



**REGIONAL
RAIL REVIVAL**

SHEPPARTON



Annual Environment Compliance Report 2024-25

Shepparton Line Upgrade

VICTORIA'S BIG BUILD

First Nations Acknowledgement

The Regional Rail Revival 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.



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Introduction

Environmental Vision

The Regional Rail Revival (RRR) aspires to be a leader in managing environmental impacts with a demonstrated commitment to continuous improvement in delivering major infrastructure projects.

To achieve this, RRR 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 these aspirations effectively, our people will endeavour to:

- Establish and implement practices to fulfil environmental compliance requirements, including all applicable environmental legislation, regulations, objectives, and targets
- Implement departmental and organisational 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.

The aim of this report is to show the progression and performance of the Project over the past twelve months from a planning and environment perspective.

Purpose

As part of the delivery of the Shepparton Line Upgrade (the Project), RRR is required to prepare an Annual Environmental Compliance Report and publish it on the Victorian Big Build public website. The first of these reports was published in 2022 and can be found [here](#).

About the Shepparton Line Upgrade

The Shepparton Line Upgrade (the Project) has already delivered benefits for passengers, with Stage 1 enabling 10 extra weekly services on the Shepparton Line and 29 additional coach services per week between Seymour and Shepparton.

Stage 2 of the Project has given passengers more reliable services, as well as modern trains, by allowing VLocity trains to run to and from Shepparton for the first time in late 2022.

As well as extended platforms and improved accessibility and amenities at Mooroopna, Murchison East and Nagambie stations, Stage 2 delivered 59 level crossing upgrades between Donnybrook and Shepparton.

Major construction on Stage 3 of the Project is complete, including the extension of the Murchison East passing loop and an expansion of the new Shepparton stabling facility to accommodate extra trains.

Goulburn Valley passengers are also enjoying smoother and more reliable journeys with the completion of major track upgrades between Shepparton and Seymour.

Mooroopna's recently completed new walking and cycling path, the Broad Way, has lighting and safety fencing, and connects Mooroopna Station and the existing footpath along Young Street.

Signalling upgrades are continuing to enable nine return services on weekdays for Shepparton, Mooroopna, Murchison East and Nagambie, almost doubling the number of services each weekday.

An alliance comprising Acciona Rail and KBR along with Regional Rail Revival and V/Line is delivering the project.

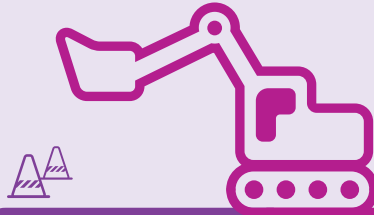
The Project is part of the Regional Rail Revival program, a more than \$4 billion investment by the Victorian and Australian governments to upgrade every regional passenger rail line in Victoria, delivering more frequent and reliable services, and creating 3,000 jobs and supplier opportunities.

Refer to **bigbuild.vic.gov.au/projects/shepparton-line-upgrade** for further information about the Project.



Total investment in the Shepparton Line Upgrade is more than

\$750m+



Creating

600

jobs over its three stages

Stage 1

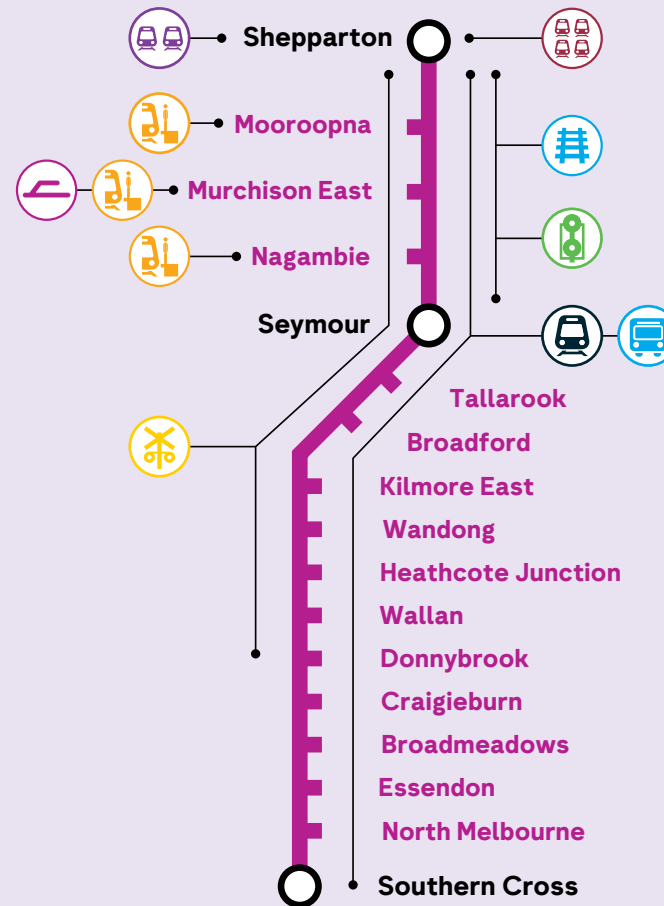
Fast-tracked to enable an additional **10 weekly services** on the Shepparton Line in 2019.

