

Media Release

The Hon Ben Carroll MP
Minister for Public Transport
Minister for Roads and Road Safety



Tuesday, 1 December 2020

BUILDING A TRAIN NETWORK FOR THE FUTURE

Victorian passengers will benefit from an extra 450 train services every week under a timetable redesign which will boost capacity and seize the benefits of the Victorian Government's major transport infrastructure projects.

Minister for Public Transport Ben Carroll today announced that an extra 280 new metropolitan train services and 170 regional services will be added to the network each week from 31 January 2021, giving Victorians more options on their journeys and providing more space for physical distancing.

The coronavirus pandemic has dramatically changed the way Victorians use public transport, and with more people now moving around the state, these services will help reduce crowding.

The new timetable will deliver more trains during the peak on many regional lines, and greater frequency around the peak in metropolitan Melbourne – increasing trains during busy morning and afternoon periods to encourage passengers to stagger their weekday travel.

To make it easier for metropolitan passengers to travel during quieter times and physically distance as Victoria recovers from the coronavirus pandemic, off-peak fares will be discounted for three months. From 31 January 2021, anyone using myki money between 9.30am and 4pm or after 7pm on weekdays will receive a 30 per cent discount.

The community will experience the benefits of the Government's major transport projects like the Ballarat Line Upgrade and Cranbourne/Pakenham Line Upgrades – with dramatically increased regional frequency and bigger, better metropolitan trains entering service.

The Ballarat Line Upgrade will be complete once the new timetable begins – adding an additional 125 new services each week to deliver 20-minute frequency during busy morning and afternoon periods and 40 minutes in the off-peak. Changing the stopping patterns of some trains will better service the growing communities on the line.

The changes will allow for 45 extra services each week for Geelong line passengers, more morning express services to reduce travel time on the Bendigo Line and extra stops to cater for communities along the Traralgon line.

The new services will increase capacity on the Cranbourne, Pakenham, Frankston, Werribee, Williamstown, Upfield, Craigieburn and Sunbury lines during the busiest times each day to prepare the metropolitan network for the opening of the Metro Tunnel.

Passengers will be required to adjust the way they travel on some metropolitan lines – like Cranbourne and Pakenham line passengers, benefitting from 90 new services each week, who will travel in an anti-clockwise direction through the City Loop all day to pave the way for Melbourne's bigger, more modern trains.

Frankston passengers, who will see 45 new services each week, will not run via the City Loop until the Metro Tunnel is open in 2025, running straight to Flinders Street and Southern Cross then through to Werribee. Werribee and Sandringham weekend services will also leave the City Loop for more consistent services through the week.

Extra weekday services on the busy Craigieburn, Sunbury and Werribee lines will mean passengers will have a train at least every 10 minutes for more than three hours in the busy morning and afternoon peaks – while Williamstown services will extend to Flinders Street on weekends – so people no longer have to change trains at Newport.

Separating some of Melbourne's busiest rail lines enables more services and ensures delays on one line don't spread across the network – as well as allowing us to more regularly update the timetable and better respond to growth on specific lines.

Those who rely on local bus services to access trains will see new timetables to ensure they make their train connections – rolling out better timetables for 320 suburban bus routes by 11 April 2021, and re-coordinating 40 V/line coaches with the new train timetable from 31 January 2021.

To keep passengers safe the extensive cleaning of all trains, trams, buses, stations and myki facilities will continue across the network and hand sanitising facilities have been introduced at key stations and stops.

Victorians are reminded to always wear a mask when on public transport, never travel when unwell, practise good hygiene and physically distance from others wherever possible.

Timetables will be available at ptv.vic.gov.au from 8 January 2021.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Public Transport Ben Carroll

“We’re introducing the biggest timetable change in a decade – delivering 450 extra train services to our busiest lines to give Victorians more options on their journeys and increase capacity on our trains.”

“We know COVID Normal will see people travelling differently than in the past – working from home arrangements, more services and a discount for off-peak travel will make it easier for people to stagger their trips.”

“This is just the first step in the massive improvements Victorians will see to our transport network, with new bigger, better trains as we prepare to deliver the Metro Tunnel and our upgrades of every regional rail line still to come.”

