

Media Release

The Hon Melissa Horne MP
Minister for Ports and Freight
Minister for Public Transport



Tuesday, 21 April 2020

MAJOR WORKS ON THE BALLARAT LINE

A crew of more than 90 workers will carry out major upgrades to infrastructure along the Ballarat, Ararat and Maryborough lines from Wednesday thanks to the Andrews Labor Government.

The \$3.9 million package of maintenance and improvement works will run from Wednesday 22 April until Sunday 3 May, with coaches replacing Ballarat, Ararat and Maryborough trains for all or part of the journey.

Crews will focus on maintaining and renewing important infrastructure along the line, including the historic Melton Reservoir Viaduct.

The surface of the rail bridge over Toolern Creek and several culverts will be replaced, which allow water to pass under the tracks.

The package of works also includes replacing and improving sections of track, installing signalling equipment and upgrading the road surface at the Dowling Road level crossing in Windermere.

During this time, coaches will replace all trains for the entire journey between Southern Cross, Ballarat and Ararat from Wednesday 22 April until Sunday 3 May.

Coaches will also replace Maryborough line trains between Southern Cross, Ballarat and Maryborough from Wednesday 22 April to Monday 27 April. Trains will resume running between Maryborough and Ballarat, connecting with coaches between Ballarat and Southern Cross from Tuesday 28 April to Sunday 3 May.

Works will be following the Chief Health Officer's guidelines on work sites, including implementing physical distancing wherever possible by limiting physical interaction between workers and limiting worker numbers.

While coach replacement services will run to provide an essential service for those who need to travel, the message is clear – stay home. There are only four reasons to leave home: food and supplies, medical care, exercise, and work or education.

To help maintain physical distancing, replacement coaches are typically limited to 25 passengers per coach and the front two rows of seats are not available for passengers. Coach operators have also increased cleaning measures.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Public Transport Melissa Horne

"We're getting on with this work now to improve reliability and services for passengers on the Ballarat, Ararat and Maryborough lines."

"These works are going ahead with extra precautions in place to keep workers safe as we continue to slow the spread of coronavirus."

Quote attributable to Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison

"We are carrying out these important works now, to ensure that the many members of the Ballarat community who rely on V/Line services, get the service they deserve."

Quote attributable to Member for Buninyong Michaela Settle

"We're investing \$3.9 million to carry out vital maintenance works on the Ballarat line – which will help make the service more reliable for passengers."

Media contact: Matt Macklin 0437 793 066 | matt.macklin@minstaff.vic.gov.au