



TABLE TALK

AUSTRALASIAN TIMETABLE NEWS

No. 302, October 2017

ISSN 1038-3697, RRP \$4.95

Published by the Australian Timetable Association

www.austta.org.au

RAIL AND TRAM NEWS

Inland Freight Railway

On 21 September the Federal Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Darren Chester, announced the route of the Inland Freight Railway between Toowoomba and the Queensland/NSW border. It will be via Pittsworth, Brookstead and the Wellcamp-Charlton industrial / airport precinct. He said, "The government has chosen this route because: as much as possible it uses existing rail corridors; it goes past Wellcamp Airport, which didn't exist in 2010 when the original route was considered; and it is significantly more economically viable option than the alternative routes.

Rail projects

The Federal government is seeking "high-quality proposals" for the development of business cases to bring faster rail to Australian urban and regional areas. This follows a \$20 million commitment in the 2017 Federal budget. Proposals are open for application to both state governments and the private sector, with submissions for high-level Stage 1 proposals closing on 13 October. Ultimately, the best three proposals will receive Australian government co-funding towards business case development, with the final business cases then progressing to Infrastructure Australia for assessment.

Queensland Rail Citytrain: Driver recruitment

Queensland Rail has trained 35 of the 200 new train drivers needed to restore reliability to the timetable. The inquiry into failings at QR that led to mass cancellations in 2016 found there was a shortage of drivers and an over-reliance on overtime to meet an expanded timetable after the opening of the Redcliffe Peninsula Line. Inquiry Chair Philip Strachan recommended opening driver and guard recruitment to external applicants with no prior rail experience - and hiring 200 new train drivers and 200 new guards - but, in February, the door was only opened to people with prior QR experience. More than 100 trainee drivers and 260 trainee guards have been recruited. There are now 35 new drivers and 97 new guards fully qualified and working on the network. Driver training has been

fast-tracked from an average 18 to 12 months to complete, with the aim to bring that down to nine months.

QR opened recruitment to external applicants with no prior experience on 31 August. Potential train drivers must pass an online application, along with cognitive and psychomotor assessments. They must attend an information session, group exercises, a panel interview, and have reference checks, a health assessment and national police check before receiving an offer of employment. The health examination can include hearing, vision and musculoskeletal, heart function, cholesterol and glucose blood levels, psychological health, sleep patterns and substance use tests.

Asked if the new train drivers would be ready for the Commonwealth Games in April 2018, Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk said: "Of course we're expecting that to be the case."

Queensland Rail Citytrain: Timetable development

Large accounting firm Deloitte has been engaged to help fix Queensland Rail's ongoing timetable problems just months before the April 2018 Commonwealth Games. Queensland Rail chief executive Nick Easy said engaging Deloitte was part of a commitment to carrying out the recommendations of the \$2.5 million Strachan Commission of Inquiry. The State government has not yet made a statement on how extra services will be delivered for the Games, which are expected to bring about 100,000 visitors, despite the fact train services are yet to return to normal following a driver shortage last October. There is also not yet a date for the introduction of the much-delayed \$4.4 billion New Generation Rollingstock.

Queensland Rail Citytrain: Cross River Rail

The Queensland government has suspended an agreement with the Commonwealth over funding for Cross River Rail, as the battle over funding for the urban rail tunnel project continues. Federal funding stalled after Malcolm Turnbull said he would wait for

Infrastructure Australia approval for the project, but IA found the project did not meet its guidelines.

On 5 September Queensland's Deputy Premier, and Transport Minister, Jackie Trad, announced the State government has run out of patience and will cancel its Memorandum of Understanding with the Federal government over the \$5.4 billion project. She said the Commonwealth had even failed to contribute the "paltry" \$10 million it committed to the project's planning in October last year.

