



TABLE TALK

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TABLE 751

QUEENSCLIFF - SORRENTO

(Queenscliff Ferry)

Days of operation	Monday - Sunday						
Service No.	QF01	QF03	QF05	QF07	QF09	QF11	QF13
Ferry	Ferry	Ferry	Ferry	Ferry	Ferry	Ferry	Ferry
Catering	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Seating	Ec	Ec	Ec	Ec	Ec	Ec	Ec
QUEENSCLIFF dep	07:00	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00
SORRENTO arr	07:40	08:40	09:40	10:40	11:40	12:40	13:40

Days of operation	Monday - Sunday					
Service No.	QF15	QF17	QF19	QF21	QF23	QF25
Ferry	Ferry	Ferry	Ferry	Ferry	Ferry	Ferry
Catering	•	•	•	•	•	•
Seating	Ec	Ec	Ec	Ec	Ec	Ec
QUEENSCLIFF dep	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00A
SORRENTO arr	14:40	15:40	16:40	17:40	18:40	19:40

SORRENTO - QUEENSCLIFF

(Queenscliff Ferry)

Days of operation	Monday - Sunday						
Service No.	QF00	QF02	QF04	QF06	QF08	QF10	QF12
Ferry	Ferry	Ferry	Ferry	Ferry	Ferry	Ferry	Ferry
Catering	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Seating	Ec	Ec	Ec	Ec	Ec	Ec	Ec
SORRENTO dep	07:00	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00
QUEENSCLIFF arr	07:40	08:40	09:40	10:40	11:40	12:40	13:40

Days of operation	Monday - Sunday					
Service No.	QF14	QF16	QF18	QF20	QF22	QF24
Ferry	Ferry	Ferry	Ferry	Ferry	Ferry	Ferry
Catering	•	•	•	•	•	•
Seating	Ec	Ec	Ec	Ec	Ec	Ec
SORRENTO dep	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00A
QUEENSCLIFF arr	14:40	15:40	16:40	17:40	18:40	19:40

For connecting service Queenscliff-Geelong-Melbourne, see Table 819

Additional Symbols:

A - Operates only from 26 December to end of daylight savings period

• - Light Refreshments on board

Ec - Passenger seating provided in lounge

This is a Private Ferry Service. Tickets available on the Ferry.

For further information: Phone Queenscliff Sorrento Car & Passenger Ferries, 5258 3244 or visit www.searoad.com.au

Departure Locations:

Queenscliff - Larkin Parade

Sorrento - Causeway, Sorrento Pier

V Line's Staff Reference timetable: source of useful and unexpected information – page 2

About *Table Talk*

Table Talk is published monthly by the Australian Association of Timetable Collectors Inc. (Registration No. A0043673H) as a journal of record covering recent timetable news items. The AATTC also publishes the **Times** covering timetable history and analysis. Contributions are very welcome and should be sent to the appropriate Editor.

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TOP TABLE TALK

V LINE STAFF REFERENCE TIMETABLE, 19 JULY 2009

by Victor Isaacs

What is a Staff Reference Timetable? It is for use by employees, but it is not a Working Timetable. Its content is similar to timetables issued to the public, but it is not a Public Timetable. It falls somewhere between Working and Public timetables in concept, but it is definitely much closer to Public timetables than Working timetables.

It is full of information of use and interest equally to those interested in rail and bus (and even ferry).

The V Line Staff Reference Timetable is, in fact, a compilation of all of V Line's various Public timetable brochures, plus additional information. It is what a V Line complete system Public timetable would be, if only they would issue it as a public document.

This article reviews the current Staff Reference timetable of 19 July 2009. It commences with five pages of information about reservation conditions applicable to a few services. This is the only part of the 274 page document which reads as if it is directed at staff. Nevertheless, even this section would be of benefit if it were a public document. It contains information such as time restrictions for reservations on some long-distance trains from stations which are also well-served by short-distance trains. Dissemination of this information to the public would, no doubt, lead to fewer inquiries and reduced pressure on booking offices. The rest of the Staff Reference timetable is all written as if directed at the public, even though it is not made available to the public. For example, page 12 commences with a heading, "When you need to book", and page 16 includes such things as "Southern Cross Station has a large number of shopping outlets and cafes to explore".

There are useful indexes to the entire V Line network, which would be very useful to the general travelling public. This includes not only the expected "Melbourne to" index (which includes a list of facilities at stations), but also indexes of services from Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo. There is a very useful list of accredited V Line agents. (This, however, includes a real schoolboy howler displaying an elementary ignorance of geography outside of Victoria, where Canberra is listed as being in NSW! I know there is a rule of thumb that you can't completely rely on information provided outside a system's home state, but this is ridiculous. Similarly, the listing of Australian time zones also ignores both the ACT and Tasmania.)

Then there are useful maps of both the V Line and metropolitan networks, calendars, and a list of bus stop locations. This introductory section also includes information of great potential use to a rail traveller, if only s/he had it in available: lists of Best Western Inn, Flag Inn and Youth Hostel accommodation locations, rental car locations and taxi services on the V Line network.

Although the Staff Reference timetable is, in the main, a compilation of V Line Public timetable brochures, the first timetable section has no Public timetable equivalent. This section is of Interstate services. It is of potential very great usefulness to prospective travellers. Table 1 is of Countrylink's Melbourne-Sydney services. Then there is V Line's Melbourne-Canberra services. Table 3 shows Melbourne to Adelaide. This is a large and complicated table, because it includes Great Southern's *Overland*, V Line's *Daylink* via Bendigo, *Daylink* via Ararat, and *Nightlink* via Ballarat. There are timetables which show services which do not touch on Melbourne at all, but are of great potential usefulness to Victorians who are travelling. Table 4 is a very neat summary of Sydney-Brisbane-Bundaberg-Rockhampton-Cairns services. Table 5 shows Sydney and Melbourne to Perth. Table 7 is to Darwin. It looks like a mistake was made here, because the forward table shows connections from Melbourne, as one would expect, but the return instead shows connections to Sydney. Tables showing other interstate services from Victoria follow. One useful table summarises Countrylink's NSW North Coast trains.

The next section is called "Cross Regional". The tables in this section, with two exceptions, are all in various V Line public timetable brochures, but it is very useful to have them together. The two additional services, not repeated from public brochures, are, interestingly, Countrylink's bus services from Echuca to Wagga Wagga and Echuca to Albury.

