

Temporary Exemptions Report

Victorian Regional Railway Service

Reporting Period:

1 October 2017 to 30 September 2018

V/Line Corporation
Level 9, 750 Collins Street
Docklands, Victoria, 3008

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Introduction

V/Line's Role

V/Line is an operating agency as part of Transport for Victoria delivering services under a Partnership Agreement with Public Transport Victoria (PTV) (and other key contracts).

V/Line is:

- an operator of passenger rail and coach services
- a freight access provider
- a maintainer of railway infrastructure and rolling stock
- a project deliverer when engaged to do so.

About V/Line – Service Provided

V/Line, as a brand, has provided public transport services to regional Victoria for over 30 years.

Each week, V/Line schedules more than 1,980 train services between Melbourne and:

- Geelong and Warrnambool
- Ballarat, Maryborough and Ararat
- Bendigo, Swan Hill and Echuca
- Seymour, Shepparton and Albury
- Traralgon, Sale and Bairnsdale.

More than 1,360 V/Line-branded coach services connect with the rail network and serve regional Victorian communities. Some of our coach services also link Victoria with South Australia, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. Private sector operators provide all V/Line-branded coach services under the management of V/Line.

As well as being a public transport operator, V/Line also leases, provides access to and maintains over 3,520 kilometres of rail track used by passengers and freight rail operators. V/Line is a major employer with a workforce of 1,964 as at 30 June 2018, including many who live and work in regional Victoria.

V/Line operates three types of passenger trains which include:

- 225 VLocity carriages
- 132 locomotive-hauled carriages
- 21 Sprinters (single unit).

All V/Line train services have conductors who provide on-board customer service.

V/Line has 91 stations across the regional Victorian passenger network. Of these stations, 46 are staffed for varying times during the day.

There are more than 1700 level and pedestrian crossings on the regional rail network. This includes a mix of active, passive and occupational crossings. This figure does not include crossings in the shared rail network that are the responsibility of the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC).

V/Line's Accessibility Action Plan 2015-18

V/Line's 2015-2018 Accessibility Action Plan (the Plan) is a three-year plan that sets out our commitment to providing an inclusive and accessible public transport service to all Victorians.

V/Line's Plan is aligned with the Absolutely Everyone: State Disability Plan for 2017-2020, which is the Victorian Government's Framework for enabling people with a disability to participate and contribute to the social economic and civic life of their community.

This year our progress against the Plan has included the following achievements:

- working with V/Line's Customer Accessibility Reference Group, who made a number of improvements, including:
 - a new design for the accessible areas in Sprinter cars
 - installation of a grab rail in the buffet car to increase stability for all customers
 - additional Boarding Assistance Zones at Footscray, Sunshine and Broadmeadows stations
 - trial of veloSTRAIL flange gap technology to support safer access at the pedestrian crossing at North Shore Road
- the fifth Community Accessibility Forum was held with customers, advocates and industry partners. This forum discussed improvements across the whole customer journey for customers with accessibility needs, which will inform the development of V/Line's next Accessibility Action Plan
- a quarterly accessibility update newsletter was produced for V/Line customers and stakeholders
- a new, dedicated Accessibility Adviser commenced working with V/Line
- V/Line maintained certification under the Communication Access Symbol and began embedding ongoing learning and improvements
- regular consultation was completed with key external stakeholders on upcoming projects
- V/Line participated in state and national accessibility committees.

As the current Plan comes to an end in 2018, we are proud of the achievements that have occurred over the past three years. V/Line has commenced the process of developing our next accessibility action plan that will guide us into the future to continue to improve the experience for our customers.

Temporary Exemptions Reporting

The Public Transport Development Authority (trading as 'Public Transport Victoria' and 'PTV') (**PTV**), established under the *Transport Integration Act 2010 (Vic)*, is the statutory authority responsible for managing the regional rail network on behalf of the State of Victoria. V/Line is a statutory authority, continued under section 128 of the *Transport Integration Act 2010 (Vic)* and is ultimately responsible to the Victorian Minister for Public Transport and the Victorian Treasurer.

