There would also be immediate environmental benefits with trucks being better utilised and using less fuel.

"These benefits would flow through to the general economy over time because more deliveries could be made throughout the day and congestion on inner roads would reduce due to the notable reduction of trucks," Mr Anderson said.

Mr Anderson and Mr Negus called on the Victorian Government to make North East Link a priority and to fast-track the formative planning to make it a reality.

#### **Media inquiries**

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