

Media Release



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Murray Basin Rail Project must be delivered as promised

The Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) is calling on both the Victorian and Federal Governments to deliver the vital Murray Basin Rail Project (MBRP) in full, as promised in 2015.

VFF President David Jochinke said the VFF was promised the standardisation of the Sea Lake and Manangatang lines.

“A commitment was made to build the Murray Basin Rail Project just under five years ago, including the standardisation of the Sea Lake and Manangatang lines. Despite the problems with the project, our expectations have not changed.”

“The MBRP will secure freight connections to port for grains and horticulture producers in the Mallee and Sunraysia,” Mr Jochinke said.

“This is a nation-building project. At a time when the government is allocating billions of dollars of infrastructure for Melbourne, regional Victoria must receive its fair-share.”

VFF Grains Group President Ashley Fraser said the potential of not delivering the project in full would undermine the entire project.

“Failing to convert the Sea Lake and Manangatang rail lines to standard gauge effectively isolates these lines from the rest of the Victorian and interstate network, including the Inland Rail project. It not only weakens the gains of the entire network upgrade here in Victoria, but also creates difficulties delivering essential grain into New South Wales and Queensland.”

“We want it fully funded, we want it finished and we must have it in a single rail gauge to ensure the overall effectiveness of the network,” Mr Fraser said.

“If we continue to have duplication of broad and standard gauge trains, not only we will see an underutilisation of grain storage sites along the broad gauge lines, we will see an increase in freight pushed onto our roads.”

The Victorian Farmers Federation will continue to advocate for the completion of the Murray Basin Rail Project as it was promised.

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