Pursuant to a Services Agreement between PTV and V/Line dated 13 November 2013, V/Line is the operator and maintainer of the regional rail network.

V/Line and PTV are members of the Australasian Railway Association (**ARA**). V/Line participates in the ARA Disability Policy Working Group.

On 1 October 2015, the Australian Human Rights Commission (**AHRC**) granted temporary exemptions to members of the ARA in relation to various provisions of the *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002 (Cth)* (**Transport Standards**) and the *Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010 (Cth)* (**Premises Standards**).

V/Line provides this Report in relation to the regional Victorian passenger rail network and in accordance with the reporting requirements contained in the temporary exemptions.

This report is for the period 1 October 2017 to 30 September 2018.

If you wish to provide feedback or require further information on this Report please contact V/Line:

- call
1800 800 007
TTY (03) 9619 2727
- in writing
Customer Relations
Reply Paid 5343
Melbourne VIC 8060
- online at www.vline.com.au/Contact-us

Part A – Exemptions from the Transport Standards

2.1 Access paths – Unhindered passage

Temporary Exemption: rail premises and rail infrastructure

For a period of five years, flange gaps of up to 75mm are permitted where a level crossing forms part of an access path on rail premises or rail infrastructure.

Reporting Requirements:

a. Action taken to improve safe use of level crossings where they form part of an access path

Safety education

Safety is V/Line's highest priority and educating customers and regional Victorian communities about safe behaviour at level crossings forms a large part of V/Line's safety campaign activity. During the relevant reporting period V/Line conducted a targeted safety campaign to encourage customers to always put safety first and remain train safe. This included key messages including encouraging customers to:

- Slow down
- Hold on
- Eyes up
- Keep close

V/Line also conducted targeted communication activities at level crossings where:

- upgrade works have occurred
- there was an extended period of track works
- the timetable changed
- a level or pedestrian crossing was closed.

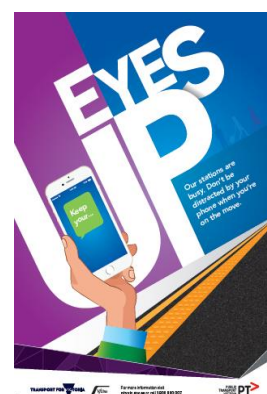


Figure 1: Eyes Up - safety campaign poster

Rail Safety Week

Rail Safety Week is an initiative of the TrackSAFE Foundation, where operators from across Australia promote rail safety, both internally and in the wider community. During 13-19 August 2018 V/Line, in conjunction with PTV, promoted Victoria's key message "Rail safety – it's my responsibility" via a 'Stop before you cross' campaign.

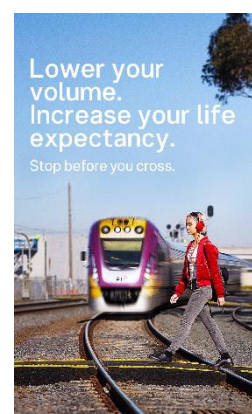


Figure 2: Rail safety week campaign poster

Level crossing upgrades

V/Line continues to improve safety by upgrading pedestrian and level crossings on the regional rail network. Crossings that have been upgraded since 1 October 2017 are shown in Table 1 below.

