



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**24 September 2020**

## **Public transport fare relief essential to reduce COVID Normal road congestion**

A proposal to slash off-peak fares for public transport in Melbourne will help reduce an anticipated spike in road congestion that will disrupt freight movements as the city begins to come out of lockdown, according to the state's peak transport industry group.

In its [Fair Move: Better Public Transport Fares for Melbourne](#) research, Infrastructure Victoria presents a number of recommendations to the Victorian Government for cheaper, safer and fairer public transport, including recommendations to address the challenges of managing social distancing on public transport.

The Victorian Transport Association has welcomed a key recommendation in the research to incentivise higher off-peak use of public transport by making it less expensive, and in so doing help to discourage passenger vehicle movements throughout Melbourne.

"As people resume working from their offices and places of business in and around the city, experience from around Australia and around the world is that public transport usage will plummet because people will revert to cars and bikes for their daily commute," said VTA CEO Peter Anderson.

"This will put enormous pressure on our road network, which is already compromised by infrastructure projects like level crossing removals, West Gate Tunnel and Metro Tunnel works, all of which involve significant heavy vehicle movements during construction.

"Buses, trams and trains are essential for reducing road congestion, so we support any measure that retains as much public transport patronage and capacity as possible as we move towards a COVID Normal world. Reducing off-peak fares will go a long way towards incentivising workers to continue using public transport and will complement greater flexibility expected from employers as people return to work," Anderson said.

Modelling by Infrastructure Victoria for the research showed:

- Up to 71% of Melburnians would pay less for public transport than they do today
- Over 96,000 car trips would be taken off Victorian roads on a typical weekday
- Crowding on busy train services will be reduced, with 30,000 fewer boardings during the peak times
- Over 100,000 new off-peak boardings across trains, trams and buses would be created
- Fare reform would generate about \$520 million in value each year for Victorians through more transport pricing options, reduced crowding and congestion and lower pollution.

"We urge the government to give serious consideration to these recommendations in the interests of mitigating road congestion so that supply chains can operate seamlessly and efficiently," Anderson said.

**Ends...**

**For the latest VTA news follow us on Twitter @VTAComms  
For further information please contact Brian O'Neil on 0411 055 284**