

Sunday 8 November 2009

STOPPING CRIME IN ITS TRACKS WITH NEW TRANSPORT SECURITY FORCE

- **Police Protective Services Officers on every metropolitan station after 6pm**
- **Major regional stations also covered**
- **Additional Victoria Police officers to patrol train, tram and bus networks**
- **More than 1,000 extra officers on public transport system**
- **Zero tolerance approach to crime on public transport**

A Victorian Liberal Nationals Coalition Government will make Victoria's train network safe again by putting Victoria Police Protective Services Officers (PSOs) on every train station in metropolitan Melbourne and the major regional centres after 6pm, seven days a week. Additional Victoria Police officers will also patrol the train, tram and bus networks.

We will turn stations from places of fear into places of safety.

Under our plan, Victorians will not be vulnerable and alone at stations. A dedicated unit of 940 fully trained professional Victoria Police PSOs will provide blanket coverage and protection at train stations every night.

In addition, we will recruit 100 additional Victoria Police officers to join the Transit Safety Division, bringing to 350 the total number of officers patrolling the entire train, tram and bus networks at all times.

The Coalition's plan guarantees that there will be uniformed officers on every station in metropolitan Melbourne and the major regional stations from 6pm until the last train, seven days a week.

Melbourne's metropolitan train stations and all stations in Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo and Traralgon will be protected by uniformed officers.

Train stations will be safe, secure and patrolled under a Coalition Government.

Policy

The Coalition will not tolerate crime, violence or anti-social behaviour on public transport.

Safe public transport is a right and it is vital to the fight against record rising violence on our streets, but the Brumby Government has failed to make public transport safe.

Anyone in the vicinity of a train station will know that if they can get to a train station they will find trained and armed Victoria Police Protective Services Officers with the skills and the powers to keep them safe.

The impact on communities across Melbourne and the major regional centres will be significant.

Lawlessness and violence force Victorians to fear for their safety and often avoid public transport and the train system, removing their basic right to a safe public transport network.

Women and elderly people in particular are frightened to use the public transport network, especially at night.

There were more than 9,000 reported offences on the public transport system last year, and levels of violence and unruly behaviour are at unacceptable levels.

Making the public transport system safe again means stopping and punishing illegal and anti-social behaviour, including violence, intimidation, offensive behaviour, public drunkenness and vandalism.

Under the Victorian Coalition's *Stopping Crime in its Tracks* plan:

- Victoria Police PSOs will form a dedicated unit of 940 uniformed and trained officers, under the direction of Victoria Police, providing blanket coverage of train stations from 6pm;
- Victoria Police PSOs will be permanently stationed on every train station in metropolitan Melbourne and the major regional centres from 6pm until last train, seven days a week;
- Victoria Police PSOs will be deployed exclusively on train stations and will not be diverted elsewhere;
- Victoria Police PSOs will be ready to respond to any threat, incident or attack that occurs on any train station from 6pm until last train;

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- PSOs will be in position to arrest, remove or impede any offenders or threatening individuals, unlike the current situation where customer service staff are told not to get involved in any incidents, and Victorians are left alone on stations;
- 100 new Victoria Police officers will be recruited to the Transit Safety Division to patrol train, tram and bus networks; and
- The Coalition will provide \$200 million over four years to fully fund an additional 940 Victoria Police Protective Services Officers, 100 Victoria Police Transit Safety Division Officers as well as minor facility improvements at stations for additional staff.

Victoria Police PSOs are armed and trained members of Victoria Police, subject to the Chief Commissioner's discipline and currently deployed at major public locations including Parliament House, the Department of Premier and Cabinet and the Victoria Police Centre.

If Victoria Police PSOs are good enough to protect the Premier and Parliament then they should also be utilised to protect Victorians at train stations.

Victoria Police PSOs train at the Police Academy to the same standard as police in weapons, defensive tactics and patrol duties.

PSOs are also trained to operate in specific limited locations and are uniquely suited to protecting Victorians on the public transport network.

It is a basic right for Victorians to be safe and secure on the transport system.

Making public transport safe and imposing zero tolerance on offenders will reduce serious criminal behaviour.

By showing a strong law and order presence on stations we will send a signal to Victorians that we will no longer tolerate unruly and anti-social behaviour, and that will have a broader impact on the culture of violence.

John Brumby has abandoned Victorians' safety. We will make the transport system safe and secure.

Victorians are living in fear because of growing violence and crime.

Labor stated in the 2006 election campaign that *'All Victorians should feel safe – whether they are in their homes, walking the streets, or catching public transport – during the day, and at night'*, yet John Brumby has failed to protect

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Victorians.

Our zero tolerance approach is in stark contrast to Labor's record of failure in addressing rising violent crime and adequately protecting Victorians.

Victorians expect leadership on key law and order issues, and the resources they need to be safe while travelling on public transport.

The government has failed this basic test.

Deployment Comparison Table

Unit	Coalition Number of Officers	ALP Number of Officers
Protective Services Officers (Train Stations)	940	0
Victoria Police Transit Safety Division	350	250
Authorised Officers (Tickets)	570	570
Total	1,860	820