

A Better Bendigo Timetable

The timetable proposed here assumes the following:

- (1) that the line remains double track for the whole distance from Melbourne to Bendigo, the tracks being upgraded to 160 km/hr as far as Kyneton and renovated to the current 130 km/hr standard from Kyneton to Bendigo. The extra expense before Kyneton is offset by the savings after Kyneton. (The timetable would be excessively demanding and therefore in practice unreliable if the second line is removed.)
- (2) that the 21 existing Sprinters are upgraded to match the performance of the new VLocity trains so that they can achieve speeds of 160 km/hr. This is perfectly possible. Note that the Sprinters can run as one multiple units.. This is unfortunately not possible for the Vlocity trains, which have a minimum 2-car configuration. One-car trains will provide the service at the less busy times
- (4) that the slower loco-hauled trains (max speed 116 kph) are replaced by VLocity or Sprinter trains for all services, including the longer-haul services to Swan Hill.

The timetable fulfils the following minimum requirements:

- (1) No one, regardless of the station at which they board or their destination should be worse off than under the existing timetable.
- (2) Trains at the main stations (Spencer Street, Sydenham, Kyneton, Castlemaine, Bendigo) should be at least hourly, with additional trains at peak times.
- (3) The average time taken for all services between Spencer Street and Bendigo should be shorter than it currently is.
- (4) The hours of service should be extended to provide an early train arriving in Bendigo well before 9.00 am and a late train leaving Spencer Street after 11.00 pm.

This timetable would provide 22 trains every weekday (Monday-Friday) to and from Bendigo.

In so far as possible (allowing for some special problems in the very busiest periods) it provides a 'clockface' service, which by itself will result in greatly increased patronage (up by 30% or more),

It also offers a good mix of express and slow (stopping most stations) trains.

And it does of course offer the much demanded early service to Bendigo and late return service from Spencer Street.

As speed is not the critical criterion on the slow services they can stop anywhere, including the almost-closed stations of Malmsbury and Kangaroo Flat, and any of the currently completely closed stations such as Taradale and Harcourt. The proposed timetable is flexible in this respect.

The timetable requires the provision of no extra rolling stock, the additional services made possible by the 'split' one-car Sprinter services. The only extra cost is that of additional drivers, but this pales into insignificance when compared with the cost savings involved from abandoning the track 'upgrading' (singling, etc.) between Kyneton and Bendigo.

A more detailed and technical explanation of this proposed timetable, and other possible timetables, is available from BRAG.

Comments are of course invited.

Better Rail Action Group

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If you were planning to spend a lot of money on something, what would you do? Most people start by deciding what they want, and then work out how best to achieve it.

Not so our railway planners. First, they decide how to spend \$200 million, and then they start investigating what is wanted..

You don't believe it? Ask them to produce the design specification for the upgrade of the Bendigo Line, in which the needs of the users of the line were set down. Ask them to produce the timetable for which the upgrade had to cater. You won't get it, because it doesn't exist. They say they are about to ask the community what it wants!.

The Better Rail Action Group (BRAG) therefore offers an improved timetable, and invites the Government and the travelling public to comment.

It is based on assumption that the travelling public wants:

- (1) Improved reliability (both mechanical and operational)**
- (2) Regularity (preferably a predictable 'clockface' timetable)**
- (3) Extended hours of operation, including early morning, late evening and improved weekend services**
- (4) Greater speed.**

BRAG believes that the timetable over the page achieves these objectives and is practicable, and affordable, i.e. well within the existing budget.

BETTER RAIL ACTION GROUP ~ AUGUST 2004

BRAG'S SUGGESTED WEEKDAY TIMETABLE

Spencer Street/Kyneton/Castlemaine/Bendigo

	A	X	A	X	S	X	S	X	S	X	A	X	S	X	S	X	S
Spencer St	06 30	07 30	07 50	08 30	08 50	09 30	09 50	10 30	10 50	11 30	11 50	12 30	12 50	13 30	13 50	14 30	14 50
Kyneton	07 44	08 26	09 04	09 26	10 04	10 26	11 04	11 26	12 04	12 26	13 04	13 26	14 04	14 26	15 04	15 26	16 04
C'maine	08 05	08 43	09 25	09 43		10 43		11 43		12 43	13 25	13 43		14 43		15 43	
Bendigo	08 30	09 06	09 50	10 06		11 06		12 06		13 06	13 50	14 06		15 06		16 06	