Forest St 1, Wendouree	South Geelong	North Shore Rd, Corio
Forest St 2, Wendouree	Yarra St 2- 1364-1B, South Geelong	Harris Lane, Terang
Hillside Rd, Dobie	Cameron Rd, Terang	Coombs Rd, Terang
Rileys Rd, Bendigo	Willowrite Rd, Pettavel	Edenmont Rd, Clematis
Andersons Rd, Drysdale	Mt Pollock Rd, Buckley	Old Monbulk Rd, Belgrave
McKillop St, Geelong	School Rd (Recreation Reserve Rd), Garvoc	Pinnocks Rd, Emerald
Vickers Rd, Panmure	Heinz St, Bendigo	Mollison St, Kyneton
Powers Lane, Birregurra	Powell St, Bendigo	Harris Lane, Terang
Craigs Lane, Pomboorneit	Lydiard St 1, Ballarat	Coombs Rd, Terang
Carters Rd, Pomboorneit	Lydiard St 2, Ballarat	Edenmont Rd, Clematis
Prices Lane, Armytage	Tierneys Rd, Dunstons	Old Monbulk Rd, Belgrave
Whytcross Rd, Birregurra	North Shore, Corio	Pinnocks Rd, Emerald
Austin St, Winchelsea	Lara Lakes Rd 1, Lara	Heinz St – SCC Yr3, Bendigo
Ondit Rd, Winchelsea	Lara Lakes Rd 2, Lara	Mollison St (Kyneton - Trentham Rd), Kyneton
Yarra St 1- 1364-1A,	Lara Lakes Rd 3, Lara	
	Lara Lakes Rd 4, Lara	

Table 1 Upgraded level and pedestrian crossings in regional Victoria

b. Progress made on the removal of level crossings

Since 1 October 2017 35 pedestrian and level crossings have been removed across Victoria. Pedestrian crossings that have been closed are in Table 2 and level crossings in Table 3 below. Occupation crossings refer to crossings within private property.

Location
Modesty Lane, Burrumbeet
Goggin Road, Tresco

Table 2 Closed pedestrian crossings in regional Victoria

Type	Line Section
Occupation Crossing	Dimboola - Yaapeet
Occupation Crossing	Dimboola - Yaapeet
Occupation Crossing	Ballarat - Maryborough - Yelta
Occupation Crossing	Murtoa - Hopetoun
Occupation Crossing	Murtoa - Hopetoun
Occupation Crossing	Murtoa - Hopetoun
Occupation Crossing	Korong Vale - Kulwin
Occupation Crossing	Dunolly - Inglewood
Occupation Crossing	Korong Vale - Robinvale
Occupation Crossing	Korong Vale - Robinvale
Occupation Crossing	Korong Vale - Robinvale
Occupation Crossing	Korong Vale - Kulwin
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat
Redpath Track	Maryborough - Ararat
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat
Thomson Rd	Maryborough - Ararat
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat

Type	Line Section
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat
Hotel St (Clarke St)	Maryborough - Ararat
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat
Occupation Crossing	Maryborough - Ararat

Table 3 Closed level crossings in regional Victoria

c. Any developments in research into possible technical solutions for bridging flange gaps

V/Line participates in working groups with the rail industry research body, the Australasian Centre for Rail Innovation (ACRI), who are currently undertaking a variety of research projects under their Level Crossing Research project. Currently there is investigation being taken into identifying and testing projects that eliminate the need for level crossing rail flange gaps.

Using this research as a guide V/Line has installed VeloSTRAIL at a trial site at North Shore station. This trial will enable V/Line to assess the impact of VeloSTRAIL on the network operations and opportunities for further roll out across the network, where appropriate.

VeloSTRAIL is an inner panel system that eliminates the flange grooves and that has been designed for a train speed maximum of 120 km/h. VeloSTRAIL presses the replaceable flangeway element down but accommodates enough resistance for pedestrians, cyclists, wheelchair users, baby carriages and inline skaters¹.

This product is not suitable for use in all locations across the regional rail network due to the high-speed lines that V/Line operates. V/Line will continue to work with ACRI to identify technologies that are suitable in high-speed environments. Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM) is also completing a trial of VeloSTRAIL in conjunction with the ACRI Victorian Railway Crossing Safety Steering Committee Working Group. Please refer to MTM's report for further information.



