

**23 August 2019**

## **300 workers on track for three-day North East line rail works**

- **North East Rail Line Upgrade early works as well as annual planned maintenance works are occurring on the North East line**
- **Shutdown provides safe track access from 6am Saturday 31 August to 6pm Monday 2 September**

Essential early works for the North East Rail Line Upgrade will be carried out by the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) during a scheduled three-day works program next weekend.

With the works taking place during ARTC's annual 60-hour maintenance 'super possession', ARTC and V/Line are urging travellers to plan ahead as there are disruptions to regular services between Melbourne and Albury.

The work will be undertaken from 6am Saturday 31 August until 6:00pm Monday 2 September.

Around 300 workers across ten sites will work around the clock installing two new sets of crossovers for the North East line as well as completing other track upgrades and an intensive program of regular maintenance works.

ARTC is asking communities along the rail corridor to take extra care during the shutdown period due to the increase in truck and machinery movements around work sites. General Manager Victoria Projects Ed Walker said it's going to be a very busy three days on the North East line.

"By closing the line to rail traffic during the annual maintenance shutdown, our project and maintenance teams can work safely and efficiently and by working round the clock complete a large amount of work in a relatively short period," Mr Walker said.

"ARTC would like to thank the community, rail passengers and motorists for their patience and understanding while we carry out these essential works."

V/Line Regional Manager North East Gary Dean said V/Line was working closely with ARTC to support the North East Line Upgrade.

"These works are critical for improving track conditions on the North East Line, which will enable new VLocity trains to run between Melbourne and Albury in 2021," Mr Dean said.

"As these essential works can only be done without passenger and freight trains running, we'll need to replace train services with coaches. Journey times may be extended by up to 60 minutes, but we expect most express coach journey times to be just as quick as the train."

With the shutdown affecting V/Line and NSW TrainLink services, alternative coach services will be provided. Details and schedules can be found on the [V/Line](#) and [NSW TrainLink](#) websites.

### **ENDS**

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### **Summary of works:**

The installation of the crossovers at Longwood and Violet Town are a critical element of the North East Rail Line Upgrade. Following their commissioning in March 2020 the crossovers will improve track access for project teams for future works, minimising disruptions to passengers.

Other works to be completed during the shutdown include level crossing upgrades, mudhole removal, turnout renewals, track tamping and the commissioning of a new siding at Benalla.

A large tamping machine that realigns the track will be in operation between Benalla and Albury and the level crossing at Escrites Road, Heathcote Junction will be renewed resulting in a smoother crossing for both motorists and train services.

Works will also be occurring in the Melbourne metro area and involve mudhole removal, turnout renewals at West Footscray, Sims Rd bridge works and upgrading the level crossing at Dock Link Road, West Melbourne.

See <https://www.artc.com.au/projects/northeast/> for more details of the North East Rail Line Upgrade or to sign up for electronic project updates.

### **Other background information:**

The Australian Government has committed \$235M to the North East Rail Line Upgrade which will upgrade the entire rail line from Melbourne to Albury Wodonga. The improvements will bring the North East line up to a Victorian Class 2 track performance standard, in line with other regional rail lines in Victoria.

The project will:

- improve passenger service reliability by upgrading track condition and addressing the main causes of delays
- improve ride quality and comfort for travelers by reducing bumps experienced during travel
- reduce the causes of major delays that can impact services such as signal failures due to signal wire theft.

ARTC is delivering the project on behalf of the Australian and Victorian governments. We are working closely with Victorian transport agencies including V/Line, Public Transport Victoria, Transport for Victoria and Rail Projects Victoria to deliver the project in support of the Regional Rail Revival program, which is upgrading regional passenger train lines right across Victoria.

### **Images:**

[High resolution images](#)

[North East Rail Line Upgrade video](#)