



MEDIA RELEASE

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VTA welcomes North East Link commitment

The Victorian Transport Association (VTA), the peak industry association for Victorian and national freight and transport companies, has welcomed the Victorian Government's commitment to build the missing North East Link connection.

"The Andrews Government is to be commended for taking on this vital infrastructure project for Victoria, which will finally connect the M80 Ring Road with Eastlink and important freight hubs in Melbourne's south east," said VTA Chief Executive Officer Peter Anderson.

"The announcement is terrific news for VTA members, who will benefit from the increased productivity and efficiencies the connection will create. The VTA has had the North East Link as its priority road infrastructure project for many years, and has long advocated for successive state governments to build the road."

Mr Anderson said transport operators for too long had been forced to use arterial roads in the north east to traverse between the M80 and the Eastern Freeway and Eastlink, and that the decision to proceed with North East Link provided certainty that a long-term solution was in sight.

"We estimate over 40% of heavy vehicle traffic will be removed from arterial roads in the north east when the North East Link is built, easing congestion and improving amenity for communities in the area," Mr Anderson said.

"Having a seamless connection will be a huge benefit to operators, who will experience productivity and efficiency gains from not having to sit idle in traffic."

Today's announcement follows Infrastructure Victoria's endorsement of the North East Link in its final 30-year infrastructure strategy which was tabled in the Parliament last week.

It also follows a concerted effort by the VTA for the Government to build the connection, which gained significant traction over the past 12 months as stakeholders from the community, government, industry and others recognised the project's potential to improve worsening traffic and congestion on arterial roads in the north east of Melbourne.

Infrastructure Victoria estimates North East Link will generate returns of between \$1.40 and \$2.10 for every \$1 invested, and that it therefore "provides the greatest benefit for the cost".

Mr Anderson said the feasibility study announced by the Government and its plans to establish the North East Link Authority were important first steps in getting the project up and running.

"We look forward to participating in and contributing to the feasibility study, which will inevitably consider the most appropriate and suitable routing for the connection," he said

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