



TABLE TALK

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RAIL AND TRAM NEWS

ARTC WTT 7 July 2017

A new ARTC Working Timetable came into effect from 7 July. It can be accessed at

<https://www.artc.com.au/customers/operations/mtp/2017-07-09/>

Aurizon future

Aurizon is considering the sale of its intermodal business. The most likely buyer is a consortium of Genesee & Wyoming and Macquarie Bank. The sale might include Aurizon's freight trains, wagons and terminals at Enfield (Sydney), Dynon (Melbourne), Acacia Ridge (Brisbane) and Forrestfield (Perth).

On 1 June Aurizon announced significant reductions in staffing as "necessary to address varying demand in the resources sector as well as changes to Aurizon's operating footprint." The changes will be phased through to late 2018. There will be:

- Staged closure of the Rockhampton rollingstock workshop by late 2018 with a loss of 181 positions.
- 126 train crew positions phased out at Callemondah, Bluff, and Stanwell, and replaced with approximately 70 locally-based train crew contractor positions.
- The reduction of approximately 62 permanent positions including train crew, freight operators and loaders at Mackay and Townsville, primarily as the result of the completion of Aurizon's haulage contract with Wilmar Sugar in December 2017. The Mackay freight train crew depot will close.
- Engagement of an additional 20 contractor train crew at the Coppabella depot in Central Queensland to meet increased customer demand on the Goonyella and Newlands Coal Systems.

Aurizon track diagrams

Updated track diagrams of the Aurizon network are available on their website. Go to

<http://www.aurizon.com.au/what-we-deliver/network/network-downloads> and look for the heading "Reports & QCA", then click on "Review of

Rail Transport Infrastructure and Line Diagrams – December 2016".

Adani coal railway

Part of the proposal by the Adani company to develop a giant coal mine in the Carmichael Basin of Central Queensland is the construction of a heavy haul railway from the mine to the port of Abbot Point, near Bowen. Aurizon has, however, countered with a proposal for the new mine to be connected instead to its existing Central Queensland coal network. This is how the proposals compare, as far as is known:

	Adani	Aurizon
Railway status	Stand alone	Add to existing network
New kilometrage	388	190
Gauge	Standard	Narrow
Cost	\$2.5 b	\$1.25 b
Ports served	Abbott Point	Abbott Point & Dalrymple Bay

Queensland Rail Citytrain reduces Sunday services

Queensland Rail will operate reduced train services on Sundays 25 June, 2 July and 9 July during the 2017 winter school holidays "to ensure full service levels for weekdays and major events in June and July". Services will operate hourly on most lines, but half hourly on the Airport line and two hourly services on the Sunshine Coast line. Additional services will operate before and after sporting events.

Queensland Budget

The Queensland Budget, delivered on 13 June, included funding of:

- \$1.95 billion over the next three years, plus \$850 million already allocated, for commencement of the Brisbane Cross-River Rail from Dutton Park to Bowen Hills. This leaves \$2.5 b to be found from the Federal government or other sources. There will be new underground stations at Boggo Road, Woolloongabba, Albert St and Roma St, and

upgraded stations at Dutton Park and the Exhibition Showgrounds.

- \$233.5 million for Gold Coast Light Rail stage 2.
- \$20.6 million towards the \$44.3 million upgrade of Central station.
- \$23.5 million towards the \$131.5 million Coomera to Helensvale railway duplication.
- \$16.9 million in 2017-18, and \$81.7 million in forward estimates, for North Coast line additional passing loops.
- \$7.6 million towards the \$9.5 million Bromelton Interregional freight facility.

Gold Coast Light Rail

The Gold Coast City Budget, presented on 19 June, included funding of:

- \$20 million towards the completion of the Light Rail extension to Helensvale, and
- \$5 million for planning of the Light Rail extension to Burleigh Heads.

Sydney Metro

On 22 June the NSW government signed a \$28.1 billion contract for construction of a second harbour rail crossing. The 15.5 km rail lines beneath Sydney Harbour will form a crucial part of the planned \$20.8 billion, 66 km Metro rail route, running from the northwest, through the CBD to Bankstown in the southwest.

NSW Budget

The NSW Budget, presented on 20 June, included funding of:

- \$2.1 billion this year (\$4.9 billion across four years) for Sydney Metro City and South West.
- \$8.3 billion over four years for Sydney Metro Northwest.
- \$658 million this year on 24 suburban trains, the purchase of which was announced last June. The total cost is estimated at \$1 billion, and their delivery is due to be completed by 2019.
- \$252.8 million this year for new intercity trains.
- \$268.6 this year for Automatic Train Protection (European Train Control System Level 1).
- \$114.2 million this year for rail power supply upgrades.
- \$102.6 million this year for the new rail operational centre at Alexandria.
- \$1.8 billion over four years for the CBD and South East Light Rail.
- \$25 million over four years for planning for Parramatta Light Rail.
- \$206.1 million this year (\$313.4 million over four years) for Newcastle Light Rail
- \$48 million this year for Central Walk, a new underground concourse at Central station.
- \$200 million to improve access to public transport, commencing with upgrades at Beecroft, Casula, Como, Beverley and Glenbrook.
- More than 70 other accessibility projects, including upgrades to Leura, Toongabbie and

Homebush stations, upgrades to Cockatoo Island, Abbotsford and Cabarita wharves, more car spaces at Ashfield, Merrylands, Pendle Hill and Penrith, and new Opal-activated bike sheds.

- \$50 million for planning and delivery of freight rail infrastructure upgrades at key sites.
- \$25 million for advance planning for a new fleet of diesel XPTs for regional services.
- \$19 million for country rail investments including preservation of the Lower Hunter Freight Corridor and the Fixing Country Rail pilot program.

Bus and Ferry items are itemised below.

NSW TrainLink and Sydney Trains: Blue Mountains and Airport trains - 24 September timetable

NSW Minister for Transport and Infrastructure Andrew Constance has announced that – from an unspecified date, but presumably the next WTT on 24 September – services between Sydney and the **Blue Mountains** will be improved to deal with current overcrowding:

- 24 new express services between Sydney and the Blue Mountains on weekends;
- Eight-car express tourist trains with around 10 minute cuts in travel times;
- More than 25,000 additional seats every week, including an extra 18,000 on weekends;
- A new weekday Sydney – Lithgow return express service to increase capacity and improve journey times for connections to/from buses at Lithgow. The morning down train will connect with buses to Bathurst and Orange and the afternoon up with buses from Nyngan, Dubbo, Wellington, Molong, Orange, Lucknow and Bathurst.

In the near future, the Minister advised that capacity on six current weekend Blue Mountains services will be increased from four to eight carriages, providing more than 4,000 additional seats. A subsequent Special Train Notice provided for weekend trains to be built up from 1 July to 20 August, from 9 September to 15 October, and from 4 November to 25 November. At this stage, it is not known what is happening on the weekends not covered by this STN.

It is believed that services on the **Airport** line will be improved with 200 extra trains per week added at non-peak times, mainly on weekends, when services will be doubled to about every seven and a half minutes. There will also be an increase of late services on weeknights. In 2014 there were 6.2m passenger journeys to and from Airport stations. Since then, there has been an increase of a further one million journeys to and from the Airport each year, and weekend patronage has grown faster than weekday patronage.

Sydney Trains WTT 6 May

Changes in the new Sydney Trains Working Timetable of 6 May 2017, version 6.05, are all of a very minor nature. There are new timing points at Berowra South Turnback and Eastwood South Turnback. From

23 January, Eveleigh Decant was renamed Eveleigh Engineering, and Eveleigh Pres [Presentation] Centre renamed Eveleigh Oscar MC [Outer Suburban Carriages Maintenance Centre].

Transport for NSW: Illawarra line

Rail improvements between Wollongong and Sydney – including the possibility of another line – have made the Infrastructure Australia's priority list – but in the "longer term" category - at least 10-15 years away. The listing for the Wollongong rail upgrade mentions slow train speeds of around 56 km/h and lengthy travel times as reasons the improvements are needed.

Transport for NSW: Central station

Contracts will be let in early 2018, to "revitalise" Central station involving a 19-metre wide tunnel from Chalmers St to new, underground metro platforms, easy access points to Sydney Trains platforms 16 to 23 and escalators to suburban platforms.

Sydney Metro

Up to 12 rail stations may be built between Sydney's inner city and Parramatta and Westmead under emerging plans for a Metro West train line. These may incorporate overtaking lines to combine both express trains between Parramatta and the central city, and trains stopping at multiple new stations through Sydney's west and inner west. At present, the NSW government has committed only to building stations at the Bays Precinct around Rozelle and Olympic Park. At the other end, there is speculation that the line may eventually be extended to south eastern suburbs (but don't hold your breath).

