



Transport for NSW

Mulwala Bridge maintenance

Community update - February 2021



**Connecting
communities**



**Improving
safety**



**Improve
pedestrian safety**

Transport for NSW is investing in essential repair work to ensure the ongoing safe operation of the bridge over Lake Mulwala.

At a glance

- Maintenance on Mulwala Bridge will keep it safe and serviceable while a new bridge is in planning
- Border restrictions have delayed the start of this work but we have a plan in place to carry out the project with limited impacts to the community
- Work is expected to start 1 March, dependent on circumstances
- Due to the changing border situation and Coronavirus impacts, it is challenging to lock down a firm schedule
- We will continue to keep you updated as the situation changes.

Background

Mulwala Bridge was built in 1924 and provides a vital transport link across Lake Mulwala, between the twin towns of Mulwala in NSW and Yarrowonga in Victoria.

On average, more than 8500 vehicles use the bridge every day and it is essential that the structure is maintained in a safe and serviceable condition for the local community and visitors alike.

Although initial planning studies for a new bridge have been carried out, these important safety improvements and essential repair work will ensure the existing bridge is able to continue to provide safe journeys across the lake until a new bridge is constructed.

This maintenance work was originally scheduled to take place in mid-2020 and then again in early 2021, but was postponed both times after the NSW/Victorian border was closed due to Coronavirus outbreaks and restrictions.

Yarrowonga Weir crossing closure postponed

The Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) previously announced the weir crossing would close in 2020. Transport for NSW has been working with MDBA to ensure the crossing remains open while this essential work is carried out over the next nine months, weather and border restrictions permitting.

The weir crossing has been used as an alternative route between Mulwala and Yarrowonga since it opened in 1939.

Proactive maintenance work aims to minimise future impacts

By proactively planning for and carrying out this work now we will minimise bridge closures needed for future routine scheduled maintenance.

There will still be some occasions when the bridge must close for urgent repairs, however in most cases motorists will be able to use the weir to minimise impacts.

We will work closely with MDBA to reduce the need for lengthy detours.



What does the work involve?

Upcoming maintenance work includes:

- upgrading the barrier rail across the bridge to improve safety for motorists and provide greater protection for the steel truss spans
- improving the pedestrian footpath
- replacing a vertical section of steel, or strut.

Mulwala Bridge is a truss bridge comprised of multiple struts, which provide the structural strength and integrity of the superstructure.

As part of the upcoming work, we will be replacing a strut that was damaged by a wide load. The strut needs to be replaced to avoid deterioration that would be more time consuming and costly to repair in the future. The damaged strut member does not impact on the structural integrity of the bridge and it is safe for all users until it is replaced.



Limiting impacts to the community

While this essential maintenance work has been delayed due to Coronavirus and border restrictions, we have a plan in place to carry out the project with limited impacts to the community.

All our decisions centre on minimising impacts to residents and road users, with particular focus on the wellbeing of our border communities during these challenging times.

Our program of work will be continually reviewed if restrictions are re-introduced or circumstances change.

The project is expected to take about nine months to complete, weather permitting. However, due to the changing border situation and Coronavirus impacts, it is challenging to lock down a firm schedule. We will keep the community updated as work progresses.



How will this work impact me?

To limit impacts on the community, work will be carried out at night, with one lane remaining open at all times. Reduced speed limits will be in place during the work. There will be no impacts to traffic outside of work hours.

The bridge will remain open to pedestrians and cyclists at all times. The work will generate some noise and we will try to minimise the impacts by:

- turning off machinery or throttle down to a minimum when not in use
- limiting the amount of equipment used on site and using the lowest size and power necessary
- selecting low-noise plant and equipment and ensuring equipment has quality mufflers installed
- minimising the use of reversing alarms wherever possible.

Bridge maintenance and repair work is **necessary to ensure the existing bridge is able to safely operate and service the community** while planning continues for a new bridge.



Work hours

We acknowledge recent border restrictions have placed additional pressure on the community. In response to this, we have planned to carry out this essential maintenance work with as few impacts as possible, working mostly at night. However, some later stages of work may involve full short-term closure of the bridge, with traffic diverted to the weir crossing.

During the first stage of work, we will be working from 9pm to 6am, Monday to Thursday, from Monday 1 March, with one lane remaining open to traffic at all times. This start date may change if there are any changes to border restrictions.

Work is expected to take about nine months to complete, weather and circumstances permitting. We will keep the community updated as work progresses.

Work will stop during Easter and the April school holidays



We will let you know when closures will happen so you can plan your journey



Repair work now will save travel times in future



To minimise the impacts to motorists, we will mostly be working at night



Structural repairs to be made to the steel truss structure

Planning for a new bridge over Lake Mulwala

Transport for NSW continues to work closely with Regional Roads Victoria on planning for a new Mulwala Bridge.

While planning continues, Regional Roads Victoria is focused on building a new connection to relieve congestion and safety issues associated with heavy vehicles using Belmore Street through the Yarrowonga CBD.

Maintenance and repair work carried out at Mulwala Bridge now will ensure it is able to continue to safely operate and service the community until planning for a replacement bridge is complete and funding for the construction of a new structure has been secured.



Contact us:

For more information about this project, please contact our Project Manager, Nathan Fisher on:

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Major work is expected to take about nine months to complete, weather and circumstances permitting



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