The bulk of the Staff Reference timetable is of intrastate V Line services. This is divided into South western, Western, Northern, North eastern and Eastern sections. The information in these is exactly as in V Line Public timetables, but with a very, very useful addition. Where there are services by alternative routes, the Staff Reference timetable gives us overall summaries. These are provided for Melbourne to Mount Gambier, Maryborough and Echuca.

The South western section gets away from a Melbourne bias, by also including Geelong to Adelaide, Mildura and Bendigo (which are also available in V Line public timetable brochures) and Geelong to Sydney and Canberra (which are not).

The final section of the Staff Reference timetable is headed "Coaches". The information is not generally readily available in hard copy, although it is all available by interrogating the Viclink website by a clunky, time-consuming process. This section, if it were available in a hard copy public document, would really be appreciated.

This section is sub-divided into the usual five V Line geographic regions. It commences with a most useful listing of all country bus operators in Victoria, arranged by cities (Geelong, Ballarat, Bendigo and Latrobe Valley), followed by town operators, then rural services. It lists network or route, names of operators and their phone numbers. Then there are timetables of some of the routes. It actually starts not with a bus service, but a ferry – Queenscliff to Sorrento (on our front cover). Then there is:

- Timboon-Warrnambool (Thursdays only) P
- Portland-Hamilton (Mon-Fri) P
- Naracoorte SA-Horsham (Mon-Fri) P
- Mildura-Horsham (Mon Wed Fri southbound, Tue, Thur, Fri northbound) P
- Avoca-Maryborough-Ballararat (Mon-Fri, supplemented by Tue & Fri service) P
- Ballarat-Maryborough (Mon-Fri) P
- Ballarat-Melbourne Airport (every day) P
- Horsham-Balmoral-Hamilton (Mon-Fri) P
- Lake Bolac-Willaura-Ararat (Tue, Wed, Thur, Sat) P
- Broken Hill NSW-Mildura (Mon Wed Fri) P
- Hepburn-Daylesford-Ballan (Mon-Fri) P
- Mt Egerton-Ballan (Mon-Fri) P
- Maldon-Castlemaine with connections to Bendigo (every day) P
- Maldon-Castlemaine with connections to Melbourne (every day) P
- Tooleybuc NSW-Swan Hill (Mon-Sat) P
- Ballarat-Maldon-Bendigo (Wed only) P
- Rokewood-Ballararat (Tue, Thur) P
- Blackwood-Bacchus Marsh (Fri only) P
- Rushworth-Shepparton (Sat only) P
- Bendigo-Shepparton (Mon-Fri) P
- Khancoban NSW-Corryong-Albury NSW (Mon-Sat) P

- Eildon-Melbourne (every day) P or V Line?
- Omeo-Bairnsdale (Mon-Fri) P
- Paynesville-Bairnsdale (Mon-Sat) V Line & P
- Lakes Entrance-Bairnsdale (every day) V Line & P
- Wonthaggi-Mirboo North-Traralgon (Mon-Fri) P
- Yarram-Traralgon (Mon-Fri) P
- Warragul-Noojee (Mon-Fri) P
- Loch Sport-Sale (Mon Wed Fri) P
- Gelantipy-Sale (Wed, Fri) P
- Donald-Horsham ((Wed, Thur) P
- Ouyen-Warracknabeal and Birchip-Warracknabeal-Horsham (Wed only) DOT
- Kaniva-Horsham (Wed only) DOT
- Sea Lake-Swan Hill (Thur only) & Ultima-Swan Hill (Fri only) P
- Hopetoun-Horsham (Wed, Thur) DOT
- Warrnambool Hamilton-Ararat (Tue, Fri, Sun) DOT
- Heathcote-Bendigo (Mon-Fri) P
- Southern Cross Station-Melbourne Airport (every day) P
- Southern Cross Station-Avalon Airport (every day) P

P means “Private” service. DOT means “Department of Transport” service. Where appropriate, V Line train connections are shown.

This series of bus timetables is intensely interesting. It certainly includes a number of services I was not aware of.

There are, however, a number of anomalies. Firstly, it is not clear why the listing goes from west to east, then suddenly swings back to the far west of Victoria.

Secondly, we discover a further conundrum to add to the question of “What is a V Line Bus” which has been the subject of a number of articles in *Table Talk*. (Well, alright, I concede, I am obsessed with this.) As well as “V Line” and “Private” buses, we now discover a category designated “Department of Transport” buses. Perhaps a distinction is that, in fact, most of the “Private” buses would get most of their revenue from mail contracts, but the “DOT” buses are completely subsidised by the DOT.

It is certainly not clear what the basis of timetable selection is. Most, but not all, lengthy non V Line bus services are shown in detail. Some minor services are included and some are not. There are many additional rural bus routes which are listed at the beginning of this section, but whose timetables are not included, for example Casterton-Hamilton, Alvie-Colac, Smeaton-Ballararat, Melbourne-Falls Creek.

There are also some interesting points about some of these routes.

- There are some routes which have both “V Line” and “Private” buses. Of these Wangaratta-Beechworth is shown in the main “North eastern” section, whereas Bairnsdale-Paynesville and Bairnsdale-Lakes Entrance are in the “Coaches” section.
- There are headings for, but no tables of, services from Geelong to various Bellarine Peninsula destinations. A few years ago, the Staff Reference timetable did include full timetables of these, and the headings must be a remnant.
- Ballarat to Melbourne Airport is listed, but routes from other major country cities to Melbourne Airport are not.
- Warrnambool-Hamilton-Ararat is an anomaly. It is the only non V Line bus service which is on V Line’s website – but it is not in a V Line paper public timetable.
- Maldon-Castlemaine is especially favoured. This gets two tables, one showing connections to Bendigo and one with connections to Melbourne. This service is also curious in that it is a former railway branchline. Most railway replacement buses are designated “V Line” whereas this is “Private”.
- Rushworth Murchison East-Shepparton is especially interesting in that it only operates on Saturdays, yet on that day there are no less than three services, but the table also says “This service will not operate unless pre-booked”.
- Khancoban-Corryong-Tallangatta (or Walwa)-Wodonga-Albury has two services via different routes on Mondays-Fridays and one on Saturdays. It has no less than three operators, depending on the route and the day.