Figure 3: VeloSTRAIL at North Shore station

¹ Source: www.strail.de

2.1 Access paths – Unhindered passage

Temporary Exemption: existing rail premises and existing rail infrastructure

For a period of five years, an access path is required to provide entrance and exit only at a single boundary point for existing rail stations where providing access at each entrance would require significant structural building work or not be feasible due to space, topographical or heritage reasons.

Reporting Requirement: Rail stations that have inaccessible entrances

For the purpose of this report, a station with an 'inaccessible entrance' is a station which is 'only accessible by steps'. All V/Line stations have a step free accessible entrance.

In conjunction with our Accessibility Reference Group V/Line has continued to deliver a customer information project that will deliver access maps for each station on the V/Line network. Maps will be available from vline.com.au, at V/Line stations, through the PTV call centre and PTV hubs. An example map is shown in Appendix A.

2.4 Access paths – Minimum unobstructed width

Temporary Exemption: existing rail premises and existing rail infrastructure

For a period of five years, for existing rail premises and existing rail infrastructure:

1. where the 1200mm minimum unobstructed width for access paths cannot be met due to structural and technical constraints, an access path with a minimum unobstructed width of 1000mm may be provided;
2. the 850mm minimum unobstructed width (applicable to doorways and gateways) is also permitted on access paths for the purposes of passing an obstruction limited to less than 800mm in length; and
3. platform edge warning TGSIs are permitted to intrude into access paths.

Reporting Requirement: Rail stations which have restricted paths of travel within station precincts

The following regional stations have restricted paths of travel:

Bacchus Marsh
Bairnsdale
Beaufort
Benalla
Birregurra
Castlemaine
Clarkefield
Donnybrook

Drouin
Kyneton
Lara
Marshall
Melton
Morwell
North Geelong
Pyramid Hill
Rockbank

Swan Hill
Terang
Violet Town
Wandong
Wangaratta
Warragul
Warrnambool
Wendouree
Woodend

Source: PTV Railway Stations Audit, December 2014

V/Line has not received feedback regarding the reported matters during the relevant reporting period. Monitoring and consultation will continue.

As part of the '*Ballarat Line Upgrade*' state project Rockbank and Wendouree stations will be upgraded. These upgrades are expected to be completed in 2019.

In conjunction with our Accessibility Reference Group, V/Line is undertaking a customer information project that will deliver access maps for each station on the V/Line network. Maps will be available from vline.com.au, at V/Line stations, through the PTV call centre and PTV hubs. An example map is shown in Appendix A.

2.6 Access paths – conveyances

Temporary Exemption: existing rail conveyances

For a period of five years, an access path is only required at a single door rather than all doors of existing rail conveyances, subject to the following conditions:

- equivalent access is provided at an alternative door of the rail conveyance in the following circumstances:
 - if an allocated space is not available;
 - to ensure access to unique facilities; or
 - to ensure a passenger can both board and alight the rail conveyance;

Reporting requirement: Measures taken to ensure that staff and passengers are adequately informed of both the access paths available at the doors of existing rail conveyances and the equivalent access measures available.

Customers can board at any door of V/Line trains.

Doors identified by the international symbol for access lead to on board accessible facilities including toilets and allocated spaces.

All V/Line stations, and the dedicated regional platforms at metropolitan stations, have a Boarding Assistance Zone where customers can choose to wait for V/Line staff if they need assistance to board.

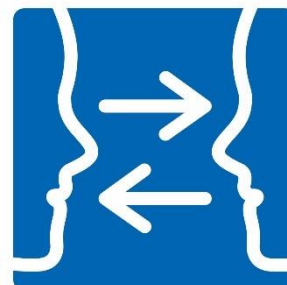
All V/Line frontline staff have completed comprehensive disability awareness training and conductors are trained on how to deploy the portable boarding ramp for customers who require assistance to board.



V/Line hosts Try Before You Ride events at regional stations, where customers of all abilities are invited to try different modes of transport including a V/Line VLocity train, a regional coach and a low floor bus. V/Line also participates in similar events held in Melbourne.

