

# Fresh calls to transform rail stations

**M**AROONDAH businessman Duncan Lee has supported calls for a major transformation of the Ringwood and Croydon railway stations.

But Mr Lee said the "vision" of local politicians Phil Honeywood and Gordon Ashley, for a commercial complex over Ringwood station was a little off course.

Mr Lee agreed the space above the two stations was valuable real estate waiting to be developed.

But he suggested the community would be better served by developing the proposed regional court complex and Ringwood police station above the Ringwood railway station.

It would save millions of dollars in land purchases, he said.

"Why pay up to \$6 million for prime commercial land when this space is available at no cost to the Government," he said.

Mr Lee questioned whether Ringwood needed more commercial space. "I know traders are having a tough time in Ringwood market," he said.

He said Croydon police station should be incorporated into the redevelopment of the Croydon railway station.

Mr Lee's comments follow the front page *Mail* article (16/5) announcing the joint study by Maroondah City Council and the Public Transport Corporation to look at the feasibility and commercial interest in Ringwood station's redevelopment.

Member for Bayswater Gordon Ashley said redevelopment of Ringwood station was of particular importance to residents.

"It has the potential to really draw the two sides of the road together," he said.

"It will also help overcome the awful difficulties people have in living on the south side of the railway line and may give them better access to amenities on the other side."

Mr Ashley said he had been pursuing the issue of redevelopment of the Ringwood station area for some time and welcomed public contribution to the debate.

He said since it was a joint feasibility study between Maroondah City Council and the PTC, people should put their ideas to the council.

Member for Warrandyte Phil Honeywood said the vision for the station was to create a major commercial centre. He said the State Government was very much aware of the important value of air space rights.

## Concern

"We would be pleased to hear of local support and input and would invite other local business people to provide their input and ideas on this project," he said. "It would be a concern though to have facilities such as a police station and court house on top of a highly public facility."

Mr Honeywood said anyone with input for the project should contact his electoral office.

"The study is open to suggestions and ideas," he said.

■ **HOW would you like to see the space above our railway stations developed? Send you ideas to the editor, 235A Maroondah Highway, Ringwood, 3134.**

18-3-97

# Track pride

RINGWOOD East railway station has become the pride of the community, thanks to the tireless work of 15 volunteers.

Led by resident Anne Kaufman, the team has held several working bees to clean up the station.

And with the help of Maroondah Council, the group has been able to complete substantial mulching, weeding and planting sessions at the station.

The work was completed as part of the Stationers — Right On Track program, an initiative of Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria and the Department of Infrastructure.

The program, which involves more than 60 stations across Melbourne, encourages community groups to landscape, beautify and maintain their local railway station.

General manager of Keep Australia Beautiful Victoria Anne Canterbury said the association between the community and the council had achieved great results.

ITY CLASSIFIEDS 9875 8000

mail 124

P7  
THE MAIL February 9, 1993NEWS **water**

# Cuts threat to rail links

By JANINE JONES

**C**UTS to rail services from Ringwood to Lilydale and Belgrave could lead to the eventual closure of these lines, the Public Transport Users' Association has claimed.

Association president Paul Mees said government plans to replace train services from Ringwood to Lilydale and Belgrave after 8pm would increase travel time from the city to these destinations by half an hour.

He said this would encourage more people to leave their cars at Ringwood Station and drive the remainder of the journey home.

This would result in decreased patronage, giving the government further excuses to cut services on the Ringwood-Lilydale, Ringwood-Belgrave lines until they were inoperable.

"It is a vicious spiral. They bring in the first round of cuts, patronage goes down and then that is used as justification to bring in the next round of cuts and that goes on until you have nothing to lose," he said.

Mr Mees said the government's decision not to return from its holiday timetable had cost outer eastern commuters dearly.

This had reduced the number of trains travelling between Ringwood and the city during peak hour from 18 to 14.

However, the Member for Warrandyte, Mr Phil Honeywood, said the government would not close train lines to Lilydale or Belgrave.

He said one of the reasons the Lilydale site was chosen for the outer eastern campus of Swinburne University was its close proximity to the train station.