- Eildon to Melbourne has been the subject of speculation in *Table Talk* already as to whether it is a “V Line” or “Private” service (see *Table Talk* June 2008) (for “Private”: not on any V Line public timetable or map, buses not in V Line livery; whereas for “V Line”: has a V Line sticker across the windscreen, included in lists of V Line departures/arrivals at Southern Cross.) Now this question is even further muddied. The Staff Reference timetable says “V Line tickets accepted on this service for travel to/from locations between Narbethong and Eildon”.
- The tables from Southern Cross to Melbourne Airport and Avalon Airport are summaries only.

In summary, the V Line Staff Reference timetable is a most useful document bringing together mainly information already in V Line’s Public timetables, but in a manageable consolidated format. As well, it contains additional very useful information. It is all written in a format for the public. It is widely distributed, not just to V Line employees, but also agents and tourist bureaux. Making it available as a public book would most certainly justify imposing a price for the convenience of the document. Indeed, until about 15 years ago it was sold as a Public timetable book. And since then, V Line has placed a whole lot of other information in the public domain. The question, therefore, is why it is not available now as a public timetable – that is indeed one of the Great Mysteries of Life!

The V Line Staff Reference timetable of 19 July 2009 is available from the AATTC Distribution Service.

RAIL & TRAM NEWS

ARTC: Interstate Working timetable 26 July 09

ARTC has re-issued its Interstate Working timetable - dated 26 July 2009. It is, as usual, on the ARTC website, under “Access Seeker/Committed Capacity”. Copies are available from the AATTC Distribution Service.

The Interstate graphical timetables on the ARTC’s website are now in a clearer format.

ARTC: Hunter Valley upgrades

The \$28 million duplication from St Helier to Muswellbrook came into use from 14 August.

ARTC has signed an agreement to create the Upper Hunter Valley Alliance to deliver a \$152 million program of works to increase the coal carrying capacity of the network. In alliance with ARTC, Leighton Contractors will undertake civil and track works in accordance with the ARTC 2009 – 2018 Hunter Valley Corridor Capacity Strategy. The work includes:

- **Nundah Bank track triplication** – a third track approximately 8km long to be laid at Nundah Bank by 30 April 2012;
- **Drayton Junction upgrade** by 31 Nov 2010;
- **Werris Creek by-pass** - re-instatement of the line to Gap and establishment of a triangle connection to by-pass of Werris Creek by 31 Dec 2010;
- **Scone Yard reconfiguration** by 31 Dec 2010;
- **Passing loop construction** at Braefield; Quipolly; Quirindi; Wingen; and Koolbury;
- **Passing loop extensions** at Parkville; Murrurundi.

ARTC has also awarded contracts as part of the \$100 million Ulan Line Alliance to design and construct passing loops and associated tunnel ventilation works between Muswellbrook and Ulan. ARTC CEO David Marchant says that the upgrade is essential if the network is to keep pace with increasing demand for coal from the region. Demand for coal from Ulan is set to grow exponentially by 2012. The program covers:

- Passing Loops by 31 Dec 2009 at Aerosol Valley, Worondi and Radio Hut;
- Passing Loops by 31 Dec 2011 at Bengalla and Wilpinjong and a further two loops at 337 km and 378 km;
- Passing Loops by 31 Dec 2012 at 353 km and 390 km;
- Bylong Tunnel ventilation by 31 Dec 2009.

ARTC: Sydney-Melbourne line upgrades

Regauging and re-sleeping with concrete sleepers from Wodonga to Seymour was completed in early August. The \$45 million project saw 225,000 timber sleepers replaced by concrete sleepers. Work continues on new passenger platforms and other ancillary works. The Albury-Wodonga bypass, including a new station at Wodonga West is expected to be completed early next year.



In June work commenced on the 5 km Donnybrook passing lane – an extension of the existing Donnybrook loop north almost to Beveridge. On 28 August construction of the new Wodonga station commenced.

Train Control Junee took over control of the Victorian North East line, along with the Benalla - Oaklands branch, from 30 August 2009. It was formerly controlled from Mile End, Adelaide. The standard gauge line is now known as the East line, and the former broad gauge (now standard gauge) line is now called the West line. ARTC is now issuing Train Alteration Advices (TAA) for their lines in Victoria.

ARTC: Cootamundra-Parkes upgrade

A \$91.5 million project to upgrade the Cootamundra-Parkes line (which is used by Sydney-Perth freight trains) commenced in early August. Placement of 301,000 concrete sleepers will be the major feature.

Pacific National goes electric

Following commissioning on 16 August of the second of PN's order for 25 narrow gauge 7100 class Siemens electric locomotives, PN has commenced electric operation of some of their coal trains in Queensland.

QR to survive

On 2 June the Queensland Premier announced that the State government would sell the QR coal network and sell or lease the regional QR network to ARTC (see July *Table Talk*, p. 3). On 19 August she advised State Parliament that "the Federal government has advised us that it is not in a position to take ownership of the [regional] network. It has said that as the agency leading the national freight network, the ARTC is currently undertaking a \$1.2 billion project across the nation and has no capacity at this time."

QR CityTrain: Park Road stops

From 2 August over 75% of Gold Coast line trains have stopped at Park Road. This is to facilitate interchange with the new Boggo Road Busway station on the South East Busway which opened the next day, and from which a direct trip to UQ St Lucia campus can be made.

QR Cityrtrain late running

QR is reportedly facing its second fine in two years after it failed to dramatically improve the number of late peak-hour trains. Figures recently released by TransLink show 91.7% of peak-hour services arrived on-time last year – or an average of 18 late trains every day. However QR is contractually obligated to ensure 92.4% of peak-hour trains arrive within four minutes of their scheduled time, with no more than 0.5% of trains cancelled. Citytrain was fined \$6.7 million last year for its worst performance in more than four years.

QR cattle trains

Queensland Transport Minister, Rachel Nolan, has stated that operation of cattle trains by Queensland Rail will continue. About 10% of cattle movements in Queensland are by rail. QR is the only Australian rail system still operating stock trains.

