

Thursday 26 October, 2006

A FARE GO FOR PUBLIC TRANSPORT USERS

Premier Steve Bracks today announced the *Fare Go Package*, a comprehensive set of public transport fare reforms that will deliver huge savings for commuters in metropolitan Melbourne, the city fringes and regional Victoria.

If re-elected the Government will roll out a five-year, \$94.1 million plan to cut public transport fares from 4 March next year. Mr Bracks said the package includes:

- An extended Zone 2 region incorporating six V/Line stations taking the Zone 2 region from 36 stations to 42;
- Abolishing Metropolitan Zone 3 and replacing it with an extended Zone 2 region;
- Reducing the cost of all V/Line train and bus tickets by an average of 20 per cent;
- Reducing local bus fares on the Mornington and Bellarine peninsulas by up to 54 per cent; and

“In the last year, public transport patronage has increased by 6 per cent through our investment in transport. Today’s announcement builds on our achievements. We are providing a new incentive for people to use public transport,” Mr Bracks said.

“Cheaper public transport fares respond to the challenge of increasing petrol prices and traffic congestion,” he said.

“That’s why we will cut the travel costs of people who typically travel the furthest – those who live in Melbourne’s outer suburbs and in regional Victoria.

“Public transport users in Zone 3 and across regional Victoria will have their travel bills slashed by up to \$725 per year under a future Labor Government.

“The *Fare Go Package* will also make it cheaper to travel from the city to visit tourist attractions in the Yarra Ranges, Mornington Peninsula, Bellarine Peninsula and throughout regional Victoria.

“This is an affordable plan to encourage more families to use our public transport network.”

Mr Bracks said the package would cut the cost of using public transport for everyone living in the current Zone 3 area.

“Our plan would cut the cost of a full fare daily ticket from Zone 3 to the city from \$12.60 to \$9.70,” Mr Bracks said.

“Weekly full fare tickets from Zone 3 to the city will fall from \$52.20 to \$45.20, monthly tickets will fall from \$186.80 to \$152.60, and yearly tickets will fall from \$1999 to \$1633.

“People travelling on a yearly ticket travelling between Zone 2 and Zone 3 would save \$725.

“A family of four from Lilydale could travel to the city for a day trip and back for just \$28.40 instead of \$36.20.”

Transport Minister Peter Batchelor said concession fares would also fall – providing savings for students, seniors, the unemployed and other concession holders.

“Fares from V/Line stations on the suburban fringe will also be priced as Metropolitan Zone 2, while local bus fares on the Mornington and Bellarine Peninsulas would be slashed by up to 54 per cent,” Mr Batchelor said.

“Tickets from V/Line stations at Lara, Bacchus Marsh, Clarkefield, Riddells Creek, Heathcote Junction and Wondong will all come down to Zone 2 prices,” he said

“These stations will be priced the same as Sunbury, Rockbank, Melton, Little River, Donnybrook, Craigieburn and Wallan, which are already priced as Zone 2.”

A Fare Go Package will make life easier for working families *right across the State*.

“Over the past seven years, our Government has worked hard to provide an efficient and affordable public transport system for all Victorians,” Mr Bracks said.

“We have increased the capacity of our rail and road networks to carry more people by putting on more public transport services and extending the hours of operation of those services.”

Mr Batchelor said the benefits of the *Fare Go Package* would flow right though to provincial Victoria, with all V/Line train and bus fares falling by an average of 20 per cent across the board.

“A full-fare day return from Melbourne to Geelong comes down from \$21.40 to \$17.10, while a weekly ticket comes down from \$71.30 to \$57.

“Making public transport cheaper and easier to use will make Victoria an even better place to live, work and raise a family,” Mr Batchelor said.