Lilydale's high growth rate would also ensure that the rail line would not be closed, he said.

Mr Honeywood said the government's reforms to the transport system would improve access to the outer east.

An additional service, a midnight to dawn bus service between the city and Croydon, travelling via Hawthorn, Kew, Doncaster, Box Hill and Ringwood, would be introduced.

The buses would be fitted with mobile phones to enable commuters to arrange transport between bus stops and their homes.

A spokeswoman for the Minister for Transport, Mr Alan Brown, said the government had not decided when buses would replace trains after 8pm.

Its first priority was to concentrate on replacing closed country rail services with private buses.

When all issues in the country were resolved, tenders would be called for replacement bus services on city lines, she said.

# Passengers fear train horror

By LEIGH PARRY

**T**HE Public Transport Users' Association says passengers on the Belgrave and Lilydale train lines risk being almost "crushed to death" because of cutbacks to train services.

The association's president, Mr Paul Mees, said the Lilydale and Belgrave lines, which both pass through Ringwood, were the most severely affected of all metropolitan train services.

He said the service was slashed by 25 per cent at the height of peak hours.

*Mail 16-3-93 PJ*  
ceived dozens of complaints from passengers using both lines.

He said the association was committed to keeping pressure on the State Government to improve the services.

A PTC spokeswoman said the two lines had experienced "operational problems" over the last fortnight, including overhead problems and signal fires.

She said the number of complaints recorded from passengers using the two lines was no greater than anywhere else on the system and did not necessarily relate to the

new timetables.

The number of trains scheduled on the Belgrave line in the morning dropped from 13 in 1992 to 10 this year, the spokeswoman said.

She said afternoon train numbers fell from 14 to 11.

The PTC was carefully monitoring the situation on both lines to ensure complaints related to operational difficulties, not the frequency of services.

She said the corporation would look at increasing services if it proved necessary.

*Mail*  
*23-3-93*  
*pi*

# Safe Train needs help

*Bluep*  


By LEONORA ELLIOTT-BRUCE

**F**EARS that railway staff cuts could jeopardise passenger safety have prompted calls for residents to increase support for the Safe Train.

Last week's deal between the State Government, Trades Hall Council and public transport unions includes the return of trains after 8pm to most metropolitan lines including Ringwood, Croydon and Lilydale.

But the Public Transport Users' Association (PTUA) warned planned railway staff cuts could mean increased dangers to commuters.

Calling on the community to back stations and keep them safe, PTUA assistant secretary John McPherson said the Safe Train would be 'needed even more'.

"We are concerned that the reduction in railway staffing levels could mean some of the stations, particularly in the outer east, would be isolated and therefore people travelling at night could be at risk," he said.

Driver-only trains, automated ticket machines and roving customer services employees are expected to be phased in during the next 18 months as part of the government railway package.

Croydon Council's leisure and community development acting manager Nick Foa said the Safe Train Committee would seek a meeting with the Public Transport Corporation to discuss details of the railway deal.

Mr Foa said confusion had surrounded the Safe Train when buses looked likely to replace late night trains.

He said some service was likely to be created for commuters whether travelling by bus or train.

"The Safe Train Committee was going to meet with the PTC to discuss the buses and to harness community energy and to continue to provide a safe community.

"We are in a similar position, in that discussions will occur with the PTC to work out the best way of harnessing that community energy," he said.

Lilydale Shire CEO Warwick Heine welcomed the return of trains after 8pm and said he hoped the Safe Train would be continued 'because it is important to the safety and well-being of local communities'.

The Safe Train has continued from Lilydale at 5.58pm on Saturday nights returning at 11.34pm.

About 100 volunteers have manned the Lilydale, Mooroolbark, Croydon and Ringwood stations and travelled the train which includes live entertainment.

● For more details about the Safe Train, phone Coral Hutchinson on 723-4589.

● See editorial page 8

Do you feel safe on the trains? Send a letter to The Mail, 235A Maroondah Highway, Ringwood.

Mail 15-6-93 p1

# SOS on station

ONE of Ringwood's prized historical buildings could be demolished if State Government plans to revamp the railway station go ahead.