NSW Rail Corp TOC August 09

A new edition of the NSW Rail Corp Train Operating Conditions (TOC) manual has been issued, version 14, dated August 2009, replacing the edition of April 2009. The TOC gives details of such things as rolling stock, train running times, loads, signal boxes, special local conditions, gradients and diagrams of lines.

CityRail Working timetable 11 October 09 *by Geoff Lambert*

During June 2009, CityRail issued the latest (version 2.04 and probably final) drafts of its new SWTT. The drafts consist of weekday and weekend volumes of the SWTT itself, Platform Workings at major stations, and Train Rosters (Zig-Zag diagrams). In addition, there is a single document "Starts and Satbles" for weekdays and weekend combined. Crew Rosters are also in existence, but have not been sighted by AATTC. The weekday SWTT has expanded from 440 to 466 pages since draft No. 1.0. AATTC is yet to analyse it in full, but some of the strangenesses present in Version 1.0 are still present- e.g. Epping-Chatswood trains which run empty to North Sydney Tunnel and then retrace their steps. One notable feature revealed by the Zig-Zag diagrams is that the majority of car sets finish each day in a different depot from the one from which they started (except for Mortdale, where all the little sheep return home dragging their tails behind them). The sets are, however, balanced by type of set, so the starting mixture at dawn at any one depot is always uniform. The Platform lists are particularly interesting in that, for main line stations, they contain colour-coded entries for Freight trains as well as Passenger trains. It is six years since any mention of freight trains was made in a CityRail SWTT- and even then it appeared to have been a mistake. The total number of pages for the 8 volumes is more than 1550. That's 1.5 reams of double-sided paper per employee. (Not counting the crew rosters!).

In addition to producing its Passenger SWTT, CityRail has, for the first time in about 45 years, produced a *Standard Working Time Table- Freight Services* for the Greater Sydney System. Of 88 pages, it is structured in a similar manner to that of the Passenger SWTT, has a similar page layout and, because it is labelled as "Book 4", seems to be considered part of the CityRail package. The SWTT takes effect from 11 October and, as it is shown as Version 2.08, earlier draft versions may exist. It was printed on 13 August. It is reported that the new Freight SWTT will replace the existing format SWTT from October.

Countrylink Public timetable 11 October 09

PDFs of Countrylink's new Public timetable brochures, effective 11 October 2009, are available on their website, www.countrylink.info. Changes are:

North Coast

- **0715 Sydney to Casino XPT** There are only minor changes between Sydney and Wauchope. From Kempsey to Casino this will run approx 10 minutes later and arrive in Casino at 1844.
- Bus connections at Grafton and Casino will depart 10 minutes later also. The stopping pattern for buses from Casino has been changed.

- **1135 Sydney to Grafton XPT** There are only minor changes between Sydney and Coffs Harbour. It will arrive Grafton 10 minutes later at 2210. This is due to the crossing of other trains in the area. On Fridays and Sundays it will arrive in Grafton at 2155.
- **1620 Sydney to Brisbane XPT** will depart at 1612 and run between 10 and 15 minutes earlier between Sydney and Kempsey. There are minor changes between Macksville and Brisbane and will arrive in Brisbane at 0630.
- **Bus services** from Casino will depart 10 minutes later at 0410.
- **0730 Brisbane to Sydney XPT** will depart Brisbane at 0730 but will run to earlier times from Kyogle to Sydney. Times will be 15 to 20 minutes earlier between Casino and Macksville and 45 minutes earlier between Kempsey and Sydney arriving at 2106.
- **Bus services** 166, 162 and 164 that connect with the XPT in Casino and service 144 that connects at Grafton will operate up to 20 minutes earlier.
- The **bus service from Grafton to Moree** will depart 20 minutes earlier at 1145.
- **0630 Grafton to Sydney XPT** has no major changes
- **1925 Casino to Sydney XPT** will depart 5 minutes later at 1930 with only minor changes to Macksville. From Kempsey to Sydney will operate 10 to 15 minutes earlier arriving Sydney 16 minutes earlier at 0652.
- The **taxi service from Lennox Head to Lismore** will depart at 1650, 35 minutes earlier
- **Taree to Newcastle bus services via Forster** will depart earlier from most locations. The bus stops at Nerong and Boolambayte have been discontinued and the stop at Green Point Turnoff has been relocated to Tiona Park.

North West

- **1534 Werris Creek to Moree Xplorer (XPL)** will depart Werris Creek at the current time but arrive in Gunnedah 10 minutes earlier, Boggabri, Narrabri and Bellata 15 minutes earlier and Moree 18 minutes earlier at 1848. The service from Moree to Werris Creek is unaltered.
- There are only minor changes to services between Sydney and Armidale and return.
- The bus service from Moree to Grafton will depart at 1115 but will operate to altered times between Glen Innes and Grafton.

South

- **0745 Sydney to Melbourne XPT** will depart Sydney 3 minutes earlier at 0742 with minor changes between Sydney and Cootamundra.
- **2040 Sydney to Melbourne XPT** will depart as formerly but operate 2 minutes earlier between Campbelltown and Cootamundra.
- Both the day and night **Melbourne-Sydney XPTs** arrive Sydney 1 minute earlier.
- **0658 Sydney to Canberra XPL** will depart as formerly but operate 2 minutes earlier from Campbelltown.
- **1210 Sydney to Canberra XPL** will depart Sydney 5 minutes earlier at 1205 and operate 2 minutes earlier from Campbelltown.
- **1815 Sydney to Canberra XPL** will depart Sydney 4 minutes earlier at 1811 with minor changes between Sydney and Canberra.
- **0637 Canberra to Sydney XPL** will now depart Canberra at 0643 with minor changes between Canberra and Sydney.
- **1205 Canberra to Sydney XPL on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays** will depart Canberra at 1152 and operate 10 to 15 minutes earlier. The Sunday service is not changed.
- **1705 Canberra to Sydney XPL** will depart Canberra at 1703 and run two minutes earlier between Canberra and Goulburn.
- There are minor changes to **buses from Eden and Bombala to Canberra** with the stopping pattern in Canberra altered to go direct to the station and then via the hospitals to Canberra Civic.
- The **0915 bus from Queanbeyan to Cootamundra** will depart as formerly but operate up to 15 minutes earlier between Canberra Civic and Yass Junction.

