

# RUSSELL NORTHE MLA

## Member for Morwell

FEBRUARY 2016

### Community newsletter

#### Confusion and Delays on the Gippsland Line

Coalition Members of Parliament say regional commuters face extended delays, cancelled services and deserve answers after it was revealed by the Minister for Public Transport Jacinta Allan that VLocity services would be banned from the Pakenham rail line for a least a further 6 weeks.

Minister for Transport Jacinta Allan has misled commuters about the extent of issues on the Gippsland Line and no real answers have been provided.

It's extremely concerning to read reports and see that there is still no definitive answer about these issues, why they have arisen, what may be causing them or how the Andrews Government can even fix them within the 6 week timeframes given by the Minister.

Constituents have voiced their frustrations clearly and expressed that a lack of information from both the Andrews Government and VLine had only made the issue worse.

My office has been inundated with calls from local commuters who say that have been forced to endure slow journeys, unexplained cancellations and massive delays.

The time has come for the Andrews Government to commit to the Coalition's plan for a better Gippsland service by investing in major infrastructure upgrades previously planned. The Victorian Coalition had a strong long term plan to improve the Gippsland Line including signal upgrades, line duplication and new passenger carriages.

I have been running a petition for some time now that calls upon the State Labor Government to adopt the Coalitions plan of more services, duplication of tracks, removal of level crossings and additional carriages but has so far fallen on deaf ears.

Copies of the petition are available for printing from my website [www.russellnorthe.com.au/petitions/](http://www.russellnorthe.com.au/petitions/)



#### Out & About...



Last month Brad Battin, Shadow Minister for Emergency Services visited the electorate and joined Member for Eastern Victoria Region, Melina Bath and I to visit Churchill CFA, Morwell SES and Morwell CFA. Well done to all emergency services personnel for keeping our community safe.



Pleased to visit Stockdale Road Primary School and present student leaders with their leadership badges. Congratulations to all student leaders on their elections!

## Support to Get it Built



The Latrobe Valley community standing together in support to "Get it Built" - as applications for funding are being to build a new Performing Arts Centre, the community are rallying behind the campaign to "Get it Built".

## Latrobe City Citizen of the Year



Congratulations to Don Di Fabrizio on receiving Latrobe City's Senior Citizen of the Year.

## Toongabbie Citizen of the Year



Congratulations to Toongabbie CFA captain Ian Alexander on being awarded Toongabbie Citizen of the Year.

## Nationals MPs visit local farmers

Leader of the Nationals Peter Walsh met with and spoke to local farmers on his recent visit to the Latrobe Valley.

Mr Walsh, who is also Shadow Minister for Agriculture and Water, along with Member for Morwell Russell Northe and Member for Eastern Victoria Region Melina Bath, visited Gippsland Free Range Eggs in Glengarry, Sticky Stuckey Honey at Flynn, Graeme Stuckey's beef and cropping property at Flynn and Agritrain's shearing shed in Rosedale.

The Latrobe region had a diverse range of farming and agriculture businesses. I'm pleased Peter is able to come and speak with local farmers about their innovative practices and see first-hand the varied range of agribusiness we have here in the Latrobe Valley.



## IN PARLIAMENT

This month in Parliament I spoke on:

### Australia Day Awards

I wish to congratulate Greg Samson for receiving an Order of Australia Medal in the recent Australia Day awards.

Morwell paramedic Neil Akers was awarded an Ambulance Service Medal for his 46 years of exceptional service to the Victorian community.

Well done to Young Citizen of the Year Maneesha Nambirajan on your dedication in supporting and assisting those persons less fortunate in life, within our local community and beyond.

### Spirit of Anzac

Congratulations to Isis Tyler from Lavalla Catholic College who was successful in her application to the 2016 "Spirit of Anzac" prize along with Lily van Berkel from St Pauls Anglican Grammar School who was selected as a regional finalist for the 2015/16 program.

### Fuel

I wish to express concerns on behalf of local motorists and businesses in the Latrobe Valley with respect to fuel price discrepancies that strongly suggest Latrobe Valley residents are paying much higher fuel prices than communities to the east, west and south.

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