Ringwood is one of six stations earmarked for privatisation and commercial development this year.

But fears for the future of the century-old building have prompted Ringwood Council to seek urgent talks with the Government.

Mayor Greg Adkins said: "This is the only real historical building in the City of Ringwood. We need to slap a development protection order on it."

Ringwood Historical Research Group president, Mrs Ellie Pullin, said loss of the station would be a tragedy.

"It is practically the oldest thing we have got," she said. "It should not be demolished."

"I am not opposed to change but when it is detrimental and takes away a focal point, I am."

The Member for Warrandyte, Mr Phil Honeywood, said there were no definite plans to demolish the station.

But he said: "I don't think that building is on the historic buildings list and does not have much historical value."

by JODIE HAYTHORNE

"I don't think there would be a great push to keep it."

Mr Honeywood said Ringwood was an ideal site for redevelopment.

"Because of the appalling financial mess we have inherited, we don't have the money for facelifts at railway stations," he said.

"If we can achieve that through private sector-injected capital by way of having shops or retail outlets, it will benefit."

A spokesman for the Transport Minister, Mr Alan Brown, said redevelopment plans could include the existing building.

"Sometimes commercial redevelopment is based around the railway station and the historical elements can be saved," he said.

"We will be placing advertisements in the next month or so asking for people to express interest."

A spokesman for the Public Transport Users Association, Mr Patrick O'Connor, welcomed the redevelopment proposal.

"The more activity that centres on railway stations the more people will be attracted to public transport," he said.

"Most importantly, it will be an enormous help in counteracting vandalism and unruly behavior."

Post 18-8-93 p2 \*

# Rail station 'risk'

RAIL commuters on Belgrave and Lilydale lines face greater security risks with the removal of station staff according to Shadow Transport Minister Peter Batchelor.

Mr Batchelor said three quarters of Melbourne's Met Stations will be left without any staff after introduction of automatic ticket selling machines.

"The introduction of automatic ticketing machines at Met Stations

will be accompanied by yet to be publicly announced plans of the withdrawal of Met station staff," Mr Batchelor said.

Mr Batchelor said it is likely Croydon and Heathmont stations will be among 21 on the Lilydale and Belgrave lines to be left unstaffed.

Public Transport Corporation (PTC) spokesman Ray Wilson said the "down sizing" of station staff had "always been announced in ac-

cordance with the introduction of Automatic Fare Collection (AFC)".

"We haven't determined what stations will be effected," Mr Wilson said.

"Nothing has been finalised yet, it is subject to the company that gets the AFC contract," he said.

Mr Batchelor claimed the PTC has "secret plans" to remove station staff from all but 52 of the 195 Metropolitan stations and eight V-Line serviced stations to use a Met ticket.

"The de-staffing of stations has been going on secretly for months," Mr Batchelor said.

"The issue of safety will be exacerbated because the guards will also be removed from trains.

Mr Batchelor said the move will "pose a huge risk to passenger safety".

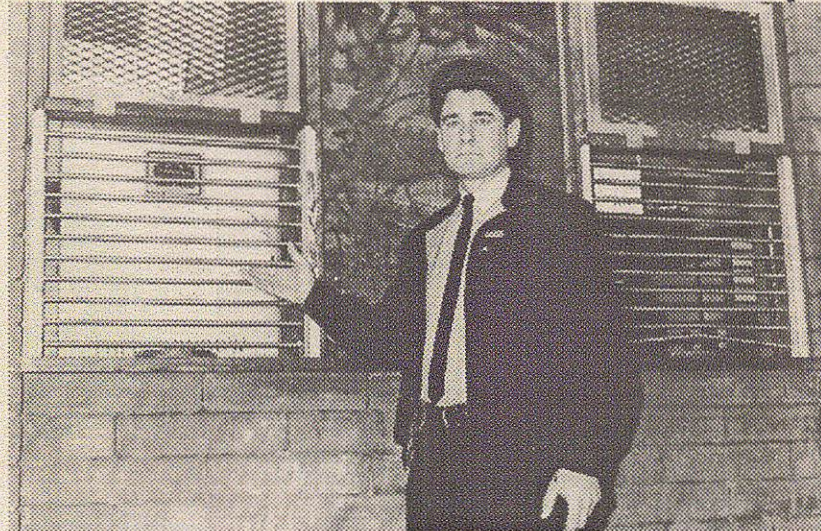
"In the current violent climate, safety is one of the main concerns of the commuting public ... automatic machines will not deter attacks, nor can they come to assist you."