West

- **0620 Sydney-Broken Hill Xplorer on Mondays** departs Sydney 1 minute later at 0621.
- **Broken Hill-Sydney Xplorer on Tuesdays** arrives Sydney 9 earlier at 2139.

- **0710 Sydney to Dubbo XPT** has only minor changes to locations between Sydney and Bathurst. From Blayney to Orange the service will operate up to 5 minutes earlier. There are minor changes also between Stuart Town and Geurie.
- **1410 Dubbo to Sydney XPT** will operate between 2 and 7 minutes earlier between Wellington and Lithgow and will arrive Sydney 1 minute earlier at 2139.
- **Bus Services.** There are a number of changes. Times at Lithgow have been altered to maintain connections with CityRail trains. This results in minor changes with some services departing between 5 and 10 minutes earlier.
- **1430 Dubbo to Lightning Ridge** will depart 10 minutes earlier at 1420 with earlier times at locations between Dubbo and Coonamble.
- **1412 Dubbo to Bourke/Brewarrina** will depart 4 minutes later and will have minor changes between Narromine and Coolabah. A 15 minute break has been included at Coolabah and the service will arrive 20 minutes later at Byrock, Bourke and 15 minutes later at Gongolgon and Brewarrina.
- **0915 Bourke and 0900 Brewarrina to Dubbo** will depart 15 minutes earlier at 0900 and 0845 respectively to Coolabah. A 15 minute break has been allowed at Coolabah. From Coolabah to Dubbo the service will operate between 5 and 10 minutes earlier arriving Dubbo at 1330.
- **0550 and 0850 Lightning Ridge to Dubbo** will depart Walgett 10 minutes earlier with minor changes between Gulargambone and Dubbo due to altered road conditions.
- **0540 Grenfell to Lithgow** will depart 10 minutes earlier at 0530 and arrive in Lithgow at 0910.
- **1425 Grenfell to Bathurst** will depart 10 minutes earlier at 1415 and arrive in Bathurst at 1650.
- **0630 Gulgong to Lithgow** will depart 10 minutes earlier at 0620 and arrive in Lithgow at 0911.
- The Monday bus between **Coonabarrabran and Barradine** and Tuesday return has been discontinued.
- **0610 Nyngan to Lithgow** The departure times at Trangie and Narromine have been altered and will depart 4 minutes earlier at 0735 and 0800 respectively.
- **1640 Orange to Lithgow** will depart 10 minutes earlier at 1630 and arrive in Lithgow at 1816.
- **Bus services Orange/Parkes/Orange** will all depart 5 minutes earlier.

NSW coal operators

The New South Wales Mineral Council is concerned a proposed rail access agreement for Hunter coal producers will reduce the efficiency of the entire coal transport system. In April, the Australian Rail Track Corporation lodged an access undertaking for the Hunter Valley Coal Network with the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC). It outlines the terms and conditions for access to the rail line by the region's 35 coal mines for the next 10 years. The NSW Minerals Council is calling on the ACCC to reject the plan in its current form. It says the proposal will not promote efficiency in the coal chain which will hinder attempts to reduce the coal queue off Newcastle. The council also says it does not ensure the rail line will cope with projected increases in coal production. The ACCC is expected to make its decision on the proposal by October.

NSW fuel trains to cease

From NSW School Railway Clubs' email newsletter:

Shell Refinery is to close its rail loading facility at Sandown [western Sydney] in November this year and to cease the movement of petroleum fuels to Canberra, Bomen, Dubbo and West Tamworth. I understand that this also means the closure of these regional fuel depots and the resultant transport of fuel by road direct to the customer, bypassing these regional depots. Various reasons have been quoted, including the intended withdrawal of a Government subsidy for the carriage of fuel by rail in order to keep tankers off the road. So far as Canberra is concerned, other reports suggest that major repairs are now required to the Shell Depot Siding and/or that the depot's future is affected by the proposed relocation of Canberra station (and Canberra Railway Museum) as part of an ACT Government redevelopment proposal.

NSW passenger patronage increase

There has been a patronage increase across public transport in NSW of more than 10.5 million journeys in the past financial year. CityRail recorded 304.8 million passenger journeys in 2008-09,

up 2.9% or 8.7 million. Journeys on Sydney Buses were up 1.5 million to 192.8 million, while Sydney Ferries recorded a 2.5% increase to 14.3 million passengers.

Cowra isolated from the world

The Demondrille to Cowra line closed from 1 September allegedly because of safety concerns, despite recent re-sleepering. Lachlan Valley Rail, operator of heritage trains, suspended operations following Cowra-Harden and v.v. trains on Sunday 23 August. Its rolling stock is now trapped at Cowra. The LVR is now examining leasing the line and/or moving its rolling stock. The Camurra-Weemelah line in NW NSW also closed from 1 Sept. The long-term future of these, as will other regional lines which may close, will be decided after the release of the Federal Government's NSW Grain Freight Review, which is imminent.

Freightliner commences operation

British rail freight operator Freightliner has commenced operation in northern NSW, with operation of cotton carrying trains using leased locomotives.

V Line 19 July Public booklet timetables

V/Line have now issued new timetable booklets for the East, North East, Northern and South West Victoria regions dated 19 July 2009 and West dated 14 June 2009.

Harcourt stop?

Victorian Public Transport Minister Lynne Kosky will consider a proposal by the Harcourt town development group for the return of passenger trains to Harcourt on the Bendigo line.

Sunbury electrification

Tenders were called on 19 August for the \$200 million project to extend electrification 15 km from Sydenham to Sunbury.

Victorian Regional Rail Link: Southern Cross

At the end of August, construction started on new platforms 15 and 16 at Southern Cross station, Melbourne. This is the first stage of construction of the Regional Rail Link project. This stage, costing \$35 million, will cover installation of lifts, escalators, systems, platform canopy, finishes and furniture and is expected to continue through to the end of 2010.

Yarra Trams 20 July 09

Yarra Trams have issued new timetables dated 20 July 2009 for the following routes: 1, 3/3a, 5/64, 6, 8, 16, 67, 72, 78/79. These replace the separate weekend timetables for these routes.

The remaining vintage W-class trams are to be phased out except on the City Circle. At present 12 W-class trams run on the City Circle and 25 on along Chapel Street in South Yarra and Church Street, Richmond (routes 78/79) and on La Trobe Street in the city (route 30).

