

Media Release

Mr Danny Pearson MP

Minister for Transport Infrastructure

Minister for the Suburban Rail Loop

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REGIONAL RAIL AUTUMN WORK BLITZ TO DELIVER BETTER SERVICES

The Allan Labor Government is continuing to transform Victoria's rail network, with significant works planned throughout autumn – which will help add more services, remove level crossings and improve facilities for regional passengers.

Minister for Transport Infrastructure Danny Pearson announced a large package of works will take place in the state's north-east, with coaches replacing trains between Seymour and Shepparton and some trains between Southern Cross and Seymour from 9 March to 14 April.

To help deliver more frequent and reliable services, these Shepparton Line Upgrade works include the rebuilding of track through level crossings as well as bridge improvements and sleeper replacement along 13km of track between Nagambie and Wahring.

V/Line is also updating infrastructure along a 20 kilometre section of the freight line between Tocumwal and Strathmerton.

Works will continue on the South Geelong to Waurn Ponds Duplication and Stage 2 of the Warrnambool Line Upgrade during two separate week-long disruptions to trains in April (Saturday 13 to Sunday 21) and May (Saturday 11 to Sunday 19).

Duplicated rail will be installed in Grovedale and bridge piers will be installed in South Geelong – allowing dangerous and congested level crossings to be removed later this year.

New train detection technology and safety improvements will be installed at level crossings in across western Victoria to allow modern VLocity trains to run to and from Warrnambool for the first time when the project is finished.

V/Line crews will carry out maintenance and infrastructure improvements in April, including in and around the rail tunnel between Geelong and South Geelong.

Test trains will continue running outside the Metro Tunnel, while the removal of level crossings and construction of a new station in Pakenham will create dedicated V/Line tracks – improving reliability on the Gippsland Line. Throughout March coaches will replace V/Line trains travelling between Southern Cross and Pakenham.

Regional passengers will also board replacement coaches for six weeks in May and June as crews on the Gippsland Line Upgrade carry out complex signalling work, safety testing and driver training.

Motorists travelling between Melbourne and Gippsland will detour through Pakenham as the eastbound lanes of the Princes Freeway close from 12 April to 15 April for asphalt strengthening works, as part of the Pakenham Roads Upgrade which will improve traffic flow and reduce bottlenecks.

Passengers planning to travel during these disruptions should allow up to 60 minutes extra for their journey and check the temporary coach replacement timetable before travelling, which will be available from the V/Line and PTV websites closer to the start of works.

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Quotes attributable to Minister for Transport Infrastructure Danny Pearson

“We are getting on with delivering vital infrastructure that will better connect regional Victoria with modern and more reliable transport.”

“These critical works will help deliver more trains, more often across regional Victoria.”

Quote attributable to Minister for Public and Active Transport Gabrielle Williams

“We thank passengers for their patience as we get on with delivering these works that will improve the way regional Victorians travel.”