

**John Graham**

Special Minister of State, Minister for Roads, Minister for the Arts, Minister for Music and the Night-time Economy, Minister for Jobs and Tourism

**Jenny Aitchison**

Minister for Regional Transport and Roads

## Media Release

# Safety first as NSW Government expands vehicle testing centre in Central West

Saturday, 3 August 2024

The Minns Labor Government is continuing its work to prioritise the safety of drivers, passengers and pedestrians on our roads, with the state's premier vehicle safety facility to quadruple in size.

Funded through the Community Road Safety Fund, \$30 million has been invested by the NSW Government to significantly expand the Future Mobility Testing and Research Centre (FMTRC) in Cudal, paving the way for new highway speed and heavy vehicle testing.

This investment follows the purchase of 100 hectares of farmland adjacent to the existing site. Planned works will include the expansion and construction of a 4.4-kilometre loop track, as well as a new heavy vehicle skid pad.

This will support the team in increasing safety testing and research. This work involves enacting real-world scenarios at the centre to test vehicle safety features that help prevent crashes.

Since being established in 2019 the facility has delivered more than 85 test and research programs.

Transport for NSW will now begin planning and community consultation for the design of the new loop track, with construction set to commence in 2025.

The Mobility Testing and Research Centre is the only Government-owned and operated testing centre of its kind in the world and is foundational in ensuring all vehicles on NSW roads are road ready and safe.

Find out more about the Future Mobility Testing and Research Centre at [transport.nsw.gov/fmtrc](https://transport.nsw.gov/fmtrc) and the Community Road Safety fund [here](#).

**Minister for Roads John Graham said:**

"The need for a new heavy vehicle testing space in the southern hemisphere was a key finding from extensive engagement with vehicle manufacturers, developers and researchers to map the future for the Cudal site.

"As light vehicles continue to become more advanced, there is also a need to uplift testing capabilities to keep up with new, increasingly automated, technology.

"The new Cudal track will let the team test new driver assist systems in real-world scenarios, including heavy laden B-doubles travelling at highway speeds, and situations involving head-on approaches and merging safety with cars, trucks and motorcycles."

**Minister for Regional Transport and Roads Jenny Aitchison said:**

“This expansion is an investment in regional NSW, and this cutting-edge facility attracts clients from across the globe, making NSW a leader in testing road safety aspects of autonomous vehicles that will save lives.

“Vehicle safety is a critical part of making our roads safer and independent modelling has shown that vehicle safety improvements have saved more than 700 lives over the past decade.

“The Cudal centre is a part of our transport history as a former airport, and it is a vital part of our transport future, testing the next generation of safety technology.

“As the only government-owned and operated testing centre of its kind in the world, the Future Mobility Testing and Research Centre is a pillar of integrity in the safety and testing landscape.

“As more advanced safety features on vehicles become available, it’s increasingly important that these are rigorously tested so we can get them into our cars and onto our roads faster.”

**Independent Member for Orange Phil Donato said:**

“I’m thrilled to welcome this substantial investment in the Future Mobility Testing and Research Centre. The expansion of this state-of-the-art facility will significantly enhance its capacity to test and improve vehicle safety.

“This investment is a crucial step in ensuring that our roads remain safe for all motorists, both now and in the future.”

**Labor’s spokesperson for Orange Stephen Lawrence said:**

“A commitment to this Cudal site is a commitment to Central West hospitality operators, local tradespeople who service this site, and families looking for local career paths for their children.

“Although country residents make up about a third of the NSW population, they sadly make up around two-thirds of deaths on NSW roads, so I’m pleased this regional Central West site is helping to play a key role in improving road safety for all communities.”

**Transport for NSW’s Director Future Mobility Evan Walker said:**

“Our vision for the Future Mobility Testing and Research Centre is that it continues to grow as a world-class vehicle testing site.

“We’re acting on feedback directly from manufacturers, developers, and industry about the kind of facility they need, and addressing a growing community and government need for confidence and assurance in vehicle safety as new technologies emerge.

“Our team ensures these systems do what they claim to and identifies the best emerging safety technology that we want to encourage more of on our roads to reduce the heavy cost of crashes on our community.”