Sydney Metro draft timetable

The draft Sydney Metro timetable referred to in the June *Table Talk* was, in fact, an ATA Member-produced timetable, drawn up for analysis of data provided in a booklet issued by Sydney Metro. It does not have official status. Apologies for any misunderstanding.

Sydney Light Rail

Some passengers have complained that crowding on Sydney's inner west light rail line during peak travel periods is a "nightmare", despite the introduction of an extra 90 weekly services last year on the 12.8-km Central station - Dulwich Hill line. The number of passengers increased by 59% to 9.73 million in the 12 months to June 2016. Patronage has soared since a 5.6-km extension to Dulwich Hill opened in early 2014. The line carried about 4 million passengers a year before the extension.

Transport for NSW said it would continue to monitor passenger numbers. It said it put on an additional 107 services during off-peak periods on weekdays and on Saturdays in January as part of a trial. The introduction of extra services early last year led to trams running every eight minutes during peak periods instead of every 10 minutes. The afternoon peak was also extended by an hour to 1900.

Light Rail

Email newsletter updates on progress with **Sydney** Light Rail construction are available at <http://sydneylightrail.transport.nsw.gov.au/>

Email newsletter updates on progress with **Canberra** Light Rail construction are available at <http://www.transport.act.gov.au/light-rail-network>

V/Line: Albury services

Border Rail Action Group, BRAG, a NE Victoria lobby group, is advocating operation of a standard gauge VLocity DMU providing services Albury-Seymour and v.v., connecting at Seymour with existing broad-gauge services to/from Melbourne, as an interim measure to improve services on Victoria's north-east line.

V/Line: Ararat services

The Victorian government has announced a further nine new train services every week for the Ararat line, on top of the 10 announced in May. There will therefore be a total of 19 additional services each week from 27 August. The nine extra services include the extension of an existing weekday afternoon Ballarat service to start in Ararat, and four new weekend services. On Saturdays and Sundays, a new late morning service will run from Ararat to Ballarat, and an early afternoon service from Melbourne to Ballarat will be extended to Ararat. The earlier announcement covered an extra weekday morning service from Ararat connecting with a Melbourne train at Ballarat, and a weekday afternoon service departing Southern Cross, extended to Ararat.

Timetables will be available for download from ptv.vic.gov.au in July.

Melbourne growth and Melbourne Metro

Average weekday boardings on metropolitan trains are set to double from 750,000 to 1.5 million by 2031 according to the *Herald Sun* newspaper (19 June). Melbourne's population is expected to almost double from 4.4 million to 7.8 million by 2050. Rail patronage has soared from 150 million trips in 2005 to 233.3 million trips a year now — a jump of more than 50%. Across the rail network, the number of people travelling into the city in the morning peak (0700-0900) is expected to have grown by 90% by 2031 from 2011 figures.

While the City Loop has served the CBD well for more than 30 years, Melbourne Metro Rail Authority chief Evan Tattersall said the time had come for Melbourne's rail network to expand to meet the ever-increasing demand for public transport. Costing \$11 billion, the Melbourne Metro Tunnel will add five new underground stations and 18km of new track into an existing network of about 370km. "Melbourne is Australia's fastest growing city, but we can't run more trains to and from the outer suburbs because the City Loop is full," Mr Tattersall said. "By taking some of Melbourne's busiest train lines through a new tunnel under the CBD, the project will free up space in the City Loop. The result will be more trains, more often, right across Melbourne, with a less crowded and more reliable train network."

The Metro Tunnel is expected to reduce crowding at the existing CBD stations, with daily use at Flinders St station expected to be 257,000 people once Melbourne Metro is built, compared to 345,000 without it. Similarly, daily passenger numbers at Southern Cross are expected to be 342,000, rather than 428,000.

To cater for the large growth in patronage, Metro Tunnel underground station platforms will be extra-long — about 234m, or the length of two soccer pitches. Sixty-five high-capacity trains will run through the tunnel, capable of carrying up to 1300 passengers each. Passenger safety will be enhanced with international style platform screen doors installed in the five new underground stations, meaning faster boarding and unboarding of passengers.

More than 40% of Melbourne's population growth in the next 15 years is expected to occur in greenfield residential developments in the north, west and south-eastern growth corridors, significantly in Wyndham, Casey, Melton and Hume.

By freeing up capacity in the City Loop, Mr Tattersall said the Metro Tunnel would pave the way for future electrification, extension and construction of rail lines across Melbourne. "Future projects such as a rail line to Melbourne airport and the electrification of rail lines to Melton will be one step closer because the Metro Tunnel will create more space to run trains across the city. For the first time, Victorians will have a train line to key destinations such as the St Kilda Road employment precinct, the Shrine of Remembrance, the University of Melbourne and world leading research and medical facilities at Parkville."

V/Line and Melbourne Metro: July disruptions

As well as the usual range of weekend and evening closedowns / bus substitutions, there will be bigger disruptions during the July school holidays. Suburban trains will be suspended for civil engineering works between Dandenong and Cranbourne from 6 to 14 July, and between Dandenong and Pakenham from 8 to 14 July. V/Line Eastern line trains will be replaced by buses 8-14 July between Southern Cross and Pakenham for Traralgon trains, and for the entire journey for long distance Bairnsdale trains.

Tram disruptions will also take place during this period – see the next item.

Yarra Trams: Route 58 and other diversions

Construction of new tracks along Toorak Road, South Yarra, to replace the existing track via Park St and Domain Road, has been completed. This deviation is to allow construction of Domain station for the Melbourne Metro tunnel. Trams ceased using the former route after 128 years at 2200 on Friday 30 June. The new line will open on 12 July -the closure period is during school holidays. A superstop is to be built near Millswyn St and an elaborate junction in St Kilda Road, which will have a third track for diverging trams. From 1 to 11 July there were no trams between

the Domain Road interchange and St Kilda Road/Commercial Road. Buses filled the gap running all the way from St Kilda Road to Toorak terminus. Other trams along busy St Kilda Road were replaced by buses between stop 19 Shrine of Remembrance and stop 25 St Kilda Road/Commercial Road, This significant new construction will actually slightly reduce the size of the Melbourne tram network.

Taking to the air in Melbourne?

Airshuttle Australia consortium has suggested driverless trains would link Melbourne airport to the city and high-growth suburbs at Doncaster and Monash. Supporters of the SkyLink RapidTransit proposal say the technology could also be extended from the CBD to service "public transport desert" suburbs and complement the existing tram and train networks around Sunbury, Ringwood and Dandenong. Peter O'Brien, the head of the consortium, is behind the \$1.5 billion push for super-fast rail to the airport. Connecting Doncaster and Monash would bring the total cost up to \$5 billion. Monash is the second-biggest employment centre outside the CBD with more than 85,000 workers and 40,000 students. It is projected to double to 170,000 workers over the next 30 years. He said Monash was the main growth corridor in Victoria. "Doncaster is the other big corridor. There are five cities out in the east without rail — and they've been trying to get a train line for more than 100 years," he said. "We can do the airport link without doing Doncaster and Monash but it's not going to be as effective."

Infrastructure Victoria released a report last year that said a train to the airport was needed in 15 years, but assumed the solution would be a heavy rail link via the Albion East reservation. Costing up to \$5 billion to build, the trip would take up to 40 minutes — three times the cost and time of the airshuttle. The number of airport users is expected to grow to 60 million passengers a year by 2033. The airshuttle would make the shortest trip between Southern Cross station and the airport about 15 minutes. A one-way trip to or from the city would cost about \$25. "We need to be carrying 12 million people a year on rail to and from the airport in 10 years from now," Mr O'Brien said. "In other words, about 20% of the 60 million passengers visiting the airport each year, with another 20% on buses." To run trains at two-minute intervals, Mr O'Brien said they would need to be automated.

Last month, the state government announced \$10 m in funding to examine proposals for the best route for an airport rail link, its cost, and how to deliver it.

New line to Port Adelaide

A new – re-instated – 1 km railway will be built to Port Adelaide's commercial centre and the Dock One residential precinct, re-establishing a connection after 36 years. The \$16.4 million project will lead to a new railway station at Baker St, in the heart of the Port, the Government announced in the SA Budget on 22 June. The new station will be located on the doorstep of the Dock One waterfront redevelopment which will include more than 750 new townhouses and apartments, a refurbished Marine and Harbours building, and a

waterfront boardwalk. Construction will start in 2018. Since 1981, the railway has passed well to the south of the town centre but the project will include reconstruction and duplication of a spur line from the existing Outer Harbor line at Grand Junction Road before the line crosses Port Road.

National Railway Museum executive officer Bob Sampson said the new link would be a "huge benefit" for Port Adelaide's businesses, events and local attractions. Port Adelaide Mayor Gary Johanson said he was "really excited" because the project would open up the inner area of the Port.

