

# Media Release

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



Tuesday, 26 January 2021

## STUDENT SAFETY THE PRIORITY AS SCHOOL GOES BACK

Victorians are urged to prioritise safety as students, parents and school communities return to the roads and public transport network for Term One.

Commuters should expect to see a large increase in road traffic and public transport usage during peak hour, as well as a rise in foot and bicycle traffic during school times. Motorists are particularly reminded to take care when passing trams – ensuring they give pedestrians right of way when trams are stopped to avoid dangerous near misses.

Yarra Trams data shows the number of near misses – where a motorist passes a stopped tram when pedestrians have right of way – have already returned to pre-coronavirus levels.

In November and December last year, after coronavirus restrictions were eased, about 200 near misses were recorded across the tram network each month – compared to an average of 126 per month between 1 April and 1 November 2020.

School speed zones will be switched on across the state to create a safe environment for students and motorists from Wednesday, the official start of the 2021 school year. Some school speed zones are permanent, while others operate from 8am to 9.30am and from 2.30pm to 4pm on weekdays during terms.

This year, safety near schools is being boosted with new electronic speed limit signs and pedestrian upgrades at 55 schools across the state, as part of the Victorian and Australian Governments' \$19.5 million Pedestrian and Safer Schools Program.

Works are already underway to install electronic signs outside Cardinia Primary School and Clyde Primary School in Melbourne, and at Tyers Primary School in Gippsland.

Parents are urged to set a good example for children by safely entering and exiting parked cars, only using designated pedestrian crossings and obeying the direction of crossing supervisors.

To further improve safety on the public transport network, Metro Trains will ramp up safety awareness programs for schools, conducting 250 classroom sessions this year to teach students about rail safety, the dangers of trespassing and disobeying level crossings.

Students aged 12 years and over must wear a face mask when travelling on trains, trams and regular bus services to help slow the spread of coronavirus. To help keep the community safe on the public transport network, high touch surfaces are being cleaned regularly and trains, trams and buses deep cleaned every night.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Public Transport, Roads and Road Safety Ben Carroll

*"School-aged children are some of our most vulnerable road users – and we all have a responsibility to keep them safe when they're travelling to and from school. That means everyone slowing down and paying attention around school zones."*

*"We're playing our part to keep school communities safe – delivering new electronic speed signs and safety upgrades in school zones, while Metro Trains delivers its school safety awareness program to even more Victorian students."*

### Quote attributable to Yarra Trams CEO Julien Dehornoy

*"With students returning to school, we're calling on all motorists to follow the rules around trams. If a tram is pulling into a stop, please be patient and wait until it is clear to pass safely – speeding past isn't worth the risk of injuring someone."*

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