V/Line staff on trains and at stations were accredited in the international symbol for Communication Access which means:

- V/Line frontline staff are able to communicate successfully with customers who have communication difficulties.
- V/Line frontline staff are welcoming and treat people with dignity and respect.
- Communication tools are available to help customers get their message across and understand what people are telling them.



4.2 Passing areas – Two-way access paths and aerobridges

Temporary Exemption: existing rail platforms

For a period of five years, for existing rail platforms, a passing area every 9 metres along any two-way access path that is less than 1800mm wide is permitted where it is not possible to provide one every 6 metres due to structural or heritage constraints.

Reporting Requirement: Rail station platforms which do not provide passing spaces every 6 metres where any two-way access path is less than 1800mm wide

Station	Platform
Macedon	Platform 2
Rockbank	Platform 2
Seymour	Platform 3
Trafalgar	Platform 2

Source: PTV Railway Stations Audit, December 2014

V/Line has not received feedback regarding the reported matters during the reporting period. Monitoring and consultation will continue.

As part of the Victorian Government '*Ballarat Line Upgrade*' Project Rockbank station will be upgraded to meet DSAPT requirements. These upgrades are expected to be completed by February 2019.

5.1 Resting points – When resting points must be provided

Temporary Exemption: existing rail premises and existing rail infrastructure

For a period of five years, compliance with clause 5.1 is not required for existing rail premises and existing rail infrastructure to the extent that site constraints prevent compliance (rather than only added expense or difficulty).

Reporting Requirement:

a. Outcomes of consultations and locations where a resting point with a seat is not provided every 60m

Feedback has been received about seating at the coach bays at Bendigo Station. This taxi rank is being upgraded as part of the Bendigo and Eaglehawk station upgrade project. Phase one of the project has commenced with construction of a pedestrian overpass commencing at Bendigo station. Station facilities upgrades for Bendigo and Eaglehawk will commence design phase in late 2018.

No other feedback has been received during the reporting period. V/Line will continue to monitor and consult on these locations.

b. Locations where a resting point with a seat is not provided every 60m

The following station precincts do not have resting points with a seat every 60m:

Ararat
Ardeer
Avenel
Ballarat
Bendigo
Clunes
Colac
Corio
Creswick
Deer Park
Dingee
Eaglehawk
Elmore
Gisborne

Kilmore East
Lara
Little River
Longwarry
Marshall
Maryborough
Melton
Morwell
North Geelong
North Shore
Riddells Creek
Rockbank
Seymour
Sherwood Park

South Geelong
Swan Hill
Talbot
Tarneit
Trafalgar
Traralgon
Violet Town
Wallan
Wangaratta
Warragul
Wendouree
Woodend
Wyndham Vale
Yarragon

Source: PTV Railway Stations Audit, December 2014

6.4 Slope of external boarding ramps

Temporary Exemption: rail conveyances

For a period of five years, where the relationship between the platform and rail carriage means that an external boarding ramp can only be provided at a gradient greater than 1 in 8 and less than 1 in 4, ARA members are not required to provide staff assistance in ascending or descending the ramp.

Reporting Requirements

a. Number of locations where boarding ramp slopes of one in eight or better cannot currently be achieved

Due to legacy platform standards and resulting platform heights, the height and width of rolling stock that use the regional rail network, including freight trains, and the current design of V/Line boarding ramps, 123 platforms in the regional rail network cannot achieve a boarding ramp slope of one in eight or better.

b. Measures to be taken to increase the number of locations where external boarding ramp slopes of one in eight or better will be achieved

In 2018 V/Line completed a comprehensive assessment of Platform Geometry to identify platform height and clearance determination for DDA compliance in unassisted boarding. This assessment considered V/Line's current rolling stock and infrastructure with reference to initiatives undertaken by other operators, Metro and Transport for New South Wales. This assessment has resulted in a number of recommendations for both rolling stock and infrastructure that will guide a V/Line standard. Future platforms will be built to this standard and existing infrastructure to be upgraded in line with State Government investment.

c. Results of examination of alternative methods of achieving accessible boarding

V/Line accepts the Companion Card issued by the Department of Health and Human Services to people who may require the assistance of a companion. It provides free travel for the carer/companion of the card holder on all public transport services².