South Australian Budget

In addition to the preceding item, the SA Budget, presented on 22 June, included funding of:

- \$462.5 million for stage 2 of the Gawler line electrification from Salisbury to Gawler Central. However, this is contingent upon additional funding from the Federal government; and.
- \$22 million to improve train services on the Gawler, Outer Harbor, Seaford and Belair lines. There will be a 30-minute frequency instead of 60 minutes during weeknights. Tonsley line peak services will run at a 20-minute frequency instead of 30 minutes.

Adelaide Metro: Oaklands upgrade

The Federal government will provide \$95 million to upgrade the Oaklands level crossing on the Seaford line in Adelaide's south, in addition to \$74.3 million from the SA government, and \$5 million from the City of Marion. The railway will go underneath Diagonal Road and Oaklands platforms will be extended to 160 metres for longer trains as patronage continues to increase on the Seaford line. The project will start next

year, and is expected to take around 18 months to complete.

TransWA: AvonLink to continue

TransWA's AvonLink Northam to Midland train will continue, but at a reduced frequency. On 1 June, Rita Saffioti, WA Minister for Transport; said the service will revert to one return service per weekday following an unsuccessful trial of a significantly expanded timetable. Poor patronage, and a shortage of funding, has led the incoming state government to end the trial of expanded services five months early. The trial started in December 2014 and virtually trebled the number of Midland-Toodyay-Northam trips. However, it only resulted in a small increase in passengers while the average number of passengers per service dropped. An average weekday AvonLink train was at 21% occupancy before the trial but that figure has since dropped to 14% - an average of 16 passengers per service on a train with a capacity of 116. From 1 July there will be return services running once a day from Monday to Friday, which is the level the AvonLink ran at before the trial. There will be no AvonLink weekend or special event train services. MerredinLink services will revert to the pre-trial timetable offering return services between Perth and Merredin on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.

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BUS NEWS

New South Wales

Closure of www.sydneybuses.info

From 3 July, the **STA Sydney Buses** website ceased to exist and all timetable information for their buses is only available in the new NSW Transport Info format. Thus their full timetable PDF timetables no longer be available online. The new NSW Transport Info format website is not restricted to buses but also covers NSW trains, ferries and light rail. In the case of light rail, ferries and some STA Metrobus routes, this new website is the only website where timetable PDFs for such routes are now available in this new format.

The Transport Shops at Wynyard, Queen Victoria Building and Railway Square bus interchanges closed permanently from Friday 30 June.

Hilaire Fraser comments: Although new State Transit bus timetables effective 14 February 2017 and 4 June 2017 were not printed, the full PDFs including route maps were found on the Sydney Buses website. The PDFs found on the transportnsw website are split into

separate routes so one has to look up several timetables to find an appropriate service along a common road. Taking as an example the Busways timetable for 67 Gosford to North Avoca and 68 Gosford to Wamberal, one has to search separate 67 and 68 timetables to get trips to Terrigal which are common to both routes. For route 67 there are separate timetable panes for outbound terminating trips and Gosford returning trips with inbound trips so once again the customer needs to do two searches. The 68 timetable is laid out in the same way, so the customer has to search two timetables and four panes to find all Terrigal trips. For Forest Coach Lines 195 Gordon to St Ives Chase there are four timetables to select from, namely 195 Gordon to St Ives Chase, 195/6 Gordon to St Ives Chase/ Belrose, 195S1 school service St Ives Chase to Pymble station, 195S2 school service from Pymble station to Brigidine College via St Ives Chase. Under Forest Coaches 196 Transportnsw TT combined St Ives Chase/ Belrose services are not mentioned. Not very seamless. From 1 July www.newcastlebuses.info will also be discontinued

and integrated with transportnsw.info. From 1 July Newcastle buses and ferries will be privately managed as Newcastle Transport.

Lourie Smit comments: When this new version was introduced a code had to be entered for each timetable required – a route number for buses, but for some trains and ferries the codes were virtually unknown, making it difficult to find the timetables. After about six weeks they reverted to separate input fields for each mode of transport - for buses a route number, but for light rail, ferries and Sydney and Intercity trains each route is displayed, so do not need codes. For regional coaches and trains a code is still needed and this is still causing some problems. This coincides with the demise of the Newcastle Buses arm of the STA. It will be interesting to see if the new Newcastle Transport website will contain timetable PDFs or whether it will also rely on these new timetables.

Geoff Hassall comments: On the recent long weekend, both an experienced (myself) and an inexperienced timetable user had to resort to the NSW Transport website for information regarding a Rail Replacement bus service, and found it all but unintelligible. Not only does one have to put up with 'When do you want to travel?' and 'Between where and where?' nonsense when you are looking for an overview of options to choose from, but to put up with entering codes, as Lourie points out above. To make matters worse, the codes exist only for the duration of the trackwork, so there is no point in even a regular traveller learning the relevant code (which bears no relation to the route code of the train it is replacing). In other words, instead of usefully displayed information (ie a timetable!) to base decisions on, there is now no timetable information directly linked to the "Trackwork" announcements at all!. It took us a good half-hour to untangle the pap enough to find out the information once provided at a glance on a single sheet of A4 paper or equivalent. Not only do they treat the general public as idiots, they waste our valuable time chasing unnecessary numbers through a myriad of poorly-labelled pages of guff.

New bus services

Double decker buses will be re-introduced in Sydney. On 13 June NSW Transport Minister Andrew Constance said, "We are replacing those bendy buses with the double-deckers." He was joined by Premier Gladys Berejiklian to announce that the government would buy 176 new buses in the 20 June NSW budget. 134 old buses will be replaced, and overall fleet number boosted by 42. There will be more than 3300 additional services for growth areas in Sydney and regions. Six double-decker buses will replace bendy buses, bringing the total number of double-deckers on Sydney roads to 44 by the end of 2017. There will be more than 1500 additional services for western Sydney, the Hills District and south west Sydney with 11 new or extended routes, including an all-night service from Parramatta to Macquarie Park. There will be more than 1600 additional services for metropolitan Sydney and extended or enhanced all-night services

The following routes will have additional services: 195, 196 and 197 Mona Vale to Gordon and Macquarie Park via St Ives; 251 Lane Cove West to City via Lane Cove; 270 Frenchs Forest District to City; 280 Chatswood to Warringah Mall via Frenchs Forest; 292 Marsfield and Macquarie Park to City via Lane Cove; 324 and 325 Watsons Bay to Edgecliff via Rose Bay; 352 Marrickville Metro to Bondi Junction via Newtown and Surry Hills; 353 Eastgardens to Bondi Junction via Coogee; 370 Leichhardt to Coogee via Newtown and Green Square; 374, X74 Coogee to City; 392, X92 Little Bay to City via Eastgardens and Kingsford; 418 Burwood to Bondi Junction via Sydenham and Mascot; 461 Burwood to City via Parramatta Road; 504 Chiswick to City via Drummoyne; 506 Macquarie Park and East Ryde to City via Drummoyne; 533, 534 Sydney Olympic Park and Ryde to Chatswood via Wentworth Point and Mowbray Road; 914 Greenacre to Strathfield; M20 Zetland to Wynyard via Central station; and M52 Parramatta to City via Victoria Road.

New, extended or enhanced all-night services will be introduced on the following routes: 400 Burwood to Bondi Junction via Sydney Airport; 423 Kingsgrove to City via Earlwood and Newtown; N20 Riverwood to City via Rockdale, Sydney Airport and Green Square; N81 Parramatta to City via Sydney Olympic Park and Wentworth Point (Thursday-Saturday only); and N91 Bondi Junction to Macquarie Park via Kings Cross, City and Chatswood.

More than 1,500 additional services, including 11 new or extended routes will be introduced in Western Sydney (including the Hills District and South West) on routes: 632 Pennant Hills to Rouse Hill Town Centre via Castle Hill and Norwest; 746 Riverstone to Rouse Hill Town Centre via Box Hill; 747 Marsden Park to Rouse Hill Town Centre via Riverstone; 751 Blacktown to Rouse Hill Town Centre via Colebee and Marsden Park; 774 Mt Druitt to Penrith via St Marys and Caddens; 840 Campbelltown to Leppington via Gregory Hills and Oran Park; 853 and 854 Liverpool to Edmondson Park via Carnes Hill; 859 Oran Park to Minto via Catherine Field; 868 Edmondson Park to Ingleburn via Ingleburn Industrial Area; and 896 Oran Park to Campbelltown via Harrington Park and Narellan.

Enhanced services will run on the following routes: 614X Crestwood to City via M2; 711 Parramatta to Children's Hospital at Westmead; 817 Cabramatta to Fairfield via Bonnyrigg and Prairiewood; 887 Campbelltown to Wollongong via Appin; M60 Hornsby to Parramatta via Castle Hill; M61 Castle Hill to City via M2; T80 Liverpool to Parramatta via Bonnyrigg and Prairiewood.

New all-night services on route M54 Parramatta to Macquarie Park via Carlingford.

