



## **The Hon Michael McCormack MP**

Deputy Prime Minister  
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development  
Leader of The Nationals  
Federal Member for Riverina



## **The Hon Jacinta Allan MP**

Victorian Minister for Transport Infrastructure  
Victorian Member for Bendigo East

## **Juliana Addison MP**

Victorian Member for Wendouree

## **Michaela Settle MP**

Victorian Member for Buninyong

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

31 October 2020

## **PLAN AHEAD FOR SERVICE CHANGES AS BALLARAT LINE UPGRADE FINAL WORKS GET UNDERWAY**

Passengers on Victoria's second busiest regional rail line are asked to plan ahead in December and January while work on the Ballarat Line Upgrade's final phase of works and safety testing is underway.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development Michael McCormack today announced commissioning, critical safety testing and driver training would take place during a five-week disruption from Monday 28 December 2020 to Saturday 30 January 2021.

"We're excited to see the Ballarat Line Upgrade at this final stage, preparing the line for those much-needed extra services and better reliability for passengers in these growing communities," Mr McCormack said.

"It's been more than three years in the making and nearly 1.6 million hours of work by dedicated crews, and we're now on the home stretch to delivering huge benefits for passengers."

Victorian Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan said the completion of works on the Ballarat Line Upgrade, which has created around 400 full time jobs, will pave the way for significantly more train services along the line, adding to the more than 150 new services delivered since 2015.

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The Hon Michael McCormack MP

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“We’re thrilled passengers will soon see the full benefits of the Ballarat Line Upgrade, but first we must complete this crucial final step on the project, as we integrate new track, a new signalling system and other infrastructure onto the existing rail line,” Ms Allan said.

“It’s one of the most critical tasks undertaken on the project to date and it’s taken time to get the right resources in place to deliver this final piece of the project.

“Our rail experts have continued complex and extensive signalling design and planning work throughout the year in preparation for the commissioning, and passengers will soon enjoy the benefits of this hard work.”

While coaches replace trains on the line, crews will also install 500 metres of track duplication between Bacchus Marsh Station and Maddingley and at two level crossings in Ballan, which could only take place at this point in the project when trains aren’t running.

Following commissioning and safety testing, trains and passengers will start using the new second platforms at Ballan, Bacchus Marsh and Wendouree stations, and the accessible pedestrian overpass at Wendouree Station will be opened.

Senator for Victoria Sarah Henderson said it was an exciting milestone for the community to see these final works and safety testing mark the end of the game-changing, job-creating upgrade.

“This upgrade has provided more than 400 much-needed jobs over the course of the project – and we know just how invaluable every single job we create is for local communities,” Senator Henderson said.

“The project also generated business activity and demand for services along the length of the rail line as the construction activity occurred.

“The completion of works on the Ballarat Line Upgrade will pave the way for extra peak train services and trains every 40 minutes in the off-peak – which is just a fantastic result for commuters.”

Victorian Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison said new train passing loops at Ballan and Millbrook will help services recover faster from unexpected delays and improve reliability by providing more options for trains to pass each other on the line.

“Following the completion of the commissioning and safety testing, Ballarat passengers will experience improved services to and from Melbourne,” Ms Addison said.

“Those alighting at the redeveloped Wendouree Station will have access to the newly constructed second platform via the pedestrian overpass. The duplicated track for the second platform is an important addition to the Wendouree station and will allow trains to pass each other preventing unexpected delays.”

Victorian Member for Buninyong Michaela Settle welcomed the major construction on the Ballarat Line that was completed at the end of last year, with a new station at Cobblebank, a rebuilt Rockbank Station, and upgraded stations at Bacchus Marsh, Ballan and Wendouree.

“Passengers are already enjoying a new station, improved station facilities and two extra peak weekday services between Melton and Southern Cross Station, and we’re excited about the rest of the project benefits,” Ms Settle said.

Coaches will replace trains on sections of the Ballarat, Ararat and Maryborough lines from Monday 28 December 2020 until Saturday 30 January 2021 to allow this important work to take place.

Passengers can find out if they're affected by the disruption at [bigbuild.vic.gov.au](http://bigbuild.vic.gov.au) and find more information about the project at [regionalrailrevival.vic.gov.au/ballarat](http://regionalrailrevival.vic.gov.au/ballarat).

The Ballarat Line Upgrade forms part of the Australian and Victorian governments' investment in Regional Rail Revival, which is upgrading every regional passenger rail line and creating jobs and local supplier opportunities across the state.

The Australian Government and Victorian Government provided \$503 million and \$98 million respectively towards this \$601 million project, with more details at [https://investment.infrastructure.gov.au/projects/ProjectDetails.aspx?Project\\_id=095764-17VIC-NP](https://investment.infrastructure.gov.au/projects/ProjectDetails.aspx?Project_id=095764-17VIC-NP)

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