Stage 2

Work enabled **modern and reliable** VLocity trains to run on the line in 2022.

Stage 3

Signalling and track upgrades to enable **nine return services a day**.



Stage 1

- Additional train services
- Stabling upgrade
- Coach services

Stage 2

- Platform extensions
- Crossing loop extension
- 59 level crossing upgrades
- Stabling for VLocity trains

Stage 3

- Track upgrades
- Signalling upgrades
- Expanded stabling

1 Environmental Management Framework

An Environmental Management Framework (EMF) was developed to ensure that environmental aspects of the Project are managed effectively.

The EMF is a document that supplies a list of environmental standards and outcomes, referred to as Environmental Management Requirements (EMRs). The Framework guides the design and construction works of the Project, ensuring compliance with critical planning, environmental, and heritage conditions. RRR works closely with our delivery partners throughout the Project to ensure conformance to all the requirements set out in the EMF.

1.1 Independent Environmental Audits

The project is independently audited at regular intervals to ensure compliance with the EMF. This provides a snapshot allowing us to see where we are performing well and allows us to identify opportunities for improvement. Under the EMF, audits are required to be undertaken within three months of construction beginning, and then on a six-monthly basis (or as agreed upon by RRR) until the completion of the Project. Some examples of what is evaluated during an audit include:

- The Project's compliance with planning, environment, and heritage approvals
- Project management plans and reports
- Site based audit to review implementation of environmental controls
- The Alliance's response to non-conformances, incidents, and complaints received.

To date, nine audits have been undertaken, and as shown in the table below, 2 non-conformances have been identified and closed out. Several improvement opportunities have also been identified and addressed. The key findings concluded by the Independent Environmental Audit can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Summary of independent environmental audits completed for the Project.

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
July 2022	18 environmental criteria were assessed	✓ No non-conformances
May 2023	Stage 2 completion audit Stage 3 pre-commencement audit	✓ No non-conformances
October 2023	18 environmental criteria were assessed	1 Non-conformance identified. Corrective actions complete and non-conformance closed out.
April 2024	15 environmental criteria were assessed	1 Non-conformance identified.
July 2024	12 environmental criteria were assessed	✓ No non-conformances identified, previous non-conformance closed out.
November 2024	12 environmental criteria were assessed	✓ No non-conformances.
May 2025	7 environmental criteria were assessed	✓ No non-conformances.

2 Environmental Performance

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

2.1 Protecting the Natural Environment

2.1.1 Reducing Our Native Vegetation Impact

Through the works of the Alliance on site, approximately 10,000 square metres of Native Vegetation and revegetation have been planted. The contractor has selected and planted native species suited to the specific bioregion and vegetation class. Delivery of 10,000 square metres of Native Hydroseeding and a confirmed commitment to 2,500 square metres of external

revegetation have been implemented. These have included an ongoing monitoring program beyond the life of the project, and a trial of 'rehabitat pods' to encourage re-habitation of fauna, post the life of the project. In addition, 70% of native vegetation that was originally approved for removal has been retained, with no large trees removed.

2.1.2 Reuse of Ballast

- The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) has outlined acceptance of the projects use of recycled aggregate and ballast. Ballast from site works which met specific criteria for use, was able to be re-used/recycled within access tracks as an aggregate material. Approx. 4054 cubic metres of ballast was able to be re-used in the upgrading of access tracks to be "fit for use" in recent design packages. The reuse of existing ballast on-site in this instance, allowed the ballast to be re-used for an ongoing purpose, and by doing so, diverted it from being sent to landfills and assisted in reducing upfront material emissions and environmental impacts.

