



**REGIONAL
RAIL REVIVAL**

SHEPPARTON

Annual Environment Compliance Report 2022

Shepparton Line Upgrade



**RAIL
PROJECTS
VICTORIA**

**VICTORIA'S
BIG BUILD**

VICTORIA
State
Government

First Nations Acknowledgement

Rail Projects Victoria respectfully acknowledges and recognises the Taungurung, Wurundjeri and Yorta Yorta peoples as the Traditional Owners of this land and waterways and pays respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Cover image
Growling Grass Frog

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1 Introduction

1.1 Environmental Vision

Rail Projects Victoria's Environmental Vision is to be an industry leader in managing environmental impacts with a demonstrated commitment to continuous improvement in delivering major infrastructure projects.

To achieve this Environmental Vision, Rail Projects Victoria is committed to:

- Ensuring environmental management is a core value of our organisation
- Promoting a culture of exceptional environmental management, collaboration and continuous improvement, empowering our people to embrace a positive environmental management culture to encourage enhanced environmental performance
- Ensuring all our delivery partners meet or exceed our environmental management requirements and integrate best practice into their activities
- Establishing a framework for setting objectives and targets across all environmental aspects of its work
- Providing staff with information, training and support to meet environmental challenges



- Encouraging innovation and taking advantage of available opportunities to manage environmental risks and impacts.

In order to implement our Environmental Vision effectively, our people will:

- Establish and implement practices to fulfil environmental compliance requirements, including all applicable environmental legislation, regulations, objectives and targets
- Implement departmental and Rail Projects Victoria environmental plans, objectives and targets
- Endeavour to protect and conserve the local and regional environment
- Effectively manage the environmental impacts including social impacts, waste, water and energy use.

1.2 Purpose

RPV is required to prepare an Annual Environmental Compliance Report and publish this on the RPV public website as part of the delivery of the Shepparton Line Upgrade (the Project). This report provides an overview on the progress and performance of the Project from a planning and environmental perspective since construction commenced in April 2021.

1.3 About the Shepparton Line Upgrade

The Project forms part of the Regional Rail Revival (RRR) program. The RRR program is a joint initiative of the Australian and Victorian governments, which have invested more than \$4 billion to upgrade every regional passenger rail line in Victoria.

The Shepparton Line Upgrade will be delivered in three stages. Stage 1 is now complete and Stage 2 works, which will enable VLocity trains to travel to and from Shepparton for the first time, are underway and targeted for completion in late 2022. Stage 3 will expand on upgrades underway as part of Stage 2 and include track speed and signalling upgrades between Seymour and Shepparton to enable fast and more frequent services.

Coleman Rail and KBR is delivering Stage 2 works as part of an alliance with Rail Projects Victoria and V/Line. Stage 2 will deliver more frequent and reliable services and enable modern VLocity trains to travel to and from Shepparton for the first time. The works for Stage 2 include:

- Platform extensions at Mooroopna, Murchison East, and Nagambie stations
- A crossing loop extension near Murchison East to enable more trains to pass each other in this section

- 59 level crossing upgrades between Donnybrook and Shepparton
- Stabling to house VLocity trains.

Stage 3 of the Shepparton Line Upgrade will deliver signalling upgrades which will enable nine return services on weekdays for Shepparton, Mooroopna, Murchison East and Nagambie.

It will include track speed upgrades between Seymour and Shepparton to enable trains to travel faster.

The new stabling facility being built north of Shepparton to house modern and reliable VLocity trains will be expanded, to accommodate even more trains and enable more services.

The Murchison East crossing loop will also be extended by an additional 1.1km, to enable a 1200m freight train and two six-car VLocity trains to pass each other, making services more reliable.

