

Action stations!

It's not too long ago that the only visible infrastructure project underway on the rail network was the Craigieburn electrification. This is no longer the case. Say what you like about the government, but it is undeniable that a number of projects have now been funded, right across the rail network.

But are they the right solutions? And are we getting our money's worth?

This map summarises what's going on where, when each project will be finished, and how much it'll cost.

Craigieburn stabling (2009)
 ✓ More train stabling
 ✓ Driver facilities to help move changeovers from Flinders St
 ✗ Should have been done with electrification

Coolaroo Station (\$36 million; 2010)
 ✓ Better rail access for residents
 ✗ High cost due to being done separately to Craigieburn electrification

Sunbury electrification (\$205 million)
 ✓ More trains to Sunbury and Sydenham

Caroline Springs Station
 ✓ Better access for residents

Regional Rail Link (Tarneit) (\$4.3 billion)
 ✓ Separate regional and suburban trains
 ✓ More consistent times from Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo
 ✓ Trains to new suburbs
 ✗ Longer travel time from Geelong?
 ✗ Geelong to Werribee passengers cut off?
 ? Details lacking

Williams Landing Station
 ✓ Built with new suburb and town centre

Laverton turnback (\$93 million; 2011)
 ✓ Allows more trains on Werribee line
 ✗ Doesn't fix Altona loop single track

What's missing?

- Network planning to co-ordinate buses and trains
- Funding for Cranbourne East/Clyde extension
- Doncaster gets more buses, not rail
- Rowville rail
- South Morang rail should go to Mernda to meet urban growth
- Re-write of train timetable to simplify and better use track capacity
- Commitment to operational improvements such as more staff on stations
- Most suburbs still have no trains, no trams, only infrequent buses
- Government road-building programme still zooming ahead

South Morang extension (\$562 million; 2013) (See also article p6)
 ✓ At long last
 ✓ Upgrades elsewhere on Clifton Hill lines
 ✗ High cost
 ✗ Falls short of urban growth; should go to Mernda

Eltham stabling and signal upgrades (part of South Morang project)
 ✓ Allow more trains to run
 ✓ Driver facilities to help move changeovers from Flinders St

Springvale Road grade-separation (\$140 million; 2010)
 ✓ Improved safety
 ✓ Reduce delays for new Smartbus
 ✗ Station design poor
 ✗ Double the cost of Middleborough Road

Westall rail upgrade (\$153 million; 2011)
 ✓ Allow more trains on Dandenong line
 ✗ High cost

New stations
 ✓ Cardinia Road (Lakeside) and Lynbrook

Also on the way:
 38 more trains
 ✓ Roughly 20% increase in size of fleet will cut overcrowding
 ✗ Rollout slow
Lots more Park and Ride at stations
 ✗ Expensive, at around \$15,000 for each single car space

