



**Sharon Grierson MP**  
Federal Member for Newcastle

**Media Release**

**7 December 2011**

**IMPROVED TRAIN MOVEMENTS ON TRACK FOR NEWCASTLE**

Sharon Grierson MP, Member for Newcastle, has welcomed today's historic agreement between the Federal and State governments that will see greatly improved train movements between Sydney and Newcastle.

The Northern Sydney Freight Corridor will see an upgrade between North Strathfield and Newcastle, expanding freight capacity over the 160 kilometre rail corridor, with \$24 million allocated for a Hexham freight loop.

"The increase in freight in our Region has long been an issue, and come February, work will finally begin to ease this congestion," Ms Grierson said.

"The project will see improved passenger travel times, take trucks off our roads and cut an expected 100,000 tonnes of carbon emissions annually.

"With the Hexham freight loop, along with additional loops between Newcastle and Sydney, we will see greater coordination between freight and passenger services, enabling them to overtake slow freight trains, a real win for our Region's working commuters."

In addition to the Hexham freight loop, two passing loops at Gosford, a third track at Epping to Pennant Hills, and a rail underpass at North Strathfield will also allow passenger trains to overtake slower freight trains.

"These are good improvements for passenger and freight rail, and the next big step should be a Fassifern to Hexham freight bypass, but we need to know what the state government's plans are for the port of Newcastle so rail can be planned accordingly."

The Federal Government is investing \$840 million, and the NSW government \$214 million, towards the \$1.1 billion project due to be completed in 2016.

"For each dollar the state is contributing, the Federal government is putting forward four," Ms Grierson said.

"This was a 2007 federal election commitment, involving almost three years of planning, so I'm pleased that the state government has finally stepped up to the mark."

**Canberra**  
House of Representatives  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
Ph: 02 6277 4221  
Fax: 02 6277 8461



**Newcastle**  
427 Hunter Street  
NEWCASTLE NSW 2300  
Ph: 02 4926 1555  
Fax: 02 4926 1895  
[www.sharongrierson.com](http://www.sharongrierson.com)