

## Traffic management

The NHPA has been trialling innovative traffic management measures to reduce risks to road users and workers on foot. While two-way traffic flow has been maintained for 89 per cent of the time for the 19 overtaking lanes delivered, there is occasionally a need to stop traffic. Variable Speed Limit Signage (VLSL) was trialled at Peak Hill to alert road users of stoppages ahead and these have been rolled out across other projects where suitable. The combination of VLSL, traffic lights and the trialling of boom gates at Chinamans Road, Tocumwal, has helped reduce the risk to workers on foot and the likelihood of end of queue incidents.

The NHPA has also been working with the Traffic and Highway Patrol Command within the NSW Police Force to raise awareness that traffic lights at construction sites are enforceable to increase road safety.

**Sergeant Martin Ling from Central West Highway Patrol, Parkes** has been working with the NHPA on red light and speed limit enforcement in construction zones. "Temporary traffic lights at roadworks are legally enforceable and just as important as regular, fixed traffic lights. If you drive through a red signal the penalty is \$464 and three demerit points. These systems are in place to keep all road users and road workers safe in the construction zone, so please obey the traffic lights."



Alistair Lunn (Director West, Transport for NSW), Bradley Lewis (Safety Manager NHPA), and Sergeant Martin Ling talking worker and community safety at the Coobang project site, north of Parkes, December 2020

## Environmental management

The NHPA continues to implement initiatives to minimise the impact to the environment. A recent initiative included planting new trees to replace trees removed during construction.

We have been working with the local community to source seedlings for tree planting. Thanks to Tim and Kelly Glass of Jayfields near Holbrook, the NHPA currently has 10,000 Grey Box Eucalyptus seedlings being grown for planting on the Newell Highway.

Grey Box Eucalyptus are an important food and habitat species for koalas and are commonly found around the Newell Highway. The aim of tree planting is not only to mitigate the construction impacts but to also work with local farmers to identify degraded areas for regeneration and provide long term benefits by enhancing the ecology along the Newell Highway. So far, we have planted 1,500 Grey Box seedlings at Grong Grong, with planting planned at Tap Hill in the coming months.



Grey box seedlings grown by Jayfields in Holbrook for planting along the Newell Highway



Grey box seedlings planted at Grong Grong

## How we are delivering for Transport for NSW customers



Increasing overtaking opportunities for the mix of vehicles on the highway



Achieved target of 19 overtaking lanes by 30 June 2021



Enhanced regional benefits through high participation of local workforce



Sharing NHPA initiatives with industry to extend value beyond the NHPA



Traffic management initiatives improving safety for road users and workers



NHPA on track for early delivery, bringing forward benefits and reducing program costs



Strong safety culture and initiatives, increasing safety for workers and the community



Maintained program, budget and community engagement during COVID-19



Applying lessons learnt and challenging the status quo to drive efficiencies and improve outcomes



Minimising environmental impacts through early input into designs and robust controls during construction



85% reduction in potable water use during construction



Continuous improvement in ride quality



Increasing value for money by combining safety improvement work with overtaking lanes where possible



Construction staging and integrated communications, minimising disruptions and improving journey planning

### For more information:

If you would like to receive updates on the project, please email [info@newellhpa.com.au](mailto:info@newellhpa.com.au) to be included in the distribution group.

For more information about the project:

1800 577 295 (during business hours, toll free)  
[info@newellhpa.com.au](mailto:info@newellhpa.com.au)  
[nswroads.work/nhpa](https://nswroads.work/nhpa)



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Transport for NSW

# Newell Highway Program Alliance

Community Update | October 2021



Overtaking lanes completed at Tap Hill, North of Gilgandra

The NSW and Australian Governments have committed \$1.455 billion to upgrade the Newell Highway which connects the State's Victorian and Queensland borders. In early 2021, the NHPA received extra funding to deliver additional overtaking lanes and road safety improvements works as part of upgrades to the Newell Highway.

## Program update

As of October 2021, the NHPA has proudly delivered 19 overtaking lanes on the Newell Highway adding an additional 28 kilometres of overtaking lanes, saving about 18 minutes in travel time and enabling more efficient freight transport and time-saving benefits to road users.

