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## **GOVERNMENT TO INVEST \$88 MILLION ON TRAIN RELIABILITY AND SAFETY**

Victoria's public transport system will now be even safer and more reliable with the announcement today of \$88 million to be spent on state of the art technology to replace the control centre of the metropolitan train network - Metrol.

Premier Steve Bracks said today the major modernisation of Metrol, to begin this year, was part of the Government's major transport strategy, which will be released this month.

"This investment will make a safe public transport system even safer and more reliable," Mr Bracks said.

"It will also ensure that the building blocks of the network are up to date and can maintain a world class system into the future.

"Metrol co-ordinates the operation of 11,000 train services each week across Melbourne's metropolitan train system and does this using technology that is about 30 years old, and is nearing the end of its useful life," Mr Bracks said.

"The \$88 million replacement of Metrol will progressively upgrade and modernise this outdated technology, and will deliver a much improved control room that will directly benefit train passengers by improving the reliability of the metropolitan train system."

Transport Minister Peter Batchelor said replacing Metrol was vitally important, because it is through Metrol that daily services are planned and operators respond to any delays or changes to those services in an effort to minimise the impact on the travelling public.

Mr Batchelor said the replacement would improve up to the minute timetable information, which can be delivered to mobile phones, and would help Connex to schedule trains so they could get the most out of the system.

"This will help us get more out of the system because it means the train operator can better estimate the spaces between trains on the network and therefore maximise the number of trains we can safely get onto the system," Mr Batchelor said.

"Metrol staff do a great job in keeping the system running. We want to provide them with the tools that they need to continue that task in the decades to come.

"It is an essential part of running an efficient and reliable train system – it has reached the end of its life and it needs to be upgraded and modernised."

The delivery of this project follows on from the recent improvements made to the regulatory framework for public transport safety including the creation of the Office of the Chief Investigator (Public Transport and Marine Safety Investigations).