Lower Hunter: Additional services will run on routes 130 Fingal Bay to Newcastle via Nelson Bay and Anna Bay, 166 Cessnock and Kurri Kurri to Stockland Green Hills via Maitland, 179 North Rothbury to Stockland Green Hills via Maitland, 262 Cameron Park to Charlestown via Cardiff, 269 Toronto to Charlestown,

270 Toronto West to Wallsend via Stockland Glendale and 275 Morisset to Toronto via Wangi Wangi.

Central Coast: More than 100 additional weekly services will be introduced on the following routes: 36, 37 Gosford to Westfield Tuggerah via Ourimbah, 47 Tuggerah to Ourimbah and 64 Woy Woy to Erina Fair via Ettalong Beach and Kincumber.

Blue Mountains: More than 40 additional weekly services will run on the following routes: 688, 689 Penrith to Emu Heights and Leonay and 692 Winmalee to Springwood.

Illawarra: Route 75 Calderwood and Tullimbar to Stockland Shellharbour will be extended.

Northern Beaches Network Plan

The new Northern Beaches Network plan is now available detailing services which will operate following the introduction of the new B-Line Service in late 2017.

- New B-Line services will operate between Newport and the City, providing frequent services all day, every day, stopping only at Newport, Mona Vale, Warriewood, Narrabeen, Collaroy, Dee Why, Brookvale, Manly Vale, Spit Junction, Neutral Bay Junction and the City.
- Route 199 will operate as a full time, all-stops service between Palm Beach and Manly via Avalon, Newport shops, Newport loop, Mona Vale, Narrabeen, Collaroy, Dee Why and Warringah Mall (Pittwater Road).
- Routes E88 and E89 will have a modified stopping pattern, with services operating all stops to Narrabeen then stopping only at Neutral Bay Junction and the City. Additional route E88 services will be provided.
- Route L90 will continue to operate during the weekday off-peak (0900-1500) and weekends (0700-2200), with a service frequency of 60 minutes. For travel to the City outside of these times, passengers will have to catch route 199 and connect to B-Line services at Newport.
- Routes 191 and 192 will operate every 30 minutes across the day.
- New route E54 will operate between Mona Vale and Milsons Point via North Sydney, providing frequent services during weekday peak periods, stopping at Mona Vale, Warriewood, Narrabeen, Collaroy, Dee Why, Brookvale, Manly Vale, Spit Junction, Neutral Bay Junction, and then all stops to North Sydney and Milsons Point.
- Routes 187 and L87 will no longer operate. For travel to North Sydney and Milsons Point, passengers will need to use B-line services or route 199 to Mona Vale, and connect to frequent route E54 to North Sydney and Milsons Point during weekday peak periods.
- Route E87 will no longer operate. For travel to the City, passengers will have to catch B-Line services at Newport, or routes E88 or E89 at any bus stop along Barrenjoey Road.
- Services via the Newport Loop will be provided by routes 199 and L90.
- Route 156 will be modified to operate between McCarrs Creek and Mona Vale, with increased frequencies across the day. For travel to Dee Why, Warringah Mall or Manly, connect to all-stops route 199 at Mona Vale.
- Route E86 will no longer operate. For travel to the City, use route 156 and connect to B-Line services at Mona Vale.
- Route 155 will be modified to operate between Bayview Garden Village and Narrabeen only via Narrabeen Peninsula and no longer operate to Manly. For travel to Dee Why, Warringah Mall or Manly, connect to all-stops route 199 at Mona Vale or Narrabeen.
- Route 182 will be modified to operate via Samuel St, Parkland Road and Waratah St, replacing routes L85/185 in this area.
- Route 185 will be modified to operate between Mona Vale and Warringah Mall (Pittwater Road) only. Route 185 in the Samuel St, Parkland Road and Waratah St area will be replaced by route 182 which will be modified to operate in this area.
- Route L85 no longer operates, replaced by all-stops route 185 to Warringah Mall (Pittwater Road). For travel to the City connect with B-line services at Narrabeen.
- Routes 175, L78, 183, 184, E84, L84, L85, E86, 187, E87, L87 and L88 will no longer operate, replaced by B-line services and routes E54 and 199.
- Route E85 will have a modified stopping pattern, with services operating all stops to Dee Why, then stopping only at Warringah Mall (Pittwater Road), Neutral Bay Junction and the City. Additional services will be provided.
- Route E83 will have a modified stopping pattern, with services operating all stops to Dee Why, then stopping only at Warringah Mall (Pittwater Road), Neutral Bay Junction and the City. Additional route E83 services will be provided.
- Route L80 to the City will be renumbered to route E80 and will operate all stops to Dee Why, then stopping only at Warringah Mall (Pittwater Road), Neutral Bay Junction and the City. Additional route E80 services will be provided.
- New route 146 will operate between Wheeler Heights and Manly via Dee Why and Warringah Mall (Pittwater Road), replacing route 179 between Wheeler Heights and Warringah Mall.
- Route 153 no longer operates. Alternative services to Dee Why and Warringah Mall will be provided by routes 146 and 178.
- Route 179 no longer operates. New route 146 will replace route 179 between Wheeler Heights and Warringah Mall. Travel to the City

is possible by transfer to B-line services at Warringah Mall.

- Route L60 will be renumbered to route E60, and will be altered to operate via Warringah Road through Narraweena and Beacon Hill. Route E60 will also be altered to operate via Boundary Road and Archer St in Chatswood. Additional services will be provided.
- Route E69 has a modified stopping pattern, with services operating all stops to Avona Crescent, Seaforth then stopping only at Cremorne Junction, Neutral Bay (Watson St) and the City. Additional route E69 services will be provided.
- There will be no changes to routes 132, 135, 136, 137, 142, 143, 144, 151, 158, 159, 169, 173, 178, 180, E41, E65, E66, E69, E76, E77, E78, E79, 188 and 248.
- New route E75 operates between Warringah Mall (Pittwater Road) and the City, via Condamine St, Balgowlah Shops and Sydney Road. The service will operate all stops to Spit Junction then stopping only at Neutral Bay Junction and the City. Route E75 services will operate during weekday peak periods.
- Route 145 no longer operates via North Seaforth.
- Route 168 is modified to operate to Milsons Point only. Services to the City are still provided by route E68.
- Route E68 has a modified stopping pattern, with services operating all stops to Spit Junction, and then stopping only at Neutral Bay Junction and the City. Additional route E68 services will be provided.
- Route 130 (Pumpkin Bus) no longer operates. Late night services from Manly on Friday and Saturday nights are provided by additional services on routes 136, 142 and 169.
- Route 131 no longer operates. Evening services to Balgowlah Heights, Seaforth and North Balgowlah are provided by route 132.
- Route E36 no longer operates. Services to and from Manly to connect with the Manly Ferry are provided by routes 136 and 139.
- Route 135 is extended to operate to and from North Fort Museum on all trips during the weekday off peak and weekend.
- Route 140 no longer operates. Alternative travel between Manly and Macquarie Park is available by routes 143 and 144 to St Leonards, and connecting to other buses or trains.
- Route E70 has a modified stopping pattern, with services operating all stops to Avona Crescent, Seaforth then stopping only at Cremorne Junction, Watson St and the City.
- Route 171 no longer operates. Additional services are provided on route E71.
- Route E71 has a modified stopping pattern, with services operating all stops to Spit Junction then stopping only at Neutral Bay

Junction and the City. Additional route E71 services are provided.

- Route E50 has a modified stopping pattern, with services operating all stops to Seaforth then stopping only at Watson St and then all stops from Miller St to Milsons Point.

Some bus timetables were amended from 26 June to accommodate ferry timetable changes (see Ferry news below):

- Route 466 Cabarita Wharf - Ashfield
- Route 513 Meadowbank Wharf - Carlingford.

NSW Budget

The NSW Budget, presented on 20 June, included funding of:

- \$170 million this year (\$811.5 million over four years) for 132 buses to increase the size of the state's fleet, and another 314 to replace older vehicles.
- \$201.5 million this year for bus infrastructure for the B-line.
- \$301.4 million this year for new bus services.

Rail items are itemised above and Ferry items are itemised below.

Hillsbus

On 19 May, the day after the Sydney bus strike (see June *Table Talk*, page 10) at about 0630, 12 Hillsbus charter buses were seen proceeding over Gladesville Bridge. Apparently they had been sent to Abbotsford in case the strike continued. Each displayed 438.

Transit Systems

Following consultation on changes to local school bus routes, revised services commenced on Tuesday 13 June:

801 (This is a normal route. This has a new timetable in Transport Info but Transit Systems do not appear to have issued a new timetable), 9017, 9029, 9054, 9057, 9058, 9064, 9202, 9203, 9304, 9306, 9309, 9312, 9313, 9314, 9317, 9503, 9505, 9510, 9512, 9519, 9530, 9532, 9534, 9542, 9551, 9552, 9561, 9569, 9578, 9579, 9610, 9611, 9615, 9616, 9617, 9621, 9624, 9627, 9628, 9810, 9813, 9818, 9823, 9834.

