

**Jenny Aitchison**

Minister for Regional Transport and Roads



## Media Release

# Light bulb moment as town switches on state's most sophisticated traffic lights

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New high-tech traffic signals to test the latest lifesaving vehicle systems have been switched on in the NSW Central West, as the Minns Labor Government continues to focus on making our roads safer into the future.

While Cudal is a small town that doesn't have any traffic lights itself, it is home to the Future Mobility Testing and Research Centre (FMTRC), a NSW Government facility focused on global innovation in road safety.

The signals, installed at two intersections within the research centre, are a crucial part of Transport for NSW's new advanced safety testing of connected vehicles.

The eight traffic signals equipped with the latest Cooperative Intelligent Transport System (C-ITS) systems will enable safe scenario testing of wireless alerts that notify drivers if they are likely to run a red light, if there is a cyclist or pedestrian on the road, or of upcoming road work.

The signals can also receive transmissions to notify them of an approaching emergency vehicle that should get priority passing through the intersection.

The Minns Labor Government has invested \$600,000 in the new traffic lights infrastructure to broaden connected technology tests at the Cudal facility, including new fibre optic wiring and site-wide 5G capabilities.

The improvements follow an announcement in August that the facility would quadruple in size to 100 hectares to expand the current track to a four-kilometre loop circuit able to test heavy vehicle safety systems at highway speeds.

Plans for the expansion are expected to go on public exhibition in coming months with work due to start in 2025.

Upgrading the research centre improves Transport's capacity to become a global leader in innovation by exploring cutting-edge technologies to improve road safety and efficiency.

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

"These are the first traffic lights for the facility at Cudal but, as we strive to drive down the road toll in NSW, they definitely won't be the last safety initiative the teams will help to develop, test and refine here.

"Adding this connected infrastructure to Transport's world-class testing site gives local and international researchers and developers a place to run real-world scenarios without risk. The other cars, pedestrians and cyclists using the intersection at our Cudal site are soft targets, not real people, cars or bicycles.

“There is a wonderful community curiosity and pride in this facility and the groundbreaking work happening in here the Central West. It’s fantastic to be sharing the site with the community at an open day today.”

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

“This month marks 91 years since Australia’s first automated traffic lights were installed in Sydney.

“At the time it was a massive leap into the future and it’s exciting to see this research into the new frontier of smart traffic signals and phasing happening right here in the NSW Central West.”

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

“We want our roads to be as safe as possible. There are already vehicles coming off production lines with the ability to receive and send information to traffic signals and by developing and improving our own smart traffic systems in NSW it puts us in the front seat to bring the safety outcomes to our streets.

“This work complements and expands on the real-world trials of connected traffic systems underway in Sydney and helps us work with our partners in other states and local industry to align advancements for safer outcomes on Australian roads.”

**Independent Member for Calare Andrew Gee said:**

“It’s amazing to see the Central West play a leading role in research that will help determine the path ahead for connected vehicles and intelligent transport systems in this country, and advance international research in this field.

“At a national level, work is underway to develop a safe, consistent and harmonised approach to coordinated and connected systems on our roads. The Transport team here at Cudal have been making key contributions towards this, that will be enhanced and advanced by the new CITS system at the testing centre”

**TfNSW Director Future Mobility Evan Walker said:**

“This site and our in-house team are a pillar of integrity in the global vehicle testing landscape.

“Our work bridges the gap between research advancements and seeing how this technology practically performs on our roads to make sure new vehicles and transport technologies meet the highest performance and safety standards, and deliver what they promise.

“We are NSW Government owned and operated and everything we do, design and deliver at the site is geared towards safety and sustainability improvements across the board. This includes testing emerging software and hardware solutions from across the globe, including the ongoing advancement of systems like Transport’s world-leading SCATS system to deliver those outcomes.”