

# Media Release

**The Hon Harriet Shing MP**

Minister for the Suburban Rail Loop

Minister for Housing and Building

Minister for Development Victoria and Precincts



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## BIG BUILD PIPELINE HEATS UP OVER SUMMER

The Allan Labor Government is urging Victorians to plan ahead this summer with major works continuing across the state as the Metro Tunnel and West Gate Tunnel prepare to open in a matter of weeks.

From 30 November, passengers will be able to travel through the Metro Tunnel and its five new stations as part of its *Summer Start* program – with extra services running and free public transport on weekends for every Victorian until the *Big Switch* occurs on Sunday, 1 February.

To prepare for the *Big Switch* – which will overhaul Victoria’s entire train network and deliver more than 1,000 services – Metro Tunnel and track works will continue over summer.

Buses will replace trains on the Sandringham and Frankston lines between 9:00pm Wednesday, 7 January to the last train Sunday, 11 January, and on parts of the Cranbourne, Pakenham, Frankston, Werribee, Williamstown, Sunbury and Sandringham lines on selected weeknights in December and January.

Annual maintenance on the West Gate Bridge will see lane closures and potential delays of up to 60 minutes with works beginning Boxing Day evening. Three outbound lanes will be closed from 9:00pm Friday, 26 December to 6:00pm Monday, 29 December, and two citybound lanes will remain open until 6:00am Sunday, 4 January.

For the first time, motorists will have the new West Gate Tunnel as an alternative to the bridge, and new road signs will be revealed in the coming weeks to help motorists ahead of the tunnel’s opening in December.

As we get on with delivering the North East Link Project – the Eastern Freeway will close between Doncaster Road and Middleborough Road from 10:00pm Wednesday, 7 January to 5:00am Monday, 12 January to remove the old Doncaster Road bridge.

There will also be overnight closures on the M80 between Plenty Road and Greensborough Bypass from December to February.

As part of Suburban Rail Loop works, lanes will be closed on the Dingley Bypass for up to eight nights in December, and there will be traffic changes on Bay Road near the future SRL Cheltenham Station from late January.

With 87 level crossings already gone for good, works will continue in Newport with buses replacing inbound trains travelling through the Altona Loop until April and buses replacing trains on the Werribee Line some evenings and weekends in February.

Road upgrades will also continue, including weekend closures on the Princes Freeway at Clyde Road in Berwick, and works at Thompson and Berwick-Cranbourne Roads, Point Cook Road, Ballan Road and Epping Road.

Further south works on Peninsula Link will continue from Saturday, 22 November to Sunday, 14 December, between Frankston-Flinders Road and the Moorooduc Highway. All lanes will reopen for the holiday period, with crews returning in February to complete the works.

In the CBD, there will be changes to Routes 86 and 96 from Monday, 16 February to Thursday, 26 February to deliver major tram intersection upgrades at Bourke and Spencer Streets.

**Quote attributable to Minister for the Suburban Rail Loop Harriet Shing**

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*“These summer works on the Suburban Rail Loop – from lane closures on the Dingley Bypass to upgrades around the future Cheltenham Station – are essential steps as we build this city-shaping project.”*

*“Whether you’re heading to cricket, concerts, or visiting family and friends, Victorians are encouraged to plan ahead and allow extra travel time this summer.”*

**Quotes attributable to Minister for Transport Infrastructure Gabrielle Williams**

*“It’s an exciting summer ahead with the Metro Tunnel and West Gate Tunnel set to open in the coming weeks, which will mean more ways to move across Melbourne.”*

**Quote attributable to Minister for Roads and Road Safety Melissa Horne**

*“Right across summer we’re getting on with the works that keep Victorians safe on our roads – making sure families, freight operators and local communities can rely on a safer, smoother and more resilient road network.”*