Newcastle

From Saturday 1 July, State Transit's Newcastle Buses and Ferries services are operated by **Newcastle Transport**. Timetables and service information are now available from transportnsw.info It appears that the new Newcastle Transport website will have their own timetables.

On-demand buses

Newcastle: A fleet of small- to medium-sized buses will run on flexible routes and timetables throughout the city, changing drop-off and pick-up points with an on-demand public transport system. Keolis Downer, Australia's largest private operator of public transport, will begin the operation in July. Commuters will be able to make a phone call, visit a website or use an app to order a bus to a "virtual bus stop".

Dubbo was the first place in NSW to get on-demand buses, with a trial of a pre-booked transport pilot

starting on 31 May. The trial extends as far as Tottenham, a township of around 300 people, 140 km away, giving it a public transport service for the first time in years.

Queensland

Budget

The Queensland Budget, delivered on 13 June, included funding of:

- \$14.4 million to upgrade the Helensvale Bus Facility
- \$16.6 million for eligible bus operators as part of the Queensland School Bus Upgrade Scheme, and
- \$2.7 million for a Council bus safety review.

New Toowoomba network

From 19 June Toowoomba's Bus Services will be managed by Translink rather than qconnect. The new network is:

- 901 Harlaxton to Uni of Southern Queensland (USQ) via City and Harristown
- 902 Glenvale to City
- 903 Mt Lofty to City
- 904 City to USQ via Centenary Heights
- 905 City to USQ and Westbrook via Kearney's Spring
- 906 Airport Estate to Toowoomba Plaza (South Toowoomba)
- 907 Wilsonton to USQ via City and West St
- 950 City to Highfields and Crows Nest.

Rangeville continues to be serviced by the kan-go Hail n Ride service. Route 3 is still used for the school service from City to Rangeville.

South Australia

SA Budget

The SA Budget, presented on 22 June, included funding of \$15 million to build Park n Ride facilities at Klemzig and Tea Tree Plaza O-Bahn bus stations.

Victoria

Doncaster Busway proposal

Transdev, operator of a third of Melbourne's bus system, has proposed a service with articulated buses running every three minutes between East Doncaster and Southern Cross station. The premium bus service would be a public-private partnership, mirroring Transdev operations in Nantes, France, and Bogota, Colombia.

Senior ministers have been briefed on the proposal, including Treasurer Tim Pallas and Public Transport Minister Jacinta Allan. Transdev and infrastructure developer John Laing submitted the idea in May, using the Department of Treasury's market-led proposal. It is estimated the Doncaster-CBD busway would cost more than \$500 million to build, which is 10 to 16% of the estimated \$3 billion - \$5 billion cost of building Doncaster rail, a project Infrastructure Victoria assessed last year would return just 10 cents for every dollar spent.



Transdev wants to pave over the Eastern Freeway median – which has been reserved for almost 50 years for a future Doncaster railway line – for express buses. The buses would be double-articulated, with doors on both sides like trains and trams, and big enough for 150 passengers. They would run every three minutes in the peak and every five to six minutes off-peak. Platform bus stops would have myki readers. New bus

"stations" would potentially be built at intersections above the Eastern Freeway, at Chandler Highway, Burke Road and Bulleen Road. This would involve building platforms with escalators and lifts down to road level. From the Eastern Freeway the busway would join Hoddle St via a dedicated ramp, then potentially follow Victoria Parade and Lonsdale St to a new underground bus terminus at the northern end of

Southern Cross station. If the busway followed Lonsdale St, the trees and on-street car parks in the median would be replaced by bus lanes and platform stops. Express bus lanes would also be built in the centre of Doncaster Road, running from the current park and ride bus terminus, which would be expanded with a new underground car park, to a new bus terminus at Donvale Hospital.

Modelling by engineering consultancy AECOM found the bus rapid transit system would provide a reliable 30-minute journey between Doncaster and Southern Cross station. Currently that journey takes 47 minutes, or more in the peak due to inner-city traffic jams. AECOM forecast the service would be used by 24,000 people in the combined morning and afternoon peaks, roughly eight times more than use the current Doncaster bus routes to the city. Transdev argues that its busway would be more like a railway, with superior travel speeds and service consistency, than a conventional bus route.

The busway would not preclude future construction of Doncaster rail in the freeway median. The concept has already won the support of the Eastern Transport Coalition, a group of seven eastern suburbs councils pushing for better transport in Melbourne's east.

Transdev spokeswoman Kathy Lazanas said that the proposal put to Treasury last month would evolve through consultation with the community, should the Andrews government support it. "We will work with the Victorian government through its well-established market-led proposal process," Ms Lazanas said. The guidelines state all private sector proposals put to the government must be unique.

Victorian Budget

Funding initiatives in the 2017/2018 Victorian Budget benefiting bus passengers include:

- \$67 million to help fund new bus services in growth suburbs, targeted on the suburban electorates of Bentleigh, Frankston, Mordialloc, Narre Warren, Craigieburn, Sunbury and Broadmeadows.
- \$2.1 million for extra peak hour bus services to Fishermans Bend on routes 235 and 237.
- Additional services on route 401 between North Melbourne and University of Melbourne during Metro Tunnel construction in Parkville.
- Continued funding for university shuttle services 301, 403 and 887, each introduced in February 2016.
- \$13.7 million for interchange upgrades at Ballarat, Huntingdale and Werribee bus interchanges, along with additional parking at Ballarat, Montmorency and Cardinia Road stations.
- Bus priority measures on Pascoe Vale Road, Broadmeadows.
- \$193.2 million for four-year extension of Night Network, including all night trains, trams, Night Bus routes and Night Coaches to regional cities.

New Network for Warragul and Drouin

The long-anticipated upgrade to town bus services in the West Gippsland towns of Warragul and Drouin

commenced on 14 May. The new network was originally due to be implemented in 2010 following planning and community engagement at the time but a lack of funding saw the plans shelved by successive State governments until further consultation took place mid last year. The Dineen Group has hired seven to eight new drivers for their expanded Warragul Bus Lines operation.

The previous town bus offering in Warragul was extremely poor for an increasing population that now exceeds 15,000. Former routes 1, 2 and 3 ran a mere three interpeak trips each between 0900 and 1430 on weekdays, with route 4 operating just twice. General Manager of local operator Warragul Bus Lines' Philip Radford was highly critical of the old network in local media in the past, stating new residents often complained there was no buses and depot staff often having to field phone calls that there was no return bus at the time a potential passenger wanted to travel home.

Under the improved network hourly timetables are now provided, with a longer span from 0600 to 1645 weekdays and for the first time, between 0900 and 1700 on weekends and public holidays. Unfortunately, it is believed a funding shortfall resulted in services finishing well before commuters return from jobs and study in Melbourne, the south-east suburbs or Traralgon - on some routes, last buses depart town as early as 1607 on weekdays, despite original plans for a 2000 finish.

Coverage across Warragul has been expanded considerably, with the following routes now operating, each radiating from the station:

- Route 80 (Warragul South): Travels in a loop via Howitt St, Fairview Village, West Gippsland Hospital, Landsborough St, King St, McMillian Drive, Lilleys Road and Burke St, providing better coverage to the south-west part of town, replacing former route 3 and parts of route 4.
- Route 81 (Warragul North): Circular service via Princes Way, La Trobe St, Sutton St, Bowen St (u-turning at Willow Cr), Sutton St and Brandy Creek Road. It replaces parts of former routes 1 and 4 while providing new coverage to the top end of town along Bowen St.
- Route 82 (Warragul North): Replacing most of former route 1, this route now serves more of the north-eastern parts of town, with buses now running along Stoddarts Road rather than the northern part of Normanby St. The revised route now incorporates the southern portion of Normanby St, catchment previously part of route 2.
- Route 83 (Warragul East): Largely replacing former route 2, this route now features an eastern loop along Sutton St, Copeland St and Albert Road, however service has been removed along Stoffers St.

Each route travels via Warragul Shopping Centre after departing the station and again before terminating back there, as does Route 85 to Drouin (as below).

Nearby Drouin, 90 km east of Melbourne, previously

held the title as the largest centre in the state without a town bus service, with its population more than doubling in the past 25 years, now nudging 10,000. This unwanted title has now been lost with the addition of new routes 85 and 86, operating either side of the railway line.

Route 85 (Warragul – Drouin – Drouin South)

Route 85 is a dual-purpose route – other than supplementing the V/Line train service between Warragul and Drouin, it provides access to the new housing estates springing up in the 7.5 km corridor between both towns, along with coverage to those living in Drouin South for the first time.

Route 85 supplements the existing “West Gippsland Transit” intertown service, which parallels the rail corridor between Pakenham and Traralgon. The timetable for the longer intertown service remains unchanged and continues to operate to a quite erratic limited timetable on weekdays and Saturday mornings.

