



The Hon Catherine King MP
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport,
Regional Development and Local
Government



The Hon Yasmin Catley MP
Minister for the Hunter
Minister for Police and Counter-terrorism

The Hon Jenny Aitchison MP
Minister for Roads
Minister for Regional Transport

MEDIA RELEASE

BIG WIN FOR HUNTER MOTORISTS: THREE SOUTHBOUND LANES NOW OPEN ON HEXHAM STRAIGHT

Major traffic relief has arrived for Hunter motorists, with one of the region's most frustrating bottlenecks taking a huge step forward, with three southbound lanes now open on Hexham Straight.

The milestone marks significant progress on the Minns and Albanese Labor Governments' \$2.24 billion investment to bust congestion and improve safety through the M1 to Raymond Terrace extension and Hexham Straight Widening projects.

For the 50,000 motorists who rely on this corridor every day, the opening means smoother, safer and more reliable trips between Old Maitland Road and Sparke Street.

A new southbound bridge over Ironbark Creek is now carrying four lanes of traffic, two in each direction, while work continues on the new northbound bridge.

Once complete, motorists will travel across twin bridges with three lanes each way, improving travel times and freight efficiency across the Hunter.

Final works including asphaltting, line marking, barriers and landscaping are now underway. The Hexham Straight upgrade remains on track for completion in 2026, delivering three lanes in each direction over six kilometres, from the Newcastle Inner City Bypass to north of Hexham Bridge.

Federal Minister for Infrastructure, Catherine King said:

"This is a big moment for the 50,000 motorists who use the Hexham Straight every day, as we open the new southbound bridge at Ironbark Creek.

"It will mean safer and more efficient commutes, with more improvements on the way as work continues on this important infrastructure project for the Hunter.

NSW Minister for the Hunter, Yasmin Catley said:

"This is fantastic news for the Hunter. For too long, Hexham Straight has been a source of frustration for locals, freight operators and visitors alike.

“The Minns and Albanese Labor Governments are investing in the infrastructure that matters and projects that make daily life easier and keep our region connected.

NSW Minister for Roads, Jenny Aitchison said:

“This is a game-changer for local motorists, freight operators and visitors alike.

“With three lanes now open southbound, Hunter drivers are already seeing the benefits of our investment in safer, more reliable roads.

“This is Labor delivery in action, working together across all levels of government to build a better NSW.”

Federal Member for Newcastle, Sharon Claydon said:

““This is a huge win for local motorists and freight operators who’ve been battling the Hexham bottleneck for years. Anyone who’s been stuck in traffic here knows how frustrating it can be so this progress will make a real difference to people’s daily lives.

“Newcastle is growing, and that means our infrastructure has to grow with us. Labor is investing in the roads, bridges and transport networks that will keep our community moving well into the future.”

Federal Member for Paterson, Meryl Swanson said:

“Better roads mean safer communities, stronger freight links and more time back in people’s days.

“This is what Labor governments do: we listen, we deliver, and we build a better future for the regions.”

NSW Member for Newcastle, Tim Crakanthorp said:

“This project is about more than smoother commutes, it’s about jobs, safety and a better future for the Hunter.

“Thanks to the hard work of the Transport for NSW team and local contractors, we’re seeing real progress on the ground.”

NSW Member for Wallsend, Sonia Hornery said:

“For people travelling on the Hexham Straight, this upgrade is already making a difference.

“It’s about making everyday life easier, spending less time stuck in traffic and more valuable time at work, school and home.

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