

Media Release

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



Wednesday, 21 April 2021

V/LINE'S FIRST ALL-FEMALE DRIVER TRAINEE GROUP HITS THE NETWORK

V/Line's first all-female group of trainee drivers are spending their first weeks on the network visiting stations and driver depots across the state.

Minister for Public Transport Ben Carroll met trainees Ashleigh McComb, Stephanie Love and Lauren Clemas at Traralgon Station today to mark the commencement of the driver training program.

The trainees travelled along the Gippsland line throughout the day with their trainer Dave Richards as part of the second phase of their training to familiarise themselves with key locations on the network, following an intensive period of classroom training earlier in the year.

They are part of a class of eight female trainees who were recruited from non-rail backgrounds, bringing with them a diverse range of experiences, including a former aviation worker, apprenticeship network provider employee, stay at home mum and Indian Army Major.

The group began classroom training in February following a comprehensive series of interviews and aptitude testing to ensure the best possible candidates were selected.

The training program takes more than 70 weeks to complete and features several modules including classroom training, practice on V/Line's driver simulator and experience on the network with a team of practical driver trainers.

Recruits from this class will be entering the network as fully qualified drivers in mid-2022.

V/Line now has more than 500 drivers and is continuing to expand its workforce to help meet the needs of growing communities in regional Victoria.

There are several other trainee driver groups at various stages of the training program. In addition to drivers from non-railway backgrounds, V/Line also recruits trainee drivers who have previous experience driving trains for other operators or have worked in other roles within V/Line.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Public Transport Ben Carroll

"Driving a train takes a lot of skill and the right mindset so it's important that we recruit the best of the best to ensure we continue to deliver safe regional transport services."

"It was terrific to meet V/Line's newest trainee drivers and I wish them all the best as they go through their training program."

Quote attributable to Member for Eastern Victoria Harriet Shing

"We're building a train service to benefit all Victorians and I am proud to see more women taking on driving roles and finding new passions in transport."

Quote attributable to V/Line Driver Ashleigh McComb

"Driving trains is definitely a change from where I've worked in the past but I'm excited about the prospects of a career in rail and I'm confident I have the skills to make it happen."

Quote attributable to V/Line Driver Lauren Clemas

"Our trainee group has formed a really strong bond, we all come from different backgrounds but that helps us use our different strengths to work through the program together."

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