11.2 Handrails and grabrails – Handrails to be provided on access paths

Temporary exemption: rail platforms

For a period of five years, rail platforms are exempt from clause 11.2.

Reporting requirement: where a request is made but the installation of a handrail does not proceed, report on the request and the reasons for not taking action

V/Line has not received any requests during the reporting period.

² Victorian Fares and Ticketing Manual, Effective 1 January 2018, Public Transport Victoria.

Part B – Exemptions from the Premises Standards

H2.2 Accessways

- **Temporary exemption: rail premises and rail infrastructure**

For a period of five years, flange gaps of up to 75mm are permitted where a level crossing forms part of an access path on rail premises or rail infrastructure.

Reporting Requirements:

- a. **action taken to improve safe use of level crossings where they form part of an access path;**
- b. **progress made in the removal of level crossings; and**
- c. **any developments in research into possible technical solutions for bridging flange gaps**

Please see V/Line's response to Part A: 2.1 Access paths – Unhindered passage.

- **Temporary exemption: existing rail premises and existing rail infrastructure**

For a period of five years, an access path is required to provide entrance and exit only at a single boundary point for existing rail stations where providing access at each entrance would require significant structural building work or not be feasible due to space, topographical or heritage reasons.

Reporting Requirement: rail stations which have inaccessible entrances

Please see V/Line's response to Part A: 2.1 Access paths – Unhindered passage.

- **Temporary exemption: existing rail premises and existing rail infrastructure**

For a period of five years, for existing rail premises and existing rail infrastructure:

- where the 1,200mm minimum unobstructed width for access paths cannot be met due to structural and technical constraints, an access path with a minimum unobstructed width of 1,000mm may be provided;
- the 850mm minimum unobstructed width (applicable to doorways and gateways) is also permitted on access paths for the purposes of passing an obstruction limited to less than 800mm in length; and
- platform edge warning TGSIs are permitted to intrude into access paths.

Reporting Requirement: rail stations which have restricted paths of travel

Please see V/Line's response to Part A: 2.4 Access paths – Minimum unobstructed width.

- **Temporary exemption: existing rail platforms**

For a period of five years, for existing rail platforms, a passing area every 9 metres along any two-way access path that is less than 1,800mm wide is permitted where it is not possible to provide one every six metres due to structural or heritage constraints.

Reporting Requirement: Rail station platforms which do not provide passing spaces every six metres where any two-way access path is less than 1800mm wide, and provides an updated version of that report every 12 months, and that these reports include a description of any measures taken by the ARA member to address any impacts this may have on users

Please see V/Line's response to Part A: 4.2 Passing areas – Two-way access paths and aerobridges.

H2.4 Handrails and grabrails

- **Temporary exemption: rail platforms**

For a period of five years, rail platforms are exempt from clause H2.4(2).

Reporting requirement: where a request is made but the installation of a handrail does not proceed, report on the request and the reasons for not taking action

Please see V/Line's response to Part A: 11.2 Handrails and grabrails – Handrails to be provided on access paths.

