



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 Damian Drum MP

Federal Member for Nicholls

Senator the Hon Sarah Henderson

Senator for Victoria



The Hon Jacinta Allan

Victorian Minister for Transport Infrastructure
Victorian Minister for the Suburban Rail Loop
State Member for Bendigo East

Maree Edwards MP

State Member for Bendigo West

MEDIA RELEASE

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HIGH-TECH RAIL UPGRADES ON TRACK FOR BENDIGO AND ECHUCA

Passengers in Greater Bendigo are set to benefit from more frequent services, thanks to work underway to introduce new technology on the regional network.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development Michael McCormack and Victorian Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan today announced V/Line, in conjunction with rail specialists Wabtec, has been awarded the contract to deliver the new electronic train order (ETO) system from Bendigo to Swan Hill and Echuca.

The Deputy Prime Minister said the new ETO system is being delivered as part of the Bendigo and Echuca Rail Line Upgrade, a first for the Victorian regional rail network that will allow additional services to both Eaglehawk and Epsom while tripling the number of weekday services to and from Echuca.

“The Australian Government’s investment in this cutting-edge technology will not only improve regional rail in Victoria but secure Victoria’s future as we move beyond the COVID-19 pandemic,” the Deputy Prime Minister said.

The Hon Michael McCormack MP

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“The new system will deliver much-needed additional services for passengers in and around Greater Bendigo and has the potential to transform the way some of the state’s long-distance lines operate.

“We are investing in critical projects such as this under our record \$110 billion infrastructure investment pipeline as part of our world-leading Economic Recovery Plan.”

Ms Allan said passengers on both the Bendigo and Echuca lines will receive huge benefits from the Bendigo and Echuca Line Upgrade.

“This project will triple the number of services to Echuca and make those services faster, connecting passengers in these communities to more opportunities for work, education, health and recreation within Bendigo and Melbourne,” Minister Allan said.

“We are continuing to roll out our program of critical infrastructure works – including the Bendigo and Echuca Line Upgrade – to support jobs and keep our economy going.”

The new system will use on-board telecommunications equipment to identify a train’s position on the network and communicate it electronically to the train controller. This information is currently shared manually between train drivers and controllers and the new electronic system will allow more trains to safely operate on these sections of track.

Federal Member for Nicholls Damian Drum said the ETO system will also provide improved service outcomes for freight by enabling one return service each week between Melbourne and Denilquin, and Melbourne and Piangil.

“The Bendigo and Echuca Rail Line Upgrade is being delivered as part of the Australian and Victorian Governments’ combined investment of more than \$4 billion in Victoria’s regional rail network,” Mr Drum said.

“This significant investment is upgrading every regional passenger rail line in the whole of Victoria.”

Patron Senator for Bendigo Sarah Henderson said that the enormous investment in improving the passenger rail network in Victoria was really delivering for the regions.

“I am excited to see planning and development activity is already underway, with works set to be complete in late 2022 – supporting much-needed jobs at this critical time,” Ms Henderson said.

“This line upgrade forms part of a much broader commitment to regional Victoria with both Governments’ contributions combining to creating 3,000 jobs.”

State Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards said this is a great step forward for the local community, with the announcement delivering more trains for Bendigo.

“Passengers right across the Greater Bendigo region will have more services to choose from and more options for travel closer to where they live thanks to these critical upgrades,” Ms Edwards said.

“This new system also has the potential to be rolled out to other Victorian lines to allow even more regional services in the future.”

Ends.

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