(The intertown route incorporates various V/Line coach trips on the Traralgon line, although at the time of writing, the full timetable has incorrectly been deleted from the PTV website, and can only be found on the Warragul Bus Lines website – this issue was still unresolved six weeks into the new network!).

Passengers travelling between Warragul and Drouin on weekdays now have access to 37 daily trips in either direction, consisting of:

- 19 V/Line train services
- 8 services on the intertown route (two operating locally Warragul to Drouin & 3 operating locally Drouin to Warragul)
- 10 services operating as the new route 85 service

On Thursdays the return Poowong East shopper bus provides a 38th option, while a later train and Night Coach operates Friday evenings.

Upon arrival at Drouin station, route 85 travels a figure-eight path south of the railway line along Drouin-Korumburra Road, Summerhill Boulevard, Clifford Drive, Cook St, Lindman St, Drouin-Korumburra Road, Lampard Road, Settlement Road, Church St and Porter Place before returning to Warragul.

Route 86 Drouin North

A new bi-directional service, route 86, serves those living north of the station and town centre. It operates via Hopetoun Road, Young St, Buln Buln Road, Walker Drive, Hopetoun Rd, McNeilly Rd, Albert Rd, Armstrong Avenue, Bennett St, Princes Way, Bloye St, Hearn St and Princes Way to the terminus at Roberts Ct, adjacent to the El Paso Caravan Park on the western outskirts of town, also the terminus for several trips on the “West Gippsland Transit” intertown route described above. One oversight though is the route fails to travel along Jacksons Drive, ignoring residents moving into the growing Jacksons View estate. A revision of the route to incorporate this housing development would be expected within the next few years.

During consultation it was proposed that route 86

would travel into Warragul, however ultimately trips have been confined locally. On weekdays it is possible to transfer to the 85 when heading east, although unfortunately the timetables don't line-up for those heading back from Warragul or on Saturdays. This is understandable as the out and back travel time around Drouin for Route 86 is double that of route 85.

Further afield, the Noojee to Warragul bus, operating two return trips on weekdays, maintains its existing timetable as a non-myki service, but now operates as route 89 instead of route 5.

The Thursday return shopper bus from Poowong East to Warragul continues to operate as an unnumbered non-myki service, but like the “West Gippsland Transit” intertown route, the timetable has also been incorrectly removed from the PTV website.

In conjunction with the new network, the familiar orange PTV signage has finally rolled out along each route. As is often the case when new routes are introduced, some homeowners grumbled to the local paper and local members of parliament about having stops elected outside their homes, which will include a concrete handstand area and tactiles at a later stage.

Shepp Transit sold

Yet another regional acquisition by the Dyson Group sees the purchase of Fallon's “Shepp Transit” operation, with takeover on 1 June, including 44 vehicles, the town bus network in Shepparton and various regional V/Line and PTV to nearby major centres such as Seymour, Moama and Bendigo. The Fallons Group continue to operate across north-east Victoria from their other operations radiating from Beechworth, Alexandra, Cobram, Falls Creek, Wangaratta and Yea.

Also effective 1 June Dysons operate the Mallacoota – Genoa V/Line connector, formerly operated by Mallacotta Explorer Tours. This bus meets the Sapphire Coast V/Line coaches running between Bairnsdale, Narooma and Batemans Bay. Dysons have also taken over a school run between Kinglake and Whittlesea Secondary College from local operator Latham's, a service that parallels their limited route 384 service.

Earlier Dysons acquisitions this year have included O'Connell's, who had a handful of runs serving Omeo, Mount Hotham and Bright; and part of the Houlahans' school bus business in Axe Creek near Bendigo.

Greensborough – Hurstbridge Link begins

As part of the as part of the Hurstbridge line upgrade funded in the 2016/2017 state budget, a new parallel bus service, route 343, was introduced on 19 June. The service, operated by the Dineen Group's Panorama operation, was initially designed to provide residents of the outer suburb Diamond Creek and the townships Wattle Glen and Hurstbridge additional public transport links, which are not achievable due to the current single track (with passing loops) beyond Greensborough. Operating weekdays only, route 343 departs at 20 minute intervals during the peaks and every 40 minutes interpeak. The PM peak is followed

by 40 and 70 minute gaps with the last departure leaving Greensborough at 2056.

The route travels via St Helena following community consultation last year that saw 51% of 840 respondents preferring this option, with better access to local community facilities, than a quicker option along Diamond Creek Road, as originally intended. Unfortunately, the longer route and runtime has botched the interpeak timetable – while buses towards Hurstbridge are off-set with the trains (providing an average 20 minute headway), return trips towards Greensborough merely meet City trains originating from Hurstbridge. This is unavoidable without horribly long layovers – had the trip been slightly faster, it would be possible to off-set trips in both directions. At the Greensborough end, buses operate via the Greensborough Plaza stop on Main St before terminating back at the station – this is different to operation of Dysons' 385 and 518 services, which layover at near the station when arriving from the north before looping past the plaza.

Other aspects of the Hurstbridge line upgrade underway include grade separations at Grange Road, Alphington and Lower Plenty Road, Rosanna, a new evaluated station at Rosanna plus the long overdue duplication of the single track between Heidelberg and Rosanna.

New route 605 routing and timetable released

As reported in the *May Table Talk*, effective 25 June route 605 travels into the Melbourne CBD via Anderson St, Domain Road, Birdwood Avenue (beside the Royal Botanic Gardens), Southbank Boulevard, Queens Bridge, Queen St, La Trobe St and William St to terminate adjacent to Flagstaff station, before heading along Lonsdale St, Queen St and the reverse back to Alexandra Avenue. The City Loop route, as introduced in November 1999 following the closure of Batman Avenue, will cease. The route change will compensate for the removal of route 58 trams along Domain Road from August as part of major constriction works for the Metro Tunnel.

Owing to the ongoing congestion, due to the current widening of Swan St bridge, an interim route change took effect on 10 May, with inbound trips travelling via Burton Avenue and Wellington Parade, bypassing the Melbourne Park precinct. On MCG event days when Burton Avenue is closed, buses continue north on Punt Road to Wellington Parade.

The new timetable from 25 June shows the existing frequency and trip count maintained, with 15 – 20 minute peak headways, 20 minutes interpeak, 40 – 45 minute Saturday morning and 85 minute intervals gaps Saturday afternoons and Sundays. Span is also unchanged, most noticeable on Sundays, with the first departure ex Gardenvale remaining at 1015 and ex Flagstaff at 1112.

Runtimes have been adjusted for the new route, however this leads to significant layovers at Gardenvale, particularly inefficient on weekends.

The previously non-uniform public holiday pattern

(Sunday timetable with no service on Good Friday or Christmas Day) has been corrected, with buses now running the standard Saturday timetable other than Good Friday and Christmas Day when the Sunday timetable now applies. Additionally, all trips now operate 52 weeks a year – route 605 was among the last routes to have peak hour reductions for the four weeks after Christmas.

Route 305 AM peak amendments

Previously unreported was a new timetable for Transdev route 305 (City – The Pines) introduced on 31 October 2016, with amendments during the AM peak. The changes coincided with roster changes following the closure of temporary depot in North Melbourne, with refurbishment works at Doncaster and North Fitzroy complete. The online timetable has been updated but a revised printed timetable has yet to be sighted.

Revised tram connections for route 732

Coinciding with the new timetable for route 75 trams implemented on 1 May, Ventura updated the timetable for route 732 (Box Hill – Upper Ferntree Gully) to maintain Knox Transit Link connections between Vermont South and Knox City. Attempts to obtain an updated printed timetable indicated one had yet to be issued six weeks after the change took place.

New St Albans interchange opens

A new train–bus interchange at St Albans finally opened adjacent to St Albans Road on 4 June, six months after the opening of the new grade-separated station. The interchange replaces the rudimentary facilities that previously existed in Alfredia St for routes 408, 418, 419 and 421. The old stop locations were a five minute walk from the station and had featured bus stops in the centre of the road! Route 425 has also relocated to the new interchange, leaving only routes 423 and 424 departing on the west side of the station in West Esplanade. Along with the new interchange, minor alterations were made to the peak timetable for route 418 to/from Caroline Springs.

Better access to Broadmeadows Shops on 477

Passengers using Tullamarine Bus Lines route 477 between Broadmeadows, Gladstone Park, Airport West and Moonee Ponds have improved access to Broadmeadows Shopping Centre from 18 June, with trips towards Moonee Ponds now operating past the shopping centre. Traditionally, passengers would catch the bus at Broadmeadows Shopping Centre on trip arriving from Moonee Ponds, which would then form the return trip within a few minutes of arriving the station. This setup also applies to routes 532 and 541. This setup was unintentionally broken in June 2015 when a more frequent interpeak timetable improved the headway from 30 to 20 minutes but introduced 19 minute layovers at the station.