All-night Trams? *from the Age 27 August*

Trams could run all night on Fridays and Saturdays, under an option put before the Brumby Government by new tram operator Keolis to cater for the hundreds of thousands of revellers who flock to Melbourne's city centre each weekend. Keolis and its bid partner EDI Downer are poised to sign a contract with the Government to run Melbourne's trams for the next eight years. Public Transport Minister Lynne Kosky will within days sign off on the contract, likely to be worth about \$2 billion to the consortium, which will take over the city's tram system on 1 December. An option put forward by Keolis during the bidding process was to begin running trams all night on Fridays and Saturdays.

The Department of Transport is yet to evaluate the proposal, but has in the past knocked back several similar proposals by the current operator. The Transport Department was concerned about the extra cost of running late night services, security concerns for drivers dealing with drunk and unruly passengers, and what effect all-night services would have on tram and track maintenance - much of which is done at night. The Government has also invested heavily in its NightRider bus service, which runs on Friday and Saturday nights on 12 routes. Final services on most tram lines now leave the city centre at about 0100, and reach their destination at about 0200. A Keolis spokesman last night would not comment on the Friday and Saturday night plan, saying it would be inappropriate before the final contracts were signed. Ms Kosky, who is yet to see any detail for an all-night option, would not be drawn on the plan. Her spokesman, Stephen Moynihan, pointed

to the popularity of NightRider buses on Friday and Saturday nights, with patronage up 56% in the past year. Reacting to a call by Melbourne City Council for trains to run all night on Friday and Saturday, Mr Moynihan said there were no plans to introduce late-night train services. "At night, necessary maintenance is conducted on the rail network and trains are cleaned," he said, adding that there was no evidence that a lack of public transport caused violence in the city.

The Premier, John Brumby, subsequently rejected the idea.

Melbourne patronage

In 2008-09 patronage on Melbourne public transport was:

Train-213.9 million (up 6.3%);

Tram-78.1 million (up 12.5%);

Bus-99.5 million (up 9%);

TOTAL-491.5 million (up 9%).

Goulburn Valley optimists

The Campaspe Shire is investigating the feasibility of a rail service between Kyabram and Echuca.

GSR Ghan 14 October 09

From 14 October 2009, Great Southern Rail's Ghan from Darwin will be slightly speeded up to arrive in Adelaide at 1230 instead of the current 1310.

TransAdelaide 23 August and 27 September 09

TransAdelaide's Belair line re-opened from Sunday 23 August, following closure for rebuilding. It operates to the same timetable as formerly.

A new timetable from 27 September will introduce additional trains on the Noarlunga line.

WA grain lines

WA's grain rail future should be decided by the end of 2009. A federal report says there is no clear case for the State to invest hundreds of millions of dollars to upgrade deteriorating country rail lines. The report examined an earlier review of 2004, which recommended WA's rail freight network be upgraded at a cost of \$400 million with a further \$400 million spent on upgrading roads. This latest report, commissioned by the Federal Government, concludes the proposed cost of the investment package would exceed the benefits.

WA's grain industry has warned of huge increases to road maintenance costs if grain is transported by road instead of rail. But the report argues the cost of maintaining all the lines is likely to be higher than any increased costs from moving more grain by road. The Federal Parliamentary Secretary for Western and Northern Australia, Gary Gray MP, says the end of the wheat marketing monopoly has radically changed the way people move grain. Mr Gray says rail is no longer the only viable, long-term option. "Which means more people have been carting their own grain. It means some have been using containerised grain options and, at this time, we want to monitor how those changes pan out to make sure the investment we make is an optimal, long-term investment," he said.

The WA Transport Minister, Simon O'Brien, agrees it is not worth spending hundreds of millions of dollars upgrading the grain freight network. Mr O'Brien has set up a committee to assess the rail system, a move welcomed by Westnet which operates the rail freight network. Westnet says it will be part of the committee process. The WA Farmers Federation says the state's rail network is out-of-date. Federation president Mike Norton says the committee should come up with a better way of improving the rail network. He says it will involve a significant financial investment. "The federal and state governments and industry still need to make a very serious capital investment in the road rail network to transport the state's grain harvest," he said.

The state committee is expected to make recommendations on the future of the rail system by the end of the year.

TransPerth City to Surf

For the annual City to Surf race on 30 August TransPerth provided three additional Armadale - Perth, five Fremantle - Perth, two Clarkson - Perth, two Mandurah - Perth, five Midland - Perth and no Thornlie - Perth extra services. On lines with extra services, at least one train was prior to the

first scheduled train of the day. In the case of the Midland line where a surprisingly late 0800 is the first train out there are three specials prior to that.

NZ WTTs July and August 09

New Auckland and KiwiRail WTTs were issued in July and August.

Auckland Trains

The nine agencies responsible for different aspect of transport in Auckland, were replaced from 25 August by a new Auckland Transport Agency.

The Agency and the NZ government will jointly fund investigation of 3.5 km, double track, electrified tunnel from Mount Eden to Britomart for suburban trains. The tunnel, if built, would double the capacity of Britomart, currently a terminus station. It would not be completed until 2020.

Kinston Flyer no more

The Kingston Flyer, popular summer steam operation operating 14 km from Kingston to Lumsden in NZ's South Island, will not operate this season, due to mounting debt.

UK electrification

The UK government has announced that the Great Western mainline from London to Bristol and Swansea will be electrified at 25kV 50Hz overhead, as will lines between Edinburgh and Glasgow via Falkirk and via Cumbernauld.

UK: National Express fails

The East Coast Inter-City franchise held by National Express has been revoked. The UK government will control the franchise for probably a year before re-letting it. This followed the company announcing that it would run out of money. National Express is the company which also failed with its franchises in Victoria for V Line, suburban trains and trams.

Benelux trains

The long delayed high speed passenger trains from Amsterdam to Brussels will be marketed under the name Fyra.

Czech passenger trains franchise

The Czech government has announced plans to franchise up to 75% of the country's long distance passenger trains over the next decade.

A through ticket from Calcutta to Edinburgh?

On 14 August the first through, trial freight train commenced its journey from Islamabad to Tehran and Istanbul using the new railway from Bam-Zahedan in south east Iran. Regular services are expected to start later this year. Once the Marmaray tunnel under the Bosphorus at Istanbul is completed soon, there will only be the train ferry across Lake Van in eastern Turkey to be bypassed to provide a continuous line of railways from the Indian sub-continent to Europe.

