



**MEDIA STATEMENT**

**29 April, 2016**

## VTA welcomes Treasurer's interest in North East Link

The Victorian Transport Association has welcomed the Victorian Government's renewed interest in completing the Metropolitan Ring Road through construction of the North East Link.

Treasurer Tim Pallas told a Melbourne Press Club luncheon yesterday that the project "innately" makes sense, and that Infrastructure Victoria would make a verdict on the proposal by the end of the year.

The VTA completely agrees with comments from the Treasurer, and reported in today's Age newspaper, that: "If you look at the way that most modern cities operate, this idea of an outer suburban high capacity freeway network....has a lot of merit to it."

The North East Link has long been the VTA's number one road infrastructure for Victoria because freight and logistic operators traveling between the north and southeast of Melbourne are forced to use suburban arterial roads, such as Rosanna Road, to traverse between the Eastern Freeway and the Ring Road at Greensborough.

"Our estimation is that up to 40 per cent of heavy vehicles would be eliminated from suburban roads in the north east of Melbourne if the North East Link was built," VTA CEO Peter Anderson said.

"As well as improving the amenity for residents of those suburbs, this would improve productivity for the whole of Melbourne – not just freight operators – because of the immediate and stark reduction in congestion that would eventuate."

Mr Anderson said the North East Link connection would also mitigate the need for night curfews on trucks greater than 4.5 tonnes travelling between the Eastern Freeway and the Ring Road, which had only led to increased congestion on roads in the area during the day.

"Because of the curfews we are seeing more trucks on these roads during the morning peak, which presents safety risks and adds to congestion," Mr Anderson said.

With the Government's apparent renewed interests in the proposal, Mr Anderson has called on for a sensible and mature discussion from all stakeholders about the "missing link" in Melbourne's freeway network.

"The VTA looks forward to working with and consulting all stakeholders on this vital project which would reduce congestion, increase productivity, and make an enormous contribution to Victoria's economic prosperity."

**Ends...**

**For further information please contact Brian O'Neil on 0411 055 284.**