



The Hon Michael McCormack MP

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

Senator Sarah Henderson

Senator for Victoria



The Hon Jacinta Allan MP

Victorian Minister for Transport Infrastructure
State Member for Bendigo East

Juliana Addison MP

State Member for Wendouree

Michaela Settle MP

State Member for Buninyong

Steve McGhie MP

State Member for Melton

MEDIA RELEASE

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BALLARAT LINE UPGRADE DELIVERS MORE SERVICES TO STATE'S SECOND BUSIEST REGIONAL LINE

The Ballarat Line Upgrade is complete, with communities along the line now set to enjoy more frequent services.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development Michael McCormack and Victorian Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan today welcomed the completion of more than 1.6 million hours of work on the project, allowing the introduction of 125 new weekly services to the Ballarat Line.

“The now-completed Ballarat Line Upgrade will deliver much-needed additional services and it is exciting for local communities,” the Deputy Prime Minister said.

“We’ve been able to deliver more frequent and reliable services on the Ballarat Line and importantly we have created jobs and local supplier opportunities along the way, providing an economic boost to the region.

The Hon Michael McCormack MP

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“The Australian Government continues to roll out these types of major projects across the nation under our record \$110 billion infrastructure investment pipeline, which is supporting 100,000 jobs and laying the foundations for the country’s economic recovery from the global pandemic.”

Victorian Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan said the end of the Ballarat Line Upgrade – delivered by a consortium comprising ACCIONA, Coleman Rail and SMEC Australia – was a significant milestone and the first completed line upgrade under the Australian and Victorian Governments’ Regional Rail Revival program.

“This vital upgrade took a power of work from our dedicated crews who duplicated 33 kilometres of track, installed a new signalling system, built a new stabling facility and a new station at Cobblebank and rebuilt Rockbank station, and delivered major upgrades at Ballan, Bacchus Marsh and Wendouree,” Minister Allan said.

“All this work means we’ve been able to add an extra 125 services along the Ballarat line every week – offering passengers travelling on Victoria’s second busiest regional rail line more choice when they travel, as well as better access to education, health and community services.”

Senator for Victoria Sarah Henderson said crews worked around the clock during the five-week disruption from 28 December 2020 to 30 January 2021 to finish the Ballarat Line Upgrade and prepare the line for the introduction of the new services.

“Around 400 full-time jobs were created, providing opportunities for a huge range of workers, including nearly 60 engineering cadets, apprentices and trainees who gained invaluable experience working on a project of this size,” Senator Henderson said.

“Trains and passengers are now using the new second platforms at Ballan, Bacchus Marsh and Wendouree stations, and the accessible pedestrian overpass at Wendouree Station has been officially opened.”

Victorian Member for Wendouree Juliana Addison said the project was a win for the local economy.

“The project has delivered benefits not only for passengers and communities along the line, but also contractors and suppliers with more than 40 businesses involved in the works on the Ballarat Line Upgrade,” Ms Addison said.

Victorian Member for Buninyong Michaela Settle said the new passing loops at Ballan and Millbrook were now in operation, providing more reliable services along the line.

“These new passing loops are vital pieces of infrastructure – helping services recover faster from unexpected delays and improving reliability by providing more options for trains to pass each other on the line.”

Victorian Member for Melton Steve McGhie thanked the communities along the Ballarat Line for their patience.

“We again thank passengers for their patience while we completed the critical infrastructure, which has delivered huge benefits for passengers on the Ballarat Line,” Mr McGhie said.

A new timetable started on 31 January, with passengers now benefiting from trains every 20 minutes during the peak, and every 40 minutes between the peaks.

Service benefits are being delivered along the length of the Ballarat Line, including:

- an extra 100 new weekly services for passengers from Ballarat

- the new Cobblebank Station and rebuilt Rockbank Station have 225 and 210 extra services respectively stopping at these locations each week, along with more than 200 extra services at Deer Park Station
- the upgraded Ballan Station sees 100 new services available for passengers each week
- Melton passengers can access an extra 140 weekly services stopping at the station, and Caroline Springs 125 new services
- Bacchus Marsh passengers have 25 new services to choose from, with more express services between Bacchus Marsh and Southern Cross Station.

The Ballarat Line Upgrade is part of the Australian and Victorian governments' investment of more than \$4 billion to upgrade every regional passenger rail line in Victoria and creating jobs and local supplier opportunities.

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