Thanks to Tony Bailey, Barry Blair, Victor Isaacs, Geoff Lambert, Michael Marshall, David Whiteford, ABC WA, Adelaide *Advertiser*, *Age*, *Cowra Guardian*, *Daily Telegraph*, *International Railway Journal*, *Rail Express* and *Railway Gazette International* for Rail news.

BUS NEWS

New South Wales – Sydney

Punchbowl Bus Company introduced additional services under the NSW's Government Growth Buses program on 10 August 2009. Route 450 (Hurstville – Strathfield and Olympic Park) now operates to an increased frequency. Trips will operate every 15 minutes during peak periods. Route 940 (Hurstville – Bankstown) now operates to an increased frequency. Trips will operate every 15 minutes between Hurstville and Riverwood during peak periods. Route 945 (Mortdale – Bankstown) now operates to an increased frequency. Trips will operate every 20 minutes during peak periods. Timetables are available on the website.

New South Wales – Regional.

Illawarra Dapto District: Premier has introduced a new timetable commencing 27 July 2009. This includes a new Route 31 service from West Dapto to Wollongong and alterations to the Route 33 and times. The majority of Route 33 services no longer travel via West Dapto. The first weekday route 43 service now operates 10 minutes earlier and no longer travels via West Dapto on Sundays.

Wollongong: Recent timetable alterations: Route 2 (Stanwell Park – Wollongong) and Route 15 (Helensburgh – Stanwell Tops) from 17 August 2009 (Greens Northern Coaches). Routes 1 and 4 (Wollongong – Austinmer and East Woonona) from 25 August 2009 (Dions). The new timetables improve frequency in peak hours.

Newcastle District: Port Stephens Coaches Route 130 (Fingal Bay – Newcastle): From 10 August, two new services depart Fingal Bay at 0605 and 0645 arriving at Newcastle Station at 0755 and 0830 respectively. This route provides a direct and convenient link between Fingal Bay and Newcastle. The 0605 service provides a connecting service at Bay Village Retreat at 6:50am for Soldiers Point passengers. An additional afternoon service will leave Newcastle Station at 1645 arriving in Fingal Bay at 1840.

Southern Highlands: State Member for Goulburn, Pru Goward, has thrown her support behind a campaign for a bus service that could reduce the number of car trips on Picton Road by up to 3000 a week. Ms Goward has written to Transport Minister David Campbell, local bus companies and Wollondilly MP Phil Costa to lobby for a twice daily return service from the Southern Highlands through Wollondilly to Wollongong. "There are in excess of 500 students based in the Wollondilly-Wingecarribee region, and on the basis of those numbers a dedicated bus service beginning at Moss Vale, travelling through Picton and thus to Wollongong appears to be readily feasible," Ms Goward said.

Countrylink changes from 11 October are detailed in the Rail News section, pages 7-9 above.

Northern Territory

Dysons has recently (exact date unknown) taken over the transfer service between Katherine and Katherine Gorge. A Travel North (the previous operator) brochure effective until 31 March 2008 shows the transfer service while the Nitmulik Tours, accredited operator of tours in Nitmulik NP, brochure for 2009/10 shows Dysons as the operator.

Queensland - Brisbane

Eastern Busway service changes 3 August 2009: **Brisbane Transport** Routes 139, 169 and 209: These routes are diverted onto the new Eastern Busway from the South East Busway to service the PA Hospital and Boggo Road busway stations before continuing to UQ Lakes.

Routes 109 and 192: These routes will continue to run along Annerley and Gladstone roads and will service the Dutton Park busway stop and UQ Lakes. TransLink is in discussions with Brisbane Transport to include Route 109 (CBD to UQ Lakes via Dutton Park) as part of the next service enhancement to the Eastern Busway.

Hornibrook Bus Lines: From Monday 3 August, bus services began to use two new sections of TransLink's expanding busway network. Routes 321, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 339, 340, 341, 346, 353, 370, 375, 376, 379, 393 and 680 divert off Bowen Bridge Road to service the new RBWH busway station. These changes help reduce congestion on busy Bowen Bridge Road and

give passengers access to the safe and secure facilities of one of TransLink's first-class busway stations.

Public transport patronage: State Transport Minister Rachel Nolan said 181.9 million public transport trips were recorded across the network last year, an increase of over 12.5 million on the previous year. "This year's growth included 8.6 per cent for buses, 5.2 per cent for rail and 4.8 per cent for ferries," she said.

Buses carried more than half of all passengers last year, while 61 million passenger trips were recorded on trains and 6.6 million trips on ferries.

Queensland - Regional

Mackay Regional Council has introduced a service between Sarina and Mackay on Mondays and Thursdays. The service is operated by Bus Fox and funded through Queensland's Blueprint for the Bush program, along with Mackay Regional Council and Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal. The service operates over 2 routes into Mackay in the morning and back in the afternoon.

Campbells Mount Isa has introduced a service to Mount Isa Airport connecting with Qantas and Qantaslink flights. The service operates between Campbell's office at the Tourist Information Centre to the Airport but may pick-up at other locations in Mount Isa.

South Australia - Adelaide

TransAdelaide: Extra bus services on Magill, Unley and Richmond roads, a new Largs Bay to West Lakes service and a Hallett Cove to City route are among changes to 90 timetables from 27 September 2009. Timetables were to be available on August 31.

Transport Department acting executive director of public transport Kevin O'Callaghan said the changes would ensure services "where they are needed most, when they are need most". "We are taking a range of measures to deliver better peak services, greater frequency, extended routes and provide improvements to on-time running," he said. "We will do everything we can to ensure our hundreds of thousands of customers are familiar with the new timetables and have access to a better public transport system."

Changes are available at <http://www.adelaidemetro.com.au> or by calling the Adelaide Metro InfoLine on 8210 1000.

Across the east and inner south, six new buses will add nearly 60 extra services every day including: Magill Rd (10), Payneham Rd (11), Grant Ave/Portrush Rd (5) and newly-named direct route from Marden via Sixth Ave and the city to both Marion and St Marys (5). The Parade will become a hub for public transport in the east when new services start in September. More than 30 extra services will run down the popular shopping and dining strip, linking it directly for the first time to Paradise via Glynburn Rd every half hour.