Mr Wilson denied PTC plans to remove station staff were secret.

"We are introducing video surveillance, improving lighting, we are introducing customer service officers roving the system, telephones at stations and working closely with Victoria Police," he said.

Post 6-10-93 pg

## Rail staff cuts hit eastern suburbs



**AUSTRALIAN Services Union Branch Secretary David Williams says removal of staff from railway stations signals the end of safe train travel for commuters.**

A STATE government proposal to remove more than 80 per cent of staff from metropolitan railway stations is seen as the end of safe train travel for commuters by Australian Services Union (ASU) Branch Secretary and eastern suburbs resident David Williams.

Mr Williams, who says his members support introduction of automatic ticketing machines, believes the decision to leave up to 160 of Melbourne's metropolitan stations unstaffed will quickly increase incidences of vandalism, violence and serious crime on and around railway stations.

Eastern suburbs stations proposed to operate without weekend staff include Bayswater and Heatherdale while the Tecoma, Ferntree Gully, Heathmont, Ringwood East, Chatham and Canterbury stations are to be permanently unstaffed.

Mr Williams said removal of station staff would also highly disadvantage the elderly, disabled and parents with pushers.

He said without station staff and removal of guards from trains, the disabled would no longer have someone available to install the metal ramp for wheelchair access to carriages, to ensure the driver

left enough time for parents with pushers and little children to embark and alight from trains safely and to assist the sight impaired with timetable information.

The Government had not thought enough about how staff cuts would detrimentally affect train travellers, deciding to implement changes on a purely financial basis, Mr Williams said.

"What we will see is the rail service used by able-bodied working commuters at peak times, with the service virtually unused at non-peak and weekends," he said.

"Because there will be no guards on trains, passengers will be left very vulnerable with no one to help them if they are confronted or attacked whilst travelling," Mr Williams said.

"But passengers will be on their own when station after station is left unstaffed - and there will be little or no deterrent for acts of violence or vandalism," he added.

Mr Williams predicted staff cuts were the first step towards ultimate privatisation of the public rail system in Victoria.

"By running down the system and offering poor services that will receive dwindling patronage, it will be easier for the Government to convince the Victorian public to embrace a privatised public transport service," Mr Williams said.

by JODIE HAYTHORNE

THE Public Transport Users Association (PTUA) has described an alleged proposal to scrap MET staff from Ringwood East and Heatherdale rail stations as 'suicidal'.

The Opposition claims the Public Transport Corporation has secret plans to remove staff from all but 52 of the 195 metropolitan stations, replacing them with automatic ticketing machines.

But the Member for Silvan, Mrs Rosemary Varty, has denied the 'wild assertions'.

"I cannot imagine how they have got hold of that idea," she said.

"It is just scare mongering obviously."

Mrs Varty touted the benefits of automatic ticket machines which aim to recover \$30 million in fare evasion.

"If you look around the world, automatic ticket machines are one way of ensuring those who travel on trains do pay for it," she said.

"We know only a small percentage of people have been paying."

PTUA president Mr Paul Mees welcomed automation, but not at the expense of commuter safety.

"It is not just the Frankston line that is not safe," he said.

"In 1993 they (ticket machines) are not going

to stop the station being vandalised.

"Unfortunately there is no one to stop them vandalising the machines."

Mr Mees said commuters should boycott stations without MET staff.

"We have got no problem with them cutting two down to one (but) to cut them from one to none seems suicidal," he said.

"They will not get customers at those stations."

### Safety

"They will only get the poor people who have no choice."

Opposition Transport Minister Mr Peter Batchelor labelled the alleged restructure as dangerous.

"In the current violent climate, safety is one of the main concerns of the commuting public," he said.