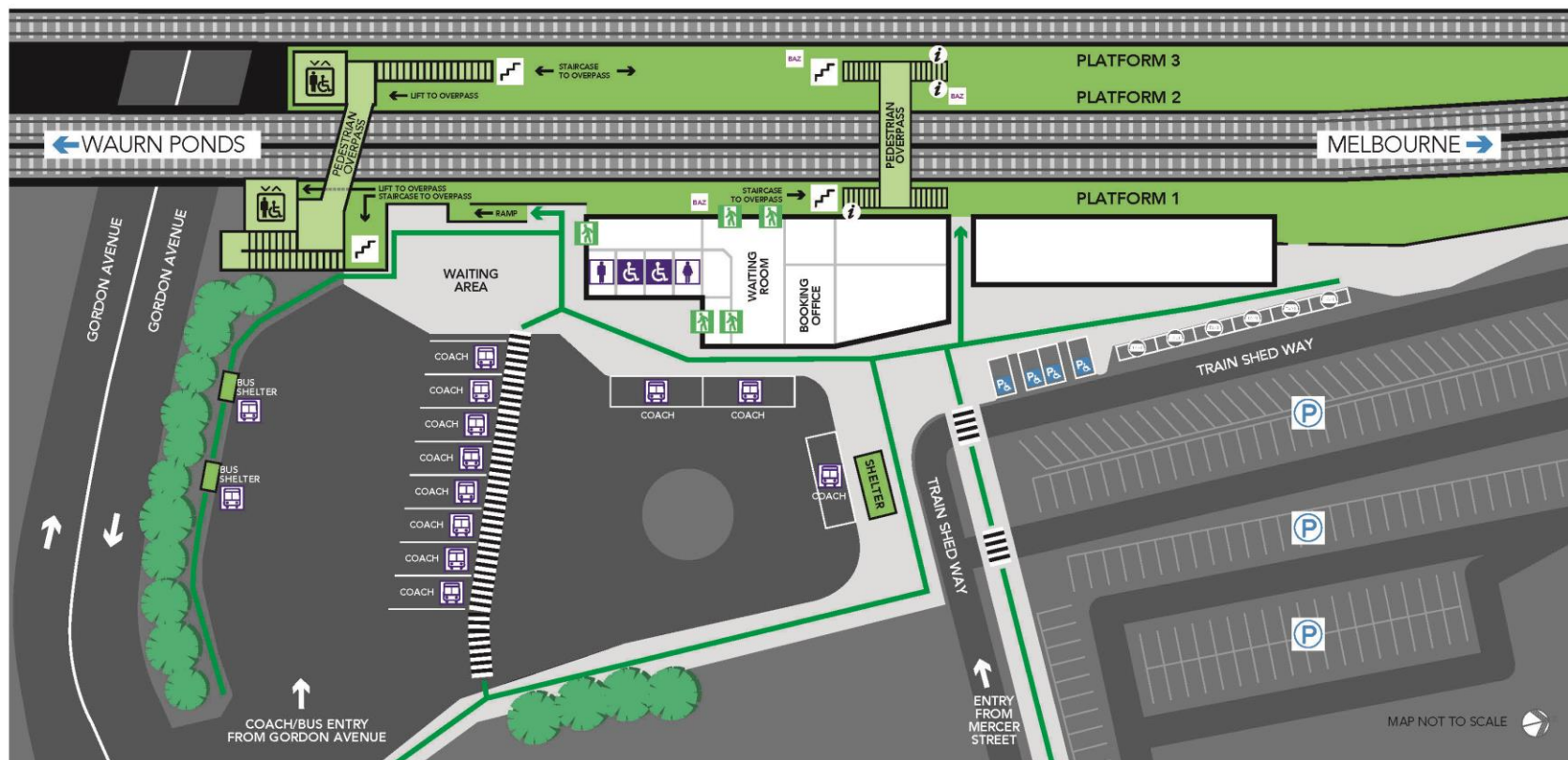
Dated 18 September 2018



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James Pinder
Chief Executive Officer
V/Line Corporation

Appendix A

GEELONG ACCESSIBILITY MAP - PLATFORM 1, 2 & 3



LEGEND

BAZ	BOARDING ASSISTANCE ZONE	P	ACCESSIBLE PARKING	—	ACCESSIBLE PATH	i	INFORMATION
	STAIRS		ENTRY / EXIT		TAXI / DROP OFF / PICKUP	P	CAR PARKS