Mr O'Callaghan said the change was part of a metropolitan-wide move to link suburban hubs without making passengers travel via the city. "People have told us that they would like better access to that shopping strip," he said.

Victoria - Melbourne

Doncaster Area Rapid Transit (DART) will double weekday bus services on four key routes running between central Melbourne and the Manningham area. Services will run every 7 - 10 minutes during peak hours, and between 0500 and midnight on weekdays. Real time information displays will be installed at some bus stops, and timetables and maps will be installed at all stops.

At this stage the Department of Transport is focusing on routes 301 (The Pines - City), 304 (Warrandyte - City), 307 (Mitcham - City) and 319 / 308 (The Pines - City). These routes cover a large portion of the Manningham area. This work will be coupled with one existing and two planned Orbital SmartBus routes, so Manningham residents will be provided with a network of high frequency routes that travel both east-west and north-south through the municipality.

Eight bus stops along Lonsdale Street will be removed in preparation for the \$360 million DART which starts running in early 2011. Bus stops being removed will have a sign with a map of the closest bus stop. Maps are available for viewing at transport.vic.gov.au and signs will be posted at each bus stop with a map that shows where the bus stop has been moved to.

Sita has issued new editions of the following timetables, all effective 20 July 2009: 400 (joint with Westrans Altona), 404, 431, 432, 457, 458, 459 and 471.

Western Australia – Perth

Transperth: From Sunday 30 August 2009, routes 525 and 526 will undergo service changes. Both services will terminate at a new terminus on Macquarie Bvd in Hammond Park. Routes 525 and 526 will extend from the existing terminus on Jackadder Ave via the following route: Continue along Jackadder Ave, left Macquarie Bvd, u-turn at the roundabout on Macquarie Bvd and Botany Pde, continue back along Macquarie Bvd to a terminus before Johnsonia Bd.

As well as this terminus change, route 525W services extending to Wattleup will be replaced with normal 525 services due to low patronage. Route 525W departing Wattleup at 0747 will be replaced with a normal route 525 departing from the new Macquarie Bvd terminus at 0803. Route 525W departing Cockburn Central at 1603 will now operate as a normal route 525 service, terminating at the new terminus on Macquarie Bvd at 1619.

From Sunday 2 August 2009, routes 881 and 940 minor timetable changes were implemented to ensure better on-time reliability and routes 520, 522, 530, 531, 532 and 533 from Cockburn Central Station also had minor timetable changes. These changes were made to align services with the recent Mandurah Line timetable changes and ensure better on-time reliability.

Thanks to Simon Aalbers, *The Advertiser*, Tony Bailey, Barry Blair, *The Courier Mail*, *East Torrens Messenger*, Neville Fenn, Hilaire Fraser, Victor Isaacs, Michael Marshall, Len Regan, Lourie Smit, *Southern Highland News* and various operator web sites.

AIR NEWS

International

AirAsia X has shelved plans to fly to Sydney as the Malaysian Government continues to delay approval. The low cost carrier was due to begin daily flights on 25 October, but with no permission in sight it will look elsewhere to expand and utilise new A330 aircraft due for delivery in late 2009. It will add a further two flights a week between the Gold Coast and Kuala Lumpur from 21 October, providing six flights a week. Although catering for increased demand, the carrier was also under pressure to make alternative plans after its Sydney plans were put on hold. Traffic on the Gold Coast route grew 15% in the first half of 2009.

From 13 August **Jetstar** expanded its Perth-Denpasar, Bali, service from four times a week to daily.

Qantas Freight will add Dallas to its freighter network from 6 August, a fourth US city, added to Chicago, New York and Los Angeles.

Air New Zealand will launch twice weekly direct trans-Tasman flights between Sydney and Rotorua from 12 December.

China Southern Airlines, has introduced a third weekly flight from Melbourne to Guangzhou until the end of March 2010. The new flight schedule, which introduces a Saturday departure, will be introduced in two phases. Until 26 October 2009, China Southern will depart Melbourne at 0705 every Monday, Thursday and Saturday morning, via Sydney to Guangzhou. During daylight saving from 26 October 2009, until 25 March 2010 the three Melbourne – Guangzhou flights will operate nonstop.

V Australia will operate twice weekly flights from Brisbane to Phuket from 22 November and weekly flights to Phuket from Melbourne from 3 December. In addition, twice weekly Melbourne-Johannesburg flights will start from 13 March. But its Melbourne to Los Angeles flights, which were due to start in September, have been pushed back to 1 December with a twice weekly service. It was originally intended to operate three flights per week. V Australia has applied to the International Air Services Commission for capacity to operate daily flights between Australia and Fiji. In order to obtain the 2527 seats required for the daily flights, it plans to transfer 1260 seats from Pacific Blue Australia's allocated capacity. Twice weekly Perth-Phuket services will be introduced, but under Pacific Blue branding, from 14 November.

Domestic

Jetstar will introduce a daily late-night Sydney-Perth service from 2 October. This will add 1200 weekly seats to Perth and complement existing double daily Jetstar flights from Perth to Melbourne, daily flights to Adelaide and three times weekly flights to Cairns. Jetstar will launch five A320 flights per day between Sydney and Melbourne Tullamarine from 25 October 25, a move which will see it decrease its flights from Avalon from seven to four per week. This is apparently a response to Tiger Airways' direct flights between Sydney and Tullamarine. Qantas will continue to operate 32 daily flights between Sydney and Melbourne. Chief executive Alan Joyce said the rebalancing of capacity would help profitability. "We believe using both brands effectively is critical to the profitability and market positioning of Qantas Group," he said. Joyce maintained there were still "huge opportunities in Avalon". More price competition is expected between Avalon and Tullamarine

Tiger Airways is reviewing its services to and from Canberra, giving rise to speculation that they may be withdrawn. From early October, the carrier is not offering flights between Canberra and Melbourne or Adelaide. This may be part of its plan to refocus on the competitive Sydney-Melbourne route. Last month, Tiger announced an increase in the number of Melbourne and Sydney flights from four to nine return a day from 4 October. It also launched daily services between Sydney and Adelaide.

Thanks to Tony Bailey for Air news.