

# Media Release

Jacinta Allan MP

Leader of the House

Minister for Transport Infrastructure

Minister for the Suburban Rail Loop

Acting Minister for Public Transport



Monday, 12 July 2021

## NORTHERN REGION WORKS KEEP LINE IN TOP SHAPE

Trains have returned to the Bendigo, Swan Hill and Echuca lines following a two-week blitz of major signal and structure renewals to provide safe, comfortable and reliable services for passengers.

Acting Minister for Public Transport Jacinta Allan said more than 500 people worked around-the-clock to complete \$21 million worth of infrastructure upgrades as part of V/Line's major maintenance and renewals program.

Completed over the school holidays, the works along the Bendigo line included a \$6 million renewal of equipment which connects tracks north of Bendigo Station, a \$3 million upgrade to the track in the Elphinstone Tunnel and the replacement of more than three kilometres of rail in the Black forest.

Crews upgraded several bridges and culverts on the Swan Hill and Echuca lines, along with works on the Murray Valley Highway level crossing in Echuca. Construction also ramped up on Bendigo's new bio-wash and train monitoring facilities.

A new timetable is now in place, allowing a morning train from Eaglehawk to Southern Cross to make an additional stop at Sunbury, providing a more convenient option for Macedon Ranges students to get to school.

Throughout the past financial year, V/Line has delivered more than \$250 million in major improvement projects, as well as regular maintenance works which were mostly done at night to minimise disruption to passengers.

Other projects have included bridge and culvert upgrades on the Seymour, Shepparton, Warrnambool, Ballarat, Ararat and Maryborough lines, rail renewal on the Geelong line and the replacement of 250,000 sleepers across the network.

### Quotes attributable to Acting Minister for Public Transport Jacinta Allan

*"These improvements ensure that these services will continue to be reliable and safe, providing the best journeys possible for passengers in northern Victoria."*

*"The area north of Bendigo Station is one of the most complex on the line, where several tracks merge and diverge, so it's crucial that the infrastructure there is in good shape."*

### Quote attributable to Member for Bendigo West Maree Edwards

*"We've worked hard to deliver these upgrades as quickly and efficiently as possible, to minimise disruptions to passengers on the line."*

### Quote attributable to Member for Macedon Mary-Anne Thomas

*"We've prioritised replacing rail in the Black Forest to reduce the risk of a fault, ensuring a much more reliable service."*