

Media Release

The Hon Philip Dalidakis MLC
Minister for Trade and Investment
Minister for Innovation and the Digital Economy
Minister for Small Business



Getting Things Done.
Making Things Fair.

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MOBILE COVERAGE FOR REGIONAL TRAIN PASSENGERS

Passengers on Victoria's five busiest regional rail lines will start to experience better mobile coverage on their journeys as the Andrews Labor Government's Regional Rail Connectivity Project (RRCP) gathers pace.

About a quarter of V/Line's VLOCITY trains are now fitted with mobile signal boosters, with more trains set to roll out each week until the entire VLOCITY fleet is connected by the end of 2018.

The Labor Government is working with Telstra, Vodafone and Optus to deliver the \$18 million RRCP, which also includes the construction of 35 new mobile towers that will combine with the boosters to increase mobile coverage for passengers along the Traralgon, Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo and Seymour lines.

Passengers that catch a train fitted with a booster will know they have access to much better coverage when they see stickers telling them they are on a connected train.

There will still be some blackspots until all trains are fitted with boosters and all the new mobile towers are up and running, but by the end of this year, passengers will have great mobile coverage on all their journeys.

With more than 15.5 million passenger trips every year, this project will enable more Victorians to work during their daily commute, delivering an estimated \$20 million boost per year to the Victorian economy.

The Labor Government is investing heavily in improving connectivity in regional Victoria. We're delivering free public WiFi in Bendigo and Ballarat, building 166 new towers to fix mobile blackspots, and have launched the \$45 million *Connecting Regional Communities Program* to address regional priorities.

On top of this, just last week the Labor Government announced Victoria's nine regional partnerships will share in \$1 million to develop comprehensive digital plans to address the needs and priorities of their region.

Information about all the Labor Government's programs to improve digital connectivity in regional Victoria can be found at economicdevelopment.vic.gov.au/connecting-victoria.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Innovation and the Digital Economy Philip Dalidakis

"We're getting on with the job of delivering the mobile coverage that our regional rail passengers deserve."

"Whether passengers want to do business, browse social media or call their loved ones to tell them they're on the way home, this project will ensure regional passengers are connected."

Quote attributable to Minister for Regional Development Jaala Pulford

"Better mobile coverage on these rail lines is part of our effort to connect regional Victoria and remove the digital divide between those living in Melbourne and those living in our regions."

Quote attributable to Minister for Public Transport Jacinta Allan

"We've added extra services throughout our regional network, upgrading every regional rail line, and we're not wasting a minute in giving our passengers better coverage on their journey – we're getting it done."

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