Road users and communities are set to benefit from further upgrades on the Newell Highway. In early 2021, the NHPA received extra funding from the Australian Government to deliver an additional 10 overtaking lanes, increasing the total to about 40 overtaking lanes. The additional overtaking lanes will improve safety on the Newell and save around 33 minutes of travel time on the Newell Highway.

Under the Road Safety Program, the Federal Government has also invested around \$76 million to deliver road safety improvement works on the Newell Highway. Six sites have been selected for road safety improvement works, these include Redbank, Dustys Creek, Firetail, Tocumwal to Finlay, Gullifers Road and Alleena. The road safety works involve widening the shoulders and centre line, and installation of audio-tactile line marking on the edges and centre of the road. These works help to reduce the likelihood of vehicles departing their lane and reduce head-on crashes by 50 per cent and run-off-road crashes by up to 25 per cent.

The combination of overtaking lanes and safety improvements being delivered will help build a safe, strong road network in regional NSW and help save lives on the State's busiest freight corridor. The combination of overtaking lanes and safety works are currently being delivered at Firetail, Redbank, Gullifers and Alleena.

Projects due to start the second half of 2021 include northbound and southbound overtaking lanes at Pilliga - Dandry, Pilliga - Rest Area, Pilliga - Sir William Bridges, and Back Creek, and a southbound overtaking lane at Mirrool.

## Benefits of the NHPA



### More efficient travel

More overtaking lanes on the Newell Highway will provide more efficient journey times.



### Increasing overtaking opportunities

More overtaking lanes will reduce driver frustration and enable safer overtaking opportunities.



### Improving freight efficiency

The overtaking lanes will provide a more secure transport route for the freight and agricultural industry.



### Connecting communities

The overtaking lanes will provide better and safer connections between communities on the highway.



### Improving road safety

The overtaking lanes will increase overtaking opportunities for the mix of vehicles on the highway.



### Rumble strips

Installation of rumble strips is estimated to reduce the likelihood of vehicles departing their lane by 15% to 25%.