"Having staff at the station gives a greater sense of personal security."

"Automatic ticketing

machines will not deter attacks nor can they come to assist you."

Sergeant Les Ross from the Ringwood Police said the scrapping of MET staff would increase demands on a force already under pressure doing their work.

"It would put extra pressure on us and... availability to the public," he said.

"The general public are going to suffer."

Sgt Ross said police were working in conjunction with the Transit Police.

A Transport Minister spokesman could not guarantee staff would not be scrapped and said safety was 'not an issue'.

"We reject there is any threat to public safety," he said.

"Victoria Police are now responsible for the public transport system and the government is working with them."

"We are looking at installing surveillance cameras and mobile phones at selected sites."

# MET's staff at stations in firing line

*mail 10-8-93*  
*PS*

Post 15-6-74 p3  
**Railway station security boost**

RINGWOOD railway station will be upgraded to "premium" status, under a \$20 million state government plan to improve security for rail travellers and encourage users back onto the system.

Ringwood and 50 other premium stations throughout the Met system will be staffed from first to last train, seven days a week. High level lighting, closed circuit television surveillance, public telephones and full booking office facilities will be installed.

On Lilydale and Belgrave lines, Croydon, Mitcham,

Blackburn and Box Hill will also be upgraded to premium, while other stations including Mooroolbark will be staffed on an as required basis, be given upgraded lighting and closed circuit TV which will be monitored at the nearest premium station. These stations will also have a panic button communication link to the closest premium station.

Additional to general Met staff, 330 customer service employees will be placed at stations and on trains working closely with transit police.

Post 25-5-74 p2  
**NEWS IN BRIEF**

**Facelift for Heathmont**

HEATHMONT station will receive a face-lift as part of a \$2 million State Government program to upgrade suburban railway stations.

Work will include upgrading of signs and seats, installation of public telephones and removal of graffiti. Safety will be improved with extra lighting and closed circuit television.

Bayswater MP Gordon Ashley expects the station upgrade to be completed by end of next month.

# BEHAVIOUR CLAMP-DOWN

THREATENING behaviour by groups of teenagers loitering around Maroondah City's train stations continues to be a source of fear for many rail commuters.

Both Croydon and Ringwood police say the problem is not new, with stations across the city attracting increased local and transit police activity in an effort to quell unruly behaviour.

According to police, Croydon, Ringwood, East Ringwood, Heathmont, Heatherdale and Mooroolbark stations all attract their share of trouble.

A number of elderly train travellers who use Mooroolbark station in Brice

Ave, have told Post they are too scared to catch trains after 3pm - when station staff finish work for the day - because they feel intimidated by groups of loitering teenagers.

In a recent incident, a proud father described to Post how his teenage daughter and her two friends helped an elderly man after he was assaulted at the station by two youths aged between 12 and 14.

The father said after the girls saw the youths push the elderly man to the ground, they rushed to his aid and pulled the youths away.

The girls asked someone to call an ambulance after the man became very

distraught and started changing colour, but the man told the girls he did not need an ambulance and just wanted to catch the train to visit his seriously ill wife in Maroondah Hospital.

It is believed the youths were running off as a train pulled in carrying two policeman who chased and caught the youths.

At the time, about 4pm on a recent Thursday, the elderly man, the teenage girls and two youths were the only people on the station platform.

Train travellers have told Post they would feel more comfortable catching afternoon trains if the Mooroolbark station was manned for longer hours.

Ringwood, East Ringwood, Heathmont and Heatherdale stations are already manned from the first morning train until the last train.

However, Senior Sergeant Graham Goodings of Croydon police said even though Croydon station was recently made a premium station and manned 24 hours a day, "it still remains a constant source of trouble".

"We are well aware of the problems at Croydon railway station and bus terminus. It is one of our (police) station's targets for extra patrols and increased police presence in general," Sen Sgt Goodings said.

"The biggest problems are caused

by groups of youths who loiter in the area, creating a nuisance and using intimidating behaviour which is disconcerting to people, especially the elderly," he said.

Snr Sgt Goodings said local police were working with transit police to stop the problem.

