

## Media Release

# Rail project supporting efforts to save Regent Honeyeater

**Tuesday, 26 September 2023**

*Please find [video pack here](#).*

Efforts to save a rare bird from extinction have been bolstered thanks to support from a Dubbo rail maintenance centre.

The Regent Honeyeater Recovery Program at Taronga Western Plains Zoo in Dubbo will receive \$80,000 as part of the currently under construction Mindyarra Maintenance Centre's voluntary biodiversity offset strategy.

The contribution will allow essential equipment such as holding boxes, transport boxes and feeders to be purchased for the birds.

It's estimated less than 350 Regent Honeyeaters remain in the wild and of the additional 75 who call the Zoo home, there are 10 breeding pairs and their offspring who are key to the species' future survival.

The breeding program is led by Taronga Conservation Society Australia, BirdLife Australia and the NSW Government's Saving our Species program and is part of wider conservation efforts under the National Regent Honeyeater Recovery Plan.

The firm building the rail maintenance centre for Transport for NSW, CPB Contractors, have contributed \$40,000 to the Zoo while Transport will contribute another \$40,000.

The Mindyarra Maintenance Centre in Dubbo is part of Transport for NSW's Regional Rail Project to replace the fleet of XPT, Xplorer and Endeavour trains.

As well as the support for the zoo's Regent Honeyeater Recovery program, the Mindyarra Centre is also planting and rehabilitating an area on-site with a woodland type which is a known Regent Honeyeater habitat.

### **Quotes attributable to Minister for Regional Transport and Roads Jenny Aitchison:**

"September is Biodiversity Month, and it is a chance for the community to focus on efforts to protect and maintain some of Australia's 700,000 unique species of plants and animals.

"It is important that Transport for NSW does its part, as one of the agencies of the New South Wales government, to assist in conservation and Taronga Western Plains Zoo's breeding program is making a real difference in that regard.

"While we are constructing regional railways and regional roads, we are also taking every opportunity we can to contribute to biodiversity.

"It is vital to highlight the importance of biodiversity, we must ensure that any species that is disrupted by human construction, is able to have a chance to survive."

### **Quotes attributable to Taronga Conservation Society Australia Conservation Officer Monique Van Sluys:**

“This project has been ongoing for about 30 years now. The objective of the project is to halt the critical decline of the wild population by restoring the Regent Honeyeater’s habitat and establish an insurance population so that those birds could be released to achieve a self-sustaining wild population.

The program relies on huge partnerships and collaborations across many organisations. Taronga is leading the program as an institution, but we rely on many other zoos and partners to assist with this work.”

**Quotes attributable to Tim Renshaw, Senior Environment & Sustainability Officer, Transport for NSW:**

“Transport for NSW has an ongoing commitment to biodiversity conservation and enhancement and the large effort to support the Regent Honeyeater breeding program is only one example of how offsets and initiatives can protect our priceless flora and fauna. This is especially important when planning major a project like the Mindyarra Maintenance Centre in Dubbo.

“It is extremely satisfying to see the ongoing commitment of the Regional Rail project to biodiversity conservation. Protecting, repairing, and managing nature better is everyone’s responsibility.”

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