Monash University shuttle updates

In a win for Monash University students living on the Mornington Peninsula, the state government has announced recurrent funding for the route 887 service, following a successful trial in 2016, which was later extended to cover the first semester this year.

In 2012 the Labor Commonwealth Government funded a \$1.5M trial of a free student shuttle buses between Rosebud and Monash University's Peninsula and Clayton campuses, marketed as PenBus. After funding dried up at the end of June 2015, the service continued with support from the local shire council, with students charged a \$3 fare each way. The State government subsequently introduced a new two-hourly Route 887 limited stop service during university semesters in February 2016, operating between Rosebud and Monash University's Peninsula Campus, timed to meet the intercampus bus funded by the university, which also operated once every two hours.

A consequence however was a reduction in both in span and frequency of services between Monash's Peninsula and Clayton campus, as PenBus was previously off-set with the university shuttle. This included the removal of trips that suited 0800 classes at the Clayton campus along with 1800 finishes. After continued lobbying by students and local Liberal state MP Martin Dixon, this issue was finally rectified after almost three semesters on 5 June. Students can now catch a Route 887 departing Rosebud at 0557, which connects with an intercampus shuttle departing Peninsula Campus at 0700. Each afternoon there is now a later intercampus bus from Clayton Campus at 1805, meet by a Rosebud-bound Route 887 service at 1906.

In addition to the expanded semester timetable, the university is trialing a return bus over the winter break from 25 June to 14 July, departing Peninsula Campus at 0700 and returning from Clayton Campus at 1700. A reduced hourly timetable also applies between Monash's Clayton and Caulfield campuses during this period (this timetable also operates for three weeks either side of the official academic year).

Route 301 to stay

In addition to the State government announcements that route 887 was now permanent (see above), La Trobe University students, staff and even Vice-Chancellor Professor John Dewar are all celebrating after the news that the route 301 express shuttle will be made permanent after a successful 18-month trial. During the 2016 academic year the service carried more than 280,000 students, or around 2,00 boardings a day during teaching weeks, not factoring in those who opted to catch the parallel Route 561 (Macleod – Pascoe Vale) all-stops service instead.

Route 833 onto Carrum

PTV has announced that effective 27 August, services on Ventura's route 833 between Frankston and Carrum Downs will be extended west to Carrum through Sandhurst and Patterson Lakes, along Thompson Road and McLeod Road. For the first time, residents of Carrum Downs will no longer have to backtrack south to Kananook or Frankston to access train services, a long-standing issue. The current half-hourly weekday and hourly weekend timetable will be maintained.

Melbourne Visitor Shuttle to end

At their May meeting Melbourne City Council

councillors voted to withdraw funding for the Melbourne City Visitor shuttle, with services to conclude at the end of August, citing dramatic falls in patronage. The service, which commenced in February 2006, ahead of the Commonwealth Games, was initially operated by Ventura from their then Nationalbus depot in North Fitzroy. Driver Bus Lines were successful in winning a longer three-year contract from September 2007 when the service was retendered – the service being an ideal pairing with Driver's regional Grayline sightseeing day tours. The contract was subsequently extended to 2012 and then 2017. The service was funded by a CBD carpark congestion levy introduced by the State government in 2005, and was free during its early years, which often led to overcrowding on its half-hour timetable. In recent years however, annual patronage has free-fallen from 330,000 journeys in 2014 to a petty 43,000 last year, due to a range of factors. At start of 2013 a \$5 fare was introduced, making up for a \$500,000 shortfall in operating costs after the levy contribution was capped at \$800,000 in 2009. This \$5 fare was later replaced with a \$10 two-day ticket in July 2015. Private operator City Sightseeing introduced their own tourist loop service in May 2013, operated using semi-open top double-decker vehicles, fragmenting the potential tourist market, despite charging premium fares of \$35 for 24 hours or \$45 for 48 hours. The addition of the free tram zone in 2015 was the final nail in the coffin for the once popular service.

With the closure of the route sees the end of another era for Driver, as they will no longer operate a traditional "hop-on, hop off" passenger service in any form, the legacy the company was formed upon in 1931. This follows the previous sale of the main route operation to CDC Victoria in July 2013. They will continue to operate school buses across Melbourne's east, south-east and Mornington Peninsula, preform charter work and operate the popular Gray Line sightseeing tours.

Frankston works delays

The \$13M redevelopment of the Frankston station bus interchange on Young St is running significantly behind schedule, with works not due to finish as late as until October, failing to be completed in May as planned. The works, which commenced on 6 November, have moved bus stops up to 7 minutes walk from the station, with buses currently departing three dispersed locations in Beach St, Young St and Fletcher Road that are also several minutes walk apart from each other. As timetables have not been adjusted, in some case passengers are forced to catch an earlier train to maintain for connections. In May the *Frankston Times* reported the delays have been caused by unexpected complications with moving underground electrical cables and the discovery of asbestos in Telstra pits.

Parkville proposals for Metro Tunnel works

Constriction of the new Metro Tunnel station at Parkville from the end of 2017 will see Grattan St closed to traffic adjacent to University of Melbourne for a five-year period. During May and early June, the

newly formed Transport for Victoria undertook public consultation on likely route changes affecting bus services serving the hospital and university precinct.

It is proposed routes 401, 402, 403, 505 and 546 largely relocate to Pelham St, about 200m south of the University. To facilitate the new stop location, it's likely trips on express Routes 401 & 403 would now operate as a loop, only picking up outside Royal Melbourne Hospital when travelling east, before departing new University terminus using Leicester St and Queensberry St.

Route 402 services towards Footscray will deviate via Bouverie St, Queensberry St and Royal Parade, with the nearest alternative stops up to a 500m away.

Ventura Capel Sound Depot

The Mornington Peninsula suburb of Rosebud West was officially renamed Capel Sound in September 2016, removing a stigma some residents felt the old name held. 56% of residents supported the name change. Ventura has embraced the new name over recent months, and now refers to the local bus depot as the Capel Sound depot rather than Rosebud depot. Prior to 2012, this depot was operated as the Portsea Passenger Service subsidiary of Grenda Corporation. At time of writing, both PTV and Google Maps still refer to the old suburb name in online maps and stop information.

New Local Area Maps

PTV have uploaded updated Local Area Maps effective May 2017 to their website for Boroondara, Hume, Melbourne, Moonee Valley, Moreland, Port Phillip and Stonnington, each documenting the introduction of the route 58 (West Coburg – Toorak) tram and extension of route 6 tram to Moreland. New maps for Banyule, Darebin and Yarra have yet to surface. A June 2017 map has been issued for Brimbank to mark the opening of the new St Albans station interchange (see above) but fails to show Ginifer station relocating south-west and associated minor route changes to route 423 (St Albans – Brimbank Central). Following the introduction of route 343 (see above), June 2017 maps appeared for Banyule and Nillumbik, but not yet for Manningham or Whittlesea, two maps which also show Greensborough and surrounds.

Transdev (un)reliability figures revealed

In late April both the *Age* and *Nine News* reported data obtained under Freedom of Information concerning the reliability of Transdev's route services across Melbourne. The data, which has never been revealed publicly, showed that about one in five Transdev buses ran more than five minutes late during 2016 and that Transdev "has never met its contractual monthly punctuality target". The bus operator is responsible for a third of Melbourne's bus network.

Transdev's overall on-time performance of 80.7% is significantly lower than Metro Trains and V/Line with just 14 of their 46 routes meeting the overall 85% punctuality target required by their contract, although somewhat on-par with Yarra Trams. Since timetable changes made in June 2016, the operation has been

liable for fines for poor performance under the 85% threshold. The tougher 90% benchmark originally proposed for the contract has all but been abandoned by PTV and the state government.

Not surprisingly the three orbital routes all failed to meet punctuality standards, nor their City – Doncaster area routes. The worst performing route was the cross town route 220 (Sunshine – Gardenvale), with a third (67.9%) of trips behind schedule, despite attempts to increase runtimes over the impossible timetables of former operator Melbourne Bus Link. Other poor performers were similar cross-town pair 216 and 219 (both around 70%), 246 along Punt Road (72.5%) and the 901 orbital SmartBus between Frankston & Melbourne Airport (73.3%)

Furthermore it was revealed that instead of increasing passenger numbers 5% a year, patronage has fallen significantly on many of its routes – loadings on orbital route 903 (Mordialloc – Altona) alone have dropped from 6.03 million to 5.18 million in little over 18 months.

In addition to failing to meet key performance benchmarks in its contract, their new Greenfields bus network, with redrawn routes and timetables, was blocked by the State government due to various cuts foreshadowed, particularly along orbital SmartBus network in Melbourne's north and west.