	X	S	B	S	X	S	B	S	X	S	B	S	X	C	C	C	C
Spencer St	15 30	15 35	15 55	16 00	16 30	16 35	16 55	17 00	17 30	17 35	17 55	18 00	18 30	19 30	20 30	22 00	23 30
Kyneton	116 26	16 49	16 59	17 14	17 26	17 49	17 59	18 14	18 26	18 49	18 59	19 14	19 26	20 44	21 44	23 14	00 44
C'maine	16 43		17 20		17 43		18 20		18 43		19 20		19 43	21 01	22 01	23 31	01 01
Bendigo	17 06		17 42		18 06		18 42		19 06		19 42		20 06	21 24	22 24	23 54	01 24

A = Stopping all stations to Bendigo (including Malmesbury, Taradale, Harcourt and Kangaroo Flat).
 B = Stopping St Albans, Sunbury, Gisborne, Woodend, then all stations to Bendigo.
 C = Stopping all current stations (i.e. excluding Malmesbury, Taradale, Harcourt and Kangaroo Flat).

S = Stopping all stations to Kyneton, terminating at Kyneton.
 X = Express service (stopping St Albans, Kyneton and Castlemaine only).

Bendigo/Castlemaine/Kyneton/Spencer Street

	S	S	X	S	A	S	X	S	A	S	X	A	X	A	X	S	X
Bendigo			05 30		05 53		06 30		06 53		07 30	07 53	08 30	08 53	09 30		10 30
C'maine			05 52		06 18		06 52		07 18		07 52	08 18	08 52	09 18	09 52		10 52
Kyneton	05 23	05 48	06 10	06 23	06 38	06 48	07 10	07 23	07 38	07 48	08 10	08 38	09 10	09 38	10 10	10 38	11 10
Spencer St	06 37	07 02	07 06	07 37	07 52	08 02	08 06	08 37	08 52	09 02	09 06	09 52	10 06	10 52	11 06	11 52	12 06

	S	X	S	X	A	X	S	X	S	X	S	X	A	X	A	C	C
Bendigo		11 30		12 30	12 55	13 30		14 30		15 30		16 30	16 53	17 30	17 53	18 30	19 30
C'maine		11 52		12 52	13 18	13 52		14 52		15 52		16 52	17 18	17 52	18 18	18 52	19 52
Kyneton	11 38	12 10	12 38	13 10	13 38	14 10	14 38	15 10	15 38	16 10	16 38	17 10	17 38	18 10	18 38	19 10	20 10
Spencer St	12 52	13 06	13 52	14 06	14 52	15 06	15 52	16 06	16 52	17 06	17 52	18 06	18 52	19 06	19 52	20 14	21 14

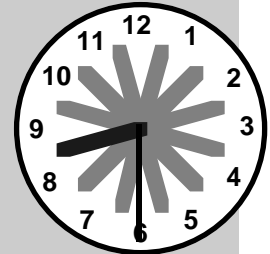
A = Stopping all stations, including Kangaroo Flat, Harcourt, Taradale and Malmesbury.
 C = Stopping all current stations (i.e. excluding Kangaroo Flat, Harcourt, Taradale and Malmesbury).
 S = Starting at Kyneton and then stopping all stations to Spencer Street.
 X = Express service, stopping at Castlemaine, Kyneton and St Albans only.

IT'S SIMPLE!

A fast train leaves Melbourne for KYNETON, CASTLEMAINE AND BENDIGO every hour on the half hour, 07:30 to 20:30

XX:30

PLUS
 extras for early, late and rush hour travellers, and an hourly stopping service to Kyneton.



A fast train leaves BENDIGO for Melbourne every hour on the half hour, 05:30 to 19:30

XX:30

PLUS
 extras for rush hour travellers.

A fast train leaves CASTLEMAINE for Melbourne every hour at 52 minutes past the hour, 05:52 to 19:52

XX:52

PLUS
 extras for rush hour travellers.

A fast train leaves KYNETON for Melbourne every hour at 10 minutes past the hour, 06:10 to 20:10

XX:10

PLUS
 a stopping train every hour at 38 minutes past the hour and extras for rush hour travellers.