Snr Sgt Goodings' comments were backed-up by Senior Sergeant Jenny O'Toole from Ringwood CIB, who told Post that once Grand Prix commitments were out of the way, Ringwood police were planning an operation to clamp down on problem behaviour in railway stations.

• Continued Page 3

**State seats - here we go again: Page 2**

Post 91

13-3-96

# Rail clamp down

• From Page 1

"The problem tends to move from station to station, involving groups of unemployed youths, drinking and general abusive behaviour. Looking at our statistics, it's now time we gave stations another very good policing," Sen Sgt O'Toole said.

"If anyone notices a problem they should phone me or their local police station to let us know. Don't ignore the problem - it's your train station and you shouldn't be afraid to use it," she advised.

Sen Sgt O'Toole said last week an 18 year old man was forced to hand over an amount of cash

outside Heathmont railway station, after being approached and threatened by three men.

She warned rail users to be wary of people acting suspiciously and not to linger in stations for too long.

Chief Superintendent Peter Graham from police F District headquarters in Knox - F District takes in Maroondah City and surrounding areas - said while there is a core group of offenders, "on the whole local teenagers are well behaved".

He added that each police station in F District now has a police youth liaison officer who specialises in dealing

with young people and their problems, further helping to control the situation.

Supt Graham said F District also now has a crime prevention officer who can speak to the elderly who may have concerns.

He said the crime prevention officer, Senior Constable Jackie Poida, specialises in giving lectures to elderly groups on how to improve their safety and about generally feeling safer in the community.

Supt Graham said Sen Const Poida can be contacted at Knox police headquarters on 9881-7948.

Post P3 13-3-96

4725 Parkway

7

# Overhaul for two railway stations

by LEONORA ELLIOTT-BRUCE

RINGWOOD and Croydon railway stations are about to be overhauled as part of a Public Transport Corporation scheme to stamp out anti-social behavior.

The two stations will be manned from first to last train, platforms will be under constant manned video surveillance and high-intensity lighting will be fitted.

Croydon will also be linked to a main security control room at Ringwood, telephones will be installed on stations and transit police will patrol carriages between stations.

The PTC will officially launch the new-look stations — which are part of a massive statewide project — within the next few weeks.

PTC spokesman Ray Wilson said the stations' upgrades had been planned for some time and aimed to improve the public's perception of rail travel.

"The Ringwood/Croydon line has been identified as a trouble spot for sometime but we're doing our best to eradicate anti-social behavior," he said.

As reported in *The Mail* (January 23) this year, violence and vandalism has caused major problems at the Croydon railway station with large objects left on tracks.

The report followed the death of a teenager "surfing" on top a train heading for Lilydale.

"Billy" Rowe died after hitting the Dorset Rd, Croydon, bridge at about 11.30pm on January 4.

Mr Wilson said the PTC was working hard to dispel the myth that train travelling especially at night was dangerous.

"This is a massive upgrade which is already showing benefits in other areas," he said.

The Camberwell and Alamein railway stations were upgraded in April last year and Mr Wilson said since then vandalism and anti-social behavior had dropped markedly.

"We have been very pleased with the results and we are sure that Ringwood and Croydon railway sta-

*"The Ringwood/Croydon line has been identified as a trouble spot for sometime but we're doing our best to eradicate anti-social behavior."*

— PTC spokesman Ray

Wilson

tions will benefit too," he said.

He said railway station-related crime dropped 13.9 per cent across the metropolitan area last year.

Ringwood police Senior-Sergeant Jeff Haines welcomed the Ringwood station upgrade and said the station had been identified as an area of high activity.

Police regularly patrolled the sta-

tion with help from transit police, he said.

"Vandalism and anti-social behavior has been going on for years at various locations and Ringwood is included in those area, but we have to realise that some of the trouble is the public's perception of what is happening," Sen-Sgt Haines said.

"Quite often people will see a group of young people and automatically think there's a problem, which is not always the case.

"While I do accept there is the graffiti, anti-social behavior and alcohol problems, the reality is everyone who is at a railway station is not a trouble-maker."

Police were well aware of the trouble-makers, Sen-Sgt Haines said.