Works for Stage 3 are targeted for completion in late 2023. For more details see regionalrailrevival.vic.gov.au/shepparton

Stage 1 – Complete



Additional train services

10 extra services a week between Melbourne and Shepparton



Stabling upgrade

in Shepparton to support extra services



Coach services

29 extra coach services for better transport connections

Stage 2 – Underway



Platform extensions at Mooroopna, Murchison East and Nagambie to suit VLocity trains



Crossing loop extension on the line to enable trains to pass each other



59 level crossing upgrades between Donnybrook and Shepparton



Stabling for VLocity trains

Stage 3 – In development



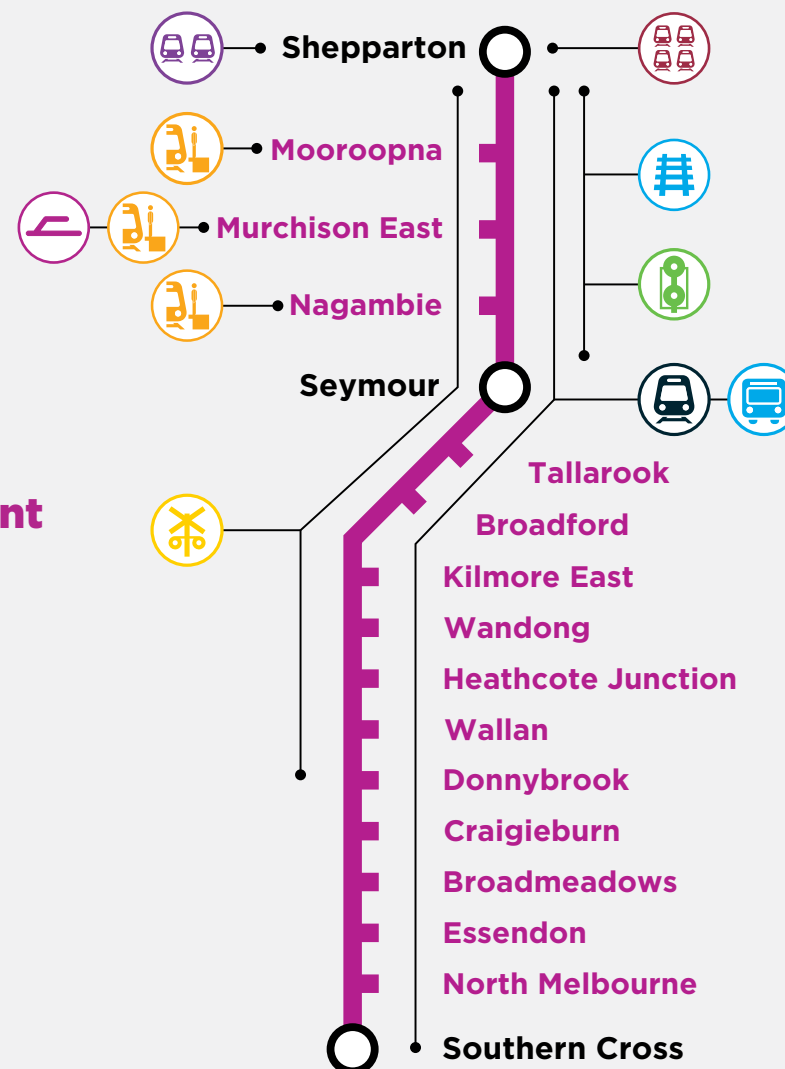
Track upgrades to enable trains to travel at higher speeds



Signalling upgrades to enable nine weekday return services



Expanded stabling for VLocity trains to support more services



To ensure effective management of the planning, environmental and heritage aspects of the Project's design and construction works, an Environmental Management Framework (EMF) was prepared.

The EMF documents a suite of performance-based environmental standards and outcomes known as the Environmental Management Requirements (EMRs). Throughout the delivery of the Project, RPV works with the delivery partners to ensure that the Project is compliant with the EMF and the EMRs.

2.1 Independent Environmental Audits

To make sure we are adhering to the EMF, the Project is independently audited at regular intervals. This provides a snapshot so we can see what we are doing well and helps us identify opportunities for improvement. The first audit was required to be conducted within three months of the works commencing, with further audits to be undertaken every six months during construction thereafter. The audit is intended to evaluate the following but is not limited to:

- The Project's compliance with planning, environment, and heritage approvals
- Project management plans and reports
- The Alliance's response to non-conformances, incidents, and complaints received.

