

had set an 84-minute travel time from Bendigo to Melbourne, but testing showed that the 84 minutes could be achieved with a stop in Castlemaine.

"I keenly supported the push for Castlemaine and am glad the residents can share in this historic rail upgrade."

The exciting new service is not the only boost for

port since the late 1800s."

There will be five new peak and nine new off-peak services each weekday, hourly off-peak services, plus 27 more services on weekends.

Victorian Premier Steve Bracks said Bendigo line travellers, especially those in Castlemaine, were among the big win-

the opposition transport spokesman Terry Mulder who described the upgrade as a "disaster".

"This was sold prior to the 1999 elections as fast trains in regional Victoria," Mr Mulder said.

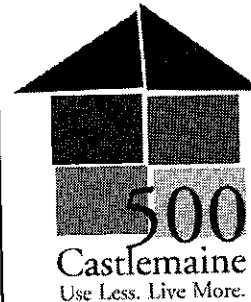
"When you look at the new timetable, compare it to the old timetable, you're still looking at savings in

"You can imagine the complexity and coordination that a shift like this takes. There are a lot of players involved and we have all worked together to make this happen," Mr Barnett said.

Mr Barnett asked customers to look out for information as selected services on the Ballarat, Geelong and Bendigo lines would be running at 160km/h starting from late August.

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