"And we keep our eye on them," he said.

Croydon Sen-Sgt Graham Gooding said the Croydon railway station was a nucleus for the business and commuting public.

"It's a bit of a hub for trains and buses and because there are such huge amounts of people coming through the area, there can be some problems," he said.

Police focused on the station for that reason, he said and during the past three months had patrolled it 394 times.

Young people tended to congregate at the station but not all caused trouble, Sen-Sgt Gooding said.

"For the vast majority of young people who live in Croydon there are very few who come into police notice.

"But I think the station upgrade will certainly help," Sen-Sgt Gooding said.

mail p7 30-4-96

mail  
P3 6-8-96

# Stations upgraded

by JAMIE DUNCAN

RINGWOOD and Croydon rail stations joined a new era in public transport last week when they were officially opened as premium stations by Transport Minister Alan Brown.

As part of the premium station program, new station facilities, security lights and closed-circuit cameras have been installed.

The works at Ringwood cost \$380,000, while at Croydon the improvements cost \$235,000.

The two stations, along with 40 others already completed under the program, will be staffed from the first train to the

last each day. The premium station program is now complete on the Lilydale, Belgrave and Alamein rail lines.

"Travellers now have a combined customer service centre and waiting area that provides a staff presence while passengers are waiting for a train," Mr Brown said.

"As an added security measure, security cameras . . . have been installed and to enhance safety at night, security lights which literally turn night into day have also been installed.

"Customers using the premium stations that have opened clearly appreciate the added security of the facilities we are providing, and I have no doubt this will be the case here at Ringwood and Croy-

don." Public Transport Corporation chief executive Ian Hobbs said smaller stations in the Ringwood area had not been forgotten during the program.

He said those stations would be provided with improved lighting, and video and audio links to a state-of-the-art security monitoring room at Ringwood station.

The premium station initiative was among the reasons Melburnians were returning to public transport, Mr Brown said.

Figures released last week showed patronage on Melbourne's trains had increased 3.7 per cent in 1995-96.

The launching of local premium stations came following revelations reported

in the *Mail* early in 1996 that local railway stations were the target of vandals.

At Croydon in January, automatic glass doors installed at Croydon station as part of the premium upgrade were smashed.

At the time, Croydon station master Bill Wellington called for more police on the Lilydale line to curb the incidence of train and station vandalism.

But a Public Transport Corporation spokesman said many security problems would be solved by the premium station upgrades.

Post p 2 7-8-96

# Lilydale line goes premium

RINGWOOD, Croydon and Lilydale Railway Stations were officially opened as Premium Stations by Transport Minister Alan Brown this week, completing the State Government's Lilydale line upgrade.

"As Premium Stations, all three will be staffed for all trains, seven days a week. At Ringwood, improvements costing \$380,000 have been carried out, including installation of 16 closed-circuit television cameras which monitor both platforms, station approaches and the car park," Mr Brown said.

"Work totalling \$235,000 was carried out at Croydon, with 12 closed-circuit cameras covering the entire station area," he said.

Mr Brown said new customer service centres, combined with improved waiting areas at all three stations would mean increased staff presence while customers wait for trains.

Brighter lighting has



**TRAINING IN STYLE....** Transport Minister Alan Brown joined Ringwood station masters David Sands and Stephan Neville for the official opening of Ringwood Railway Station as a Premium Station this week.

also been installed at the three stations, which have in the past been the scene of disturbances involving groups of loitering teenagers.

"The opening of these stations brings to 11 the number of Premium Stations along the Lilydale and Belgrave lines. It's part of our program of upgrading the busiest 61

suburban rail stations to Premium status," Mr Brown said.

Ringwood is used by 6500 people each weekday, placing it among the 10 busiest suburban stations, while Lilydale and Croydon stations are used by more than 2000 people each weekday, putting them in the top 40.

Mr Brown said other

stations along the Lilydale line would also be improved and refurbished as part of a \$51 million upgrade program.

"At these stations, closed-circuit television cameras, bright lighting, audio communication and public address systems will be installed and linked to the Ringwood Premium Station," Mr Brown said.