



# Community information session Tarago Town Hall

Monday 9 March, 6:30pm – 8:00pm

# Agenda

- Project overview
- Key events
- Steps taken to manage project risks
- What testing has been completed
- Future remediation plan
- What happens now
- Q&A session

# Project overview

- The Tarago Rail Loop Extension Project is a NSW Government project jointly funded by Transport for NSW and Veolia.
- Early planning work for the project started in 2015 and construction commenced in July 2019. Major work on the project was completed in January 2020.
- The project has converted the existing rail siding (a low-speed track section) into an open access passing loop to improve the rail network of freight and passenger services between Goulburn and Canberra and to support Veolia's Woodlawn facility in Tarago.
- Transport for NSW undertook the works in Tarago, as part of the NSW Government's Fixing Country Rail program across regional NSW. Works were completed by Transport for NSW's contractor, John Holland Rail.

# Overview of key events



History of the rail corridor



Early planning and scoping of project



First knowledge of lead contamination within rail corridor



Overview of testing regime

# Steps taken to manage project risks

Impacts associated with the historic use of the Tarago siding were identified before loop extension works. The following steps were taken to manage the risk:

- Project design changed to reduce volume of disturbed contaminated soil.
- Specialist environmental consultants engaged to develop management plans and provide independent advice and guidance before, during and after the construction works and temporary stockpiling of contaminated spoil
- Implemented on-site risk controls throughout the works including no-go zones, PPE for workers and concurrent additional soil testing
- Dust suppression applied when soil was disturbed - during excavation and stockpiling.
- Spoil generated from lead risk area was immediately covered and secured after stockpiling. Regular inspection regime implemented to confirm integrity of encasement

# Contaminated Land Management

- Contaminated land management in NSW is regulated under:
  - The Contaminated Land Management Act 1997 and numerous guidance documents which are empowered under this Act
- Under these frameworks includes assessment criteria for a range of contaminants under generic exposure scenarios
- Risk depends on source-pathway-receptor linkage
- Criteria for exposure scenarios are set conservatively low to provide confidence that they are protective of human health and the environment in most situations.
- High concentrations are those over assessment criteria and low concentrations are those under. Risks are low and acceptable – means that there is no appreciable risk increase in the population
- Specialists are qualified risk assessors and independent auditors are engaged to support management of complex contaminant issues.

# What testing has been completed

## Inside the rail corridor



### Testing (19 December 2019)

- 109 shallow soil samples
- 18 samples from rail formation cap and subgrade layers
- Surface water sampling upstream and downstream of two drainage culverts (four locations)
- Field based measurement of lead concentrations in surface soils
- Samples were submitted to NATA accredited laboratories for analyses of potential contaminants of concern (mainly lead).

### Results

- Elevated lead concentrations were observed within about a 900m length of the rail formation and in the immediately surrounding soils. Other potential contaminants were observed at concentrations below criteria
- High lead and other metals were observed in surface water downstream of the rail formation

# What testing has been completed

## Tarago Train Station



### Testing

- Five dust samples from the Tarago Station platform
- Six shallow soil samples Tarago Station carpark
- Samples were submitted to NATA accredited laboratories for lead analyses

### Results

- Results indicate contaminant risks are low and acceptable



# What testing has been completed

## Goulburn Street



### Testing

- Assessment on Goulburn Street included collection of ten shallow soil samples adjacent to the footpath from the Station south past the Goulburn Street footbridge
- Samples were submitted to NATA accredited laboratories for lead analyses

### Results

- Results indicate contaminant risks are low and acceptable

# What testing has been completed

## Tarago Public School



### Testing

- Ten shallow soil samples
- Five external paint samples
- Five external dust samples
- Five internal dust samples
- Samples were submitted to NATA accredited laboratories for lead analyses

### Results

- Results indicate contaminant risks are low and acceptable

# What testing has been completed

## Private residence

### Testing

- Six shallow soil samples
- Three external paint samples
- Three external dust samples
- Three internal dust samples
- Samples were submitted to NATA accredited laboratories for lead analyses

### Results

Elevated lead concentrations were observed in shallow soils, external paint, external dust and internal dust.

### Ongoing Management

Actions to mitigate risks associated with lead impacts are being co-ordinated with the residents of the property

# Summary of testing and current risk

- Extent of elevated contamination in soil and dust is limited to the rail corridor and adjacent residence
- Surface water impacts are limited to the corridor and adjacent downstream receptors. Not elevated in Mulwaree River
- Further testing is proposed to assess risk potential from consumption of groundwater and use of surface water discharging from the site.

# Future remediation plan

- We are currently working with the NSW Environment and Protection Authority (EPA) who has issued a draft Declaration listing sections of the Tarago rail corridor as significantly contaminated
- The declaration means the EPA will regulate the site to ensure the contamination is investigated and remediated to protect residents, the wider community and the environment.
- As part of this declaration, we are developing a comprehensive plan in accordance with the EPA guidelines to ensure ongoing monitoring and management of the site to protect the welfare and safety of the local Tarago community and our workers
- The Declaration ensures all future occupiers of this land know there is contaminated material on site
- Key remediation measures include:
  - the permanent management of the stockpiled contaminated material that is currently securely covered in sand and cement
  - groundwater testing inside rail corridor and on Council land
  - ongoing dust suppression and water run-off controls

## What happens now

- Ongoing consultation with the community and key stakeholders about current actions to manage contamination and longer term management plan
- Registration for property testing – available this evening
- Residents can also elect to have property tests and blood tests through local GP – registration available this evening.

## If you would like more information

- Register your details at the front desk
- We will add you to the distribution list for updates
- For any related enquiries please contact:

P: 02 4907 7525

E: [JHRcorres@transport.nsw.gov.au](mailto:JHRcorres@transport.nsw.gov.au)

# Q&A

Facilitated by Amanda Newbery





**Thank you**  
Transport for NSW