



MEDIA RELEASE

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VTA welcomes funding for regional roads

The Victorian Transport Association has welcomed a \$941 million funding allocation in the forthcoming Victorian budget for much-needed maintenance on regional roads.

Premier Daniel Andrews has today announced the funding, which the government says will go towards repairs and maintenance on hundreds of regional roads, and the creation of a new Regional Roads Victoria division within VicRoads focussed on the state's rural road network.

"The VTA on behalf of its regional members has been advocating for some time for more funding to repair and maintain regional roads," said VTA CEO Peter Anderson.

"A safe and efficient regional transport network is essential for road freight operators and the thousands of farmers and small businesses they service throughout Victoria, and we applaud the government for considering the infrastructure needs of regional Victorians through this announcement."

The funding announcement specifically covers:

- \$333 million for road maintenance, with more than 1,000 kilometres of roads to be repaired, resurfaced or rebuilt across the state;
- \$100 million for a *Fixing Country Roads* fund to provide grants to rural and regional councils to fix their local roads;
- \$229 million for new overtaking lanes, rumble strips and intersection upgrades as part of the *Towards Zero Road Safety Action Plan*; and
- \$98 million for planning and pre-construction of new bypasses on the Western Highway at Beaufort and Ararat, and \$40 million to upgrade the Princes Highway West between Colac and the South Australian border.

The government says key sections of the Calder Highway, Hamilton Highway and the Kiewa Valley Highway will be upgraded to improve safety, travel times and freight productivity.

Mr Anderson also reiterated the association's calls for the establishment of a Victorian Freight Authority to advise government on the unique requirements of the transport and logistics industries.

"The VTA has been advocating for policy that supports operators to be successful in business, whether it be new road, rail and port infrastructure to streamline the freight task, or new ways of operating to create efficiencies for various participants in the supply chain," Mr Anderson said.

"We need a Victorian Freight Authority to provide government with the perspective of the transport industry when it comes to decisions impacting planning and development, roads and infrastructure, user charges, the environment, and other public policy matters."

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