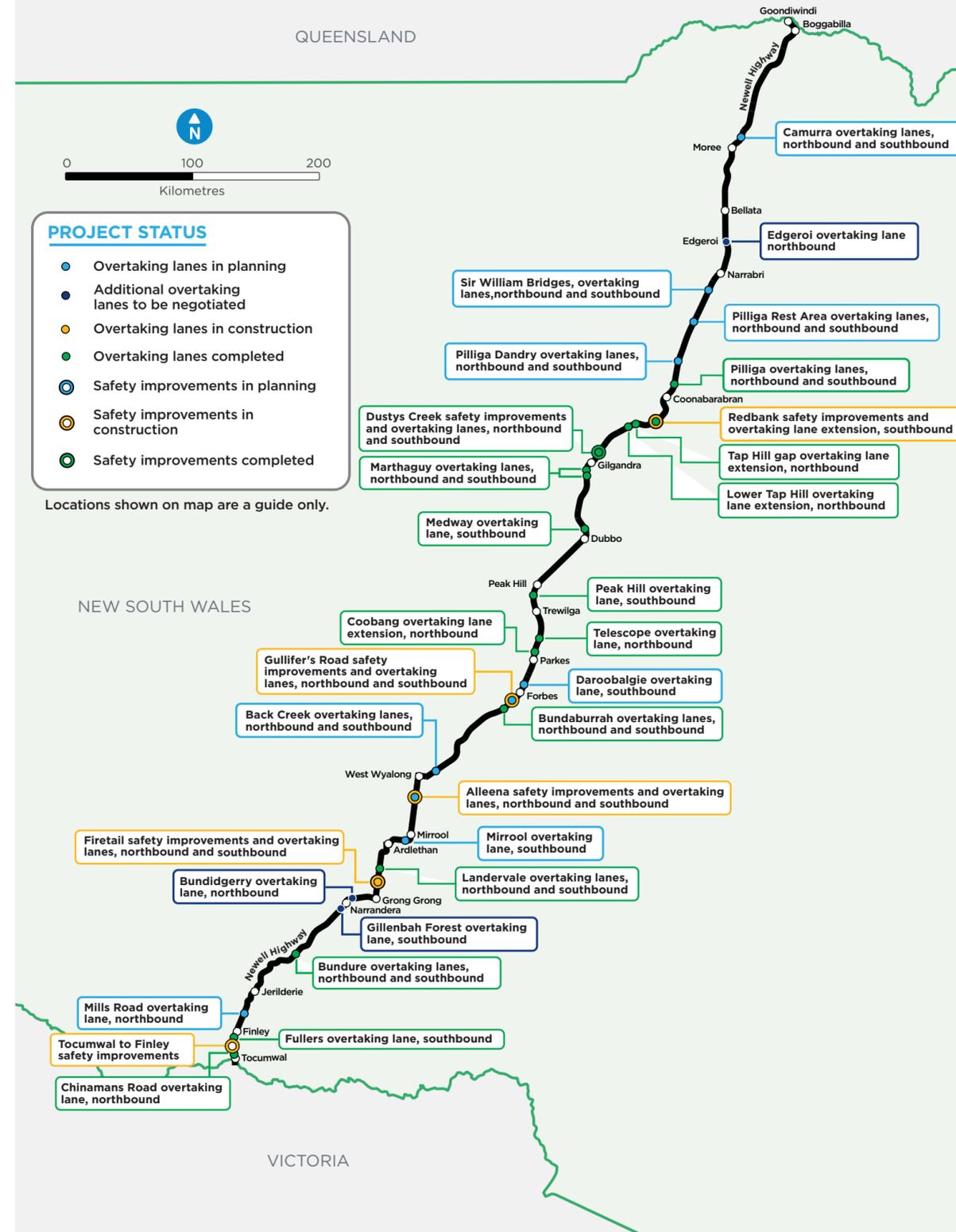
### Wide centreline

Centreline widening is estimated to reduce head-on crashes by 50% and run-off-road crashes by up to 25%.



Construction of overtaking lanes at Landervale, south of Ardlethan

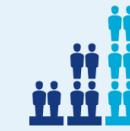
## Newell Highway Overtaking Lanes Status Map



## People and employment

The NHPA has continued working with Councils and Chambers of Commerce to raise awareness of local business and supplier opportunities. To date seven supplier information sessions have been held. The online sessions have proved popular and we will continue with these and face to face sessions to let local suppliers know of upcoming opportunities. Engaging women, indigenous, trainees and young workers is a focus for the NHPA. The NHPA is currently providing structured training under a traineeship to students enrolled in the Certificate III in Civil Construction. As of September 2021, nine trainees have been involved in the NHPA. Of the nine trainees, three are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers and all are from regional New South Wales, six from local towns along the Newell Highway. This involvement provides immediate benefit to the local economy through an upskilled workforce that will make a strong contribution to a sustainable and diverse industry base along the Newell Highway corridor.

## Outcomes



Local and regional workers make up 45% of the NHPA workforce



9 trainees working on NHPA



Aboriginal Participation in Construction (APIC) expenditure currently about 7.5% of program



All traffic control subcontractors are Aboriginal owned businesses



NHPA staff and trainees



## Optimising design outcomes

The road safety improvement works have diversified the NHPA program, demonstrating the flexibility of our teams. Designs for the road safety improvement work have been completed and the focus returns to finalising the sites for the remaining overtaking lanes. Our Design and Community Engagement teams have been working together to identify early in the design process any potential impacts to landowners and farm operations. We have been working with landowners to understand how accesses are used and to find solutions where there is an impact. Working with landowners will continue as our designers finalise the remaining overtaking lanes. We would like to thank the landowners adjacent to the works for their time and valuable input.



## Innovation

The emergence of COVID-19 limited the continuation of site inspections and motivated the NHPA to find an innovative solution. In early 2020, the NHPA established virtual inspections, which involves taking in-depth videos and live stream videos of activities on site, giving the offsite team a comprehensive view of the site and enabling real time engagement. While this initiative was implemented in response to COVID-19, the virtual inspections have the additional benefit of making site monitoring more accessible to the wider team. Alongside in-person site inspections, the virtual inspections allow more frequent interaction while reducing long distance travel, which in turn minimises risks associated with driver fatigue. Additionally, remote inspections reduce the cost associated with travel. Given the value of this initiative the virtual inspections are being implemented in conjunction with traditional site visits.



Site activities at Coobang, north of Parkes