Table 1: To date, two IEA reports have been produced and the key findings can be found in the table below. No non-conformances were identified in either of the two audits conducted so far.

Audit date	Audit scope	Key findings
July 2021	28 environmental criteria were assessed	✓ No non-conformances
January 2022	18 environmental criteria were assessed	✓ No non-conformances

3 Environmental Performance



By adopting RPV's environmental policy and applying best practices, our delivery partners have met and achieved beyond our environmental targets and objectives.

Within the last 12-months, our partners have demonstrated their ability to seek and take advantage of opportunities to manage the Project's environmental risks impacts.

3.1 Protecting the Natural Environment

3.1.1 Saving Our Growling Grass Frogs

During construction in 2021, a total of eight endangered Growling Grass Frogs (GGF) were found in an opened trench just outside of the GGF Conservation Area at Donnybrook. All works and access throughout the area were immediately halted, and the frogs were safely relocated into a dam a few metres away by the Project's appointed ecologist.

The delivery partners were quick to act to ensure that measures were undertaken to prevent a reoccurrence. The key actions from the event included:

- Trenches that could not be backfilled were temporarily covered
- All pipes were closed to avoid any additional entrapment
- A GGF fence was erected on the edge of the work site.

Almost a year after the discovery of the eight GGFs, more than 100 GGFs were found living within the dam as part of a GGF survey at Donnybrook. This has been identified as one of the most significant breeding events for the frogs this season.

RPV and our delivery partners will continue working to protect our Victorian Native frogs through GGF control.



Figure 1: All eight GGFs were released into a nearby dam.



Figure 2: 1.2km of GGF fencing was placed along the work site.



Figure 3: A group of GGFs spotted during the survey on the dam.

3.1.2 Reducing Our Native Vegetation Impact

Development is underway in minimising the Project's impact on native vegetation. From what was approved, the Project is expected to have a 45% reduction in the amount of native vegetation removed by completion.

There has also been a significant reduction in the number of Large Trees proposed to be removed by completion. While 138 Large Trees have been offset our delivery partners have identified opportunities to minimise the Project's impact. By completion, it is proposed that as few as ten Large Trees will be removed – a significant reduction on the 138 identified at the start of the project. This has been achieved through rigorous design reviews, implementation of onsite controls, and additional assessments undertaken by environmental professionals to ensure tree health is not affected by the works.

3.1.3 Repurposing Logs to become Fish Hotels

While the Project hasn't had any direct impacts on waterways or the aquatic species that call them home, more than 200 logs were able to be donated to the Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Authority to help with their conservation efforts. It intends to repurpose logs donated by the Project into 'Fish Hotels' and to help provide small freshwater fish species with:

- A new home
- A safe place to breed
- Protection from strong currents
- Protection from predators.

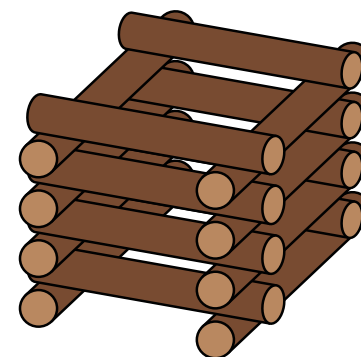


Figure 5: Illustration of a fish hotel structure.



Figure 4: Goulburn River



Figure 6: Logs collected on site to build fish hotel structure.

4 Continuing our Environmental Excellence

The upcoming milestones for the Project from planning and environmental perspectives include:

- To continue engaging with the Wurundjeri, Tanugurung and Yorta Yorta people on the interpretative signage design at a number of stations
- To reconcile the amount of impacted vegetation, and revegetate where possible
- Two more Independent Environmental Audits to be conducted, in June and December 2022

As the Project progresses, we are confident that the lessons learned from the Project will allow us to improve and drive even better environmental outcomes in the coming months.

More information

To find out more about Regional Rail Revival:

 regionalrailrevival.vic.gov.au

 1800 105 105 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