Western Australia

TransPerth: The Charles St bus bridge and busway opened in late June, speeding up Northern Suburbs services. The \$32.1 million project saw the construction of a 120 metre bridge over the Graham Farmer Freeway, the creation of a new freeway off-ramp into Northbridge and 500 metres of new bus lanes on Charles St.

All routes along Charles, Loftus and Newcastle Streets have improved journey times as a result of the opening of the bus bridge and associated priority lanes. Loftus St routes 402, 403 and 404 are most affected. In addition changes have been made to routes 15, 370, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 970 and 990 also undergoing changes. In addition, changes will occur to routes 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 340, 341, 342, 343, 345, 349, 365, 372, 376, 377, 378, 379, 390, 450 and 461 as part of Transperth's regular network updates.

Britain

Gerald Knight writes: **Transport for London** have stopped printing their London area bus maps, the last edition being March 2016. TfL state there is no demand for them, but they were increasingly difficult to obtain in the first place. You could always get them at London Council Tourist Information offices, but due to budget cuts these have been closed over the years. The only other locations you could get them was bus station offices, but the counters were rarely open to the public, so it's no wonder there was no demand for them piled up in a back office somewhere. TfL point you to the internet, saying you can print them off, but the information when printed is so small it makes it unreadable, and it's just the map with no index of where the routes run. *Ironically, ATA Member Michael*

Marshall was in UK last month and managed to obtain four sets of these guides. They are included in the June 2017 ATA Distribution List.

Thanks to Jason Blackman, Geoff Foster, Hilaire Fraser,

Matthew Gibbins, Craig Halsall, Victor Isaacs, Ben Knight, Gerald Knight, Richard Peck, David Rae, Hayden Ramsdale, Lourie Smit, various contributors on *Australian Transport Discussion Board* and the *Age*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Sydney Morning Herald* for Bus news.

AIR NEWS

International

In 2016, major international airlines had the following **shares of traffic** to/from Australia: Qantas 15.6%, Singapore Airlines 9.5%, Emirates 8.8%, Jetstar 8.1%, Air New Zealand 6.8%, Japan Airlines 6.3%, Cathay Pacific 4.9%, Virgin Australia 3.9%, United Airlines 3.1%, China Southern 2.9%.

Melbourne is currently experiencing a boom in new international flights. Over the coming months, almost a dozen new airlines will add flights to Melbourne. In addition to several new routes to China, new services include Melbourne to Tokyo Narita on Japan Airlines from 1 September, Melbourne to Colombo on Sri Lankan Airlines, Melbourne to Vancouver on Air Canada from 1 December, and Melbourne to Santiago de Chile on LATAM Airlines from 1 October.

Malaysia Airlines has cancelled its direct Darwin-Kuala Lumpur service.

Hainan Airways will start a twice-weekly service between Brisbane and Shenzhen from September.

Domestic

Qantas will replace Boeing 737 aircraft between Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane on about 20 weekend flights with smaller Boeing 717s of subsidiary QantasLink from 5 August. This, it is claimed, will

reduce operating costs and 'right-size' the weekend fleet on these routes, which see lower passenger numbers compared to weekdays. B717s carry 110 passengers – including 12 in business class – compared to 174 on B737s.

Commercial passenger flights could operate from **Albion Park airport** as early as October, according to Shellharbour mayor Marianne Saliba, with possible flights to Brisbane and Melbourne. Qantas operated Illawarra-Melbourne flights from June 2005 to July 2008. According to the council, the airport's catchment area now has a population base of about 300,000 people.

JetGo Melbourne-Port Macquarie service, which commenced in mid-November 2016, will cease from 16 July 2017. From 29 June JetGo will commence flights Gold Coast-Albury on Thursdays, returning on Sundays, to tap ski traffic. From 21 July JetGo will commence flights Melbourne Hervey Bay and Brisbane-Hervey Bay.

Virgin Australia will cease flying Brisbane-Port Macquarie from 17 November, but the service will continue, by **Alliance Airlines**.

Thanks to Tony Bailey, Paul Brown, Tris Tottenham, *Illawarra Mercury*, *NT News* and *Australian* for Air news.

FERRY NEWS

Sydney Ferries

Over 30 extra trips per week were added to F3 Parramatta River services from Monday 26 June, including additional weekday morning and afternoon peak services and later services on Sundays. This will allow for greater capacity during periods of peak demand. On Sundays, services will run until approximately 2130 instead of services ending at 1900. There were also minor timetable changes on F3 Parramatta River and F4 Darling Harbour ferry services. Some bus timetables were amended to accommodate these ferry timetable changes – see Bus news above. F3 Parramatta River and F4 Darling

Harbour services stop at the new Barangaroo Wharf instead of King St Wharf from Monday 26 June.

NSW Budget

The NSW Budget, presented on 20 June, included funding of:

- \$51.6 million for ferry fleet replacement.
- \$25 million for Parramatta River new services, and
- \$3.3 million for Barangaroo ferry wharf.

Rail and Bus items are itemised above.

Thanks to Paul Brown, Victor Isaacs and Lourie Smit for Ferry news.

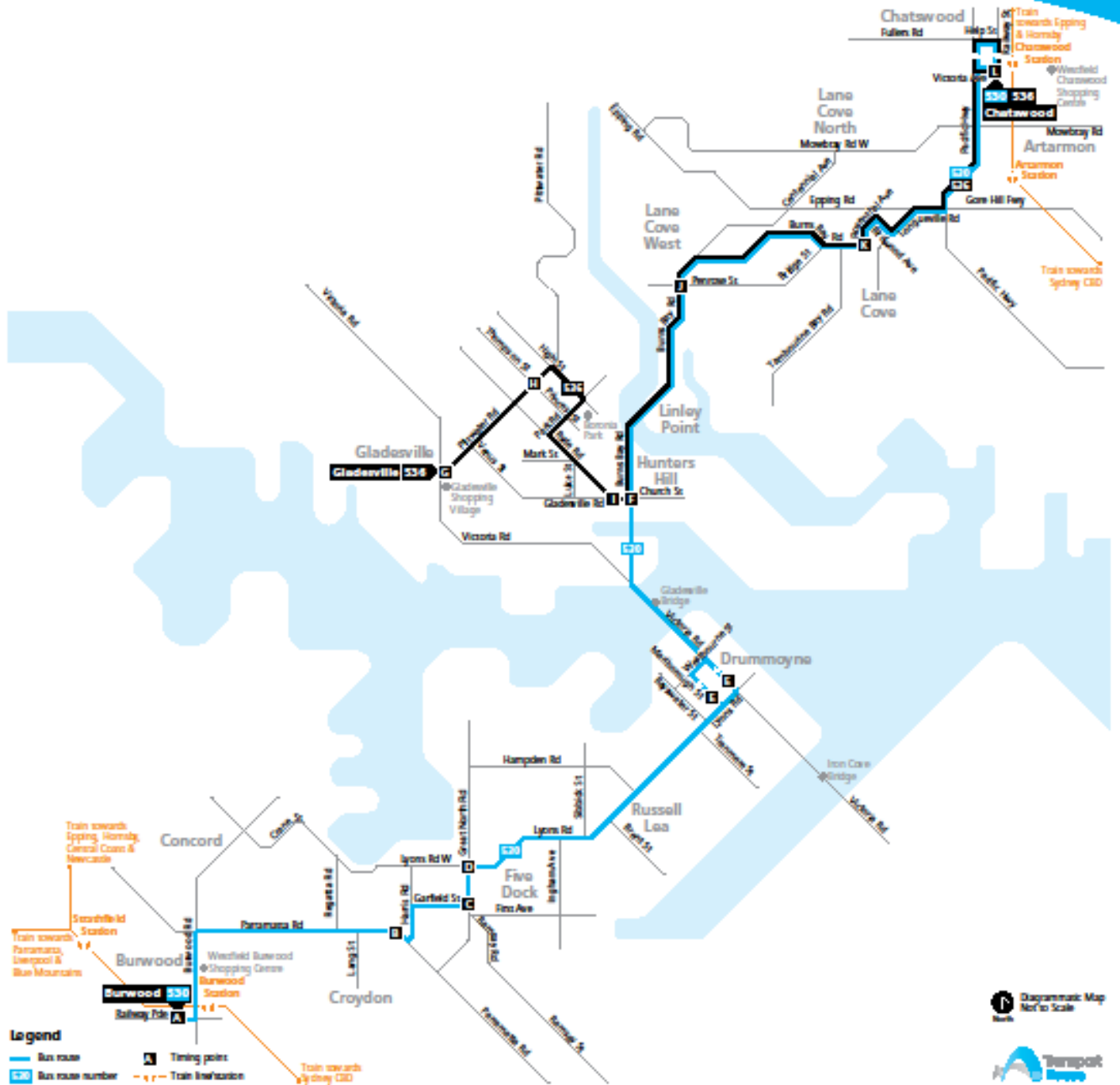


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The **deadline for Table Talk** is the second last weekend of the month, but contributions are welcome at all times.

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