An aerial view of the recycled ballast located along the Shepparton Line – Photo by SCU Alliance



An aerial view of the new planting within the rail corridor, and recycled aggregate access tracks– Photo by SCU Alliance



An aerial view of the new planting within the rail corridor – Photo by SCU Alliance



An aerial view of the new planting and reused ballast within the rail corridor – Photo by SCU Alliance



An aerial view of the new planting within and adjacent to the rail corridor – Photo by SCU Alliance





A Rehabitat Pod™ protecting a plant and providing access and shelter for native fauna. The pod will biodegrade as the plant matures. Photo by SCU Alliance

2.2 Ongoing Commitment to Sustainable Initiatives

2.2.1 Sustainability Initiatives – Revegetation, Monitoring and ‘Rehabitat Pods™’ on Private Land

The Shepparton Corridor Upgrade identified that improvements could be implemented in and around the rail corridor to ensure that habitat connectivity would be maintained and improved post construction in areas of private land that were utilised for laydown areas. Replanting of native flora and the absence of shelter and habitat during the plants initial growth period was identified as a potential barrier to preserving habitat connectivity for fauna. This led to a decision to take an innovative approach to improve habitat connectivity, by using Rehabitat Pods™ to facilitate the connections for fauna while the plants are in the early stage of life.

An area on private land on Warring-Euroa Road, Warring, was identified and an agreement was struck to revegetate this area of private land. Plants from a social enterprise supplier were sourced and species selection was overseen by ecologists, to allow the habitat corridor to extend outside the corridor and promote connectivity for native fauna.

Biodegradable ‘Rehabitat Pods™’ were implemented in place of tree guards across 30% of the area – allowing for protection

from the elements for native fauna in the area who are utilising the corridor, especially during periods of tree growth and development. A monitoring program was also implemented from the private landowner, a new collaboration that allows for ongoing improvement and surveillance of the improvements to the local environmental outcomes within the immediate ecosystem.

Five hundred and eighty (580) new plants were planted, and once the plants mature and provide natural shelter, the pods will biodegrade into the environment, creating a sustainable solution. The initiatives received positive feedback, including a feature on ABC Radio Shepparton.



Rehabitat Pods™ being installed by the Alliance Team. Photo by SCU Alliance

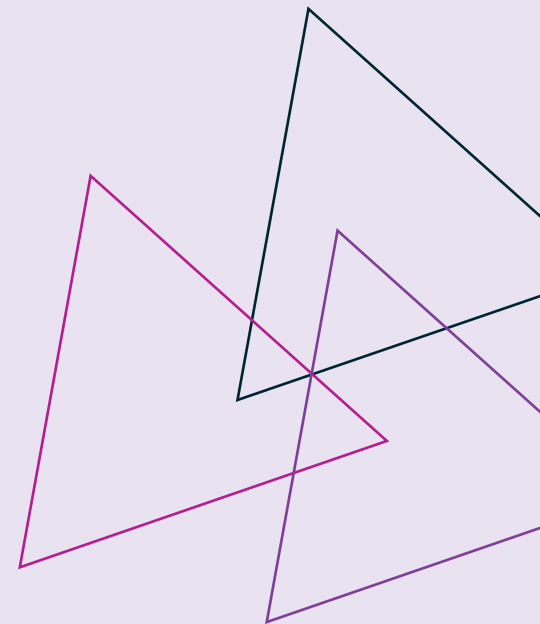
3 Continuing our Environmental Excellence

By applying best practices, our delivery partners have not only met, but exceeded environmental targets and objectives. Within the last 12-months, our partners have demonstrated a strong ability to seek and take advantage of opportunities to manage the Project's environmental risks and decrease the environmental impact.

The upcoming planning and environmental commitments for the Project include:

- Compliance with the Shepparton Corridor Upgrade Project's Environmental Management Framework (EMF) and delivering our environmental management requirements (EMR).
- Continuing to deliver our contractual Project Scope and Technical Requirements (PS&TR)
- Ensuring works delivered as per the approved conditions in our existing environmental approvals.
- Continual improvement on managing environmental conditions on site and in our records.
- Implementation and management of appropriate and optimised environmental controls and measures on site to protect the environment as reasonably practicable.
- Monitoring and improving environmental conditions on site through audits, site inspections, and procedures.
- Regular communication between the on-site Alliance Teams and the relevant subject matter experts to ensure continued compliance and excellence.

As the Project progresses, we are confident that the lessons learned from the Shepparton Corridor Upgrade will allow us to improve and further improve the on-site environmental outcomes into the future.





regionalrailrevival.vic.gov.au
regionalrailrevival@railprojects.vic.gov.au

1800 105 105 (call anytime)



For languages other than English
please call (03) 9209 0147

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