Queensland Rail Citytrain: Plan your journey

On Sundays during the school holidays, 17 and 24 September, and 1 October, as well as on Monday 2 October, which is when the Queen has her Birthday in her name-state, Queensland Rail reduced suburban services. Most lines had hourly services, except Airport (half hourly) and Sunshine Coast (every two hours).

Queensland Rail Travel: Timetable delayed

The much delayed return to service of the second Electric Tilt Train was further delayed. Queensland Rail Travel's timetable of 28 August (see August *Table Talk*, page 4) was delayed one week and came into effect from 4 September.

Aurizon: Timetable process

For an overview of Aurizon's timetable planning and scheduling decision making process, see

<http://www.aurizon.com.au/what-we-deliver/network#capricornia-system-rules>

GrainCorp: New Central Queensland siding

A siding is under construction at Yamala, 12 km east of Emerald on the Queensland Central line, for GrainCorp. The 1.5 km siding will accommodate 42 wagon grain trains. Grain will be exported through Gladstone.

Sydney Trains: Timetable 23 September

As reported in September *Table Talk* (page 3), the line from Hamilton to Newcastle Interchange will re-open with the new Sydney Trains Working Timetable of 23 September. – albeit only for empty trains, not for the public. However, in fact, the line from Broadmeadow to Newcastle Interchange will be closed on that weekend for programmed engineering works. Hence, the first trains on this section will be early on Monday morning, 25 September. (This line will open to the public from 26 November – see next item.)

Sydney Trains: Timetable 26 November

A new Sydney Trains timetable will commence on 26 November. Information about the timetable will be publicly released on 15 October, and timetables will be publicly available from 12 November. An operator draft timetable was released on 30 August. This draft timetable does not distinguish between trains and the occasional supplementary bus (Moss Vale-Bundanoon-Goulburn and Kiama-Nowra). Changes in the timetable are:

Western and Richmond lines:

There will be more services throughout the day, with most stations having a service every 15 minutes and more services during peak periods. The T5 Cumberland line (formerly Schofields-Campbelltown) is now Schofields-Leppington. Some trains start and finish at Blacktown or Richmond instead. The weekday service is extended into the late evening. The new weekend Cumberland line service is half-hourly and also runs until the late evening. These trains to/from Leppington are in addition to the existing Leppington-City Circle service. There will be a 92% increase in services to Leppington and 20% more services stopping at Glenfield.

T1 Western services will not stop at Burwood in either direction on weekdays and weekends (except for one early morning weekday service from Penrith). Passengers travelling to Burwood need to change at Strathfield for the T2 line. Services from Penrith will no longer stop at Toongabbie, Pendle Hill, Wentworthville and Westmead. Passengers travelling to these stations need to change at Seven Hills or Parramatta. Most Intercity trains stop at Blacktown. Blue Mountains trains will not stop at Redfern. Passengers travelling to Redfern need to change at Strathfield or Central.

Richmond line: T5 Richmond operating all day, Monday to Sunday.

Weekdays: Only T5 Richmond line services stations between Marayong and Richmond in the late evening. Passengers travelling to these stations on the T1 Western after 2202 (at Parramatta) need to change at Parramatta for T5 Richmond services.

Weekends: First direct train to the city departs Richmond at 0705; last direct train to the city departs Richmond at 2035 on Saturdays and 1735 on Sundays. Only T5 Richmond services stop at stations between Marayong and Richmond in the early morning and late evening. Passengers travelling to Richmond on the T1 Western need to change at Parramatta for T5 services.

Carlingford line: More frequent and consistent services, increased connection frequency to/from the City with regular 30 minute services and more connections to/from the City. *Weekdays:* The 0659 direct service to the City from Carlingford no longer operates.

Olympic Park line: No changes.

Epping, Northern, North Shore, Richmond, Western:

Weekdays: There will be more express services run between Parramatta and the City. T1 Western and Richmond services will not stop at Lidcombe between 0645 and 0843 (to the City) and between 1710 and 1843 (from the City) (times at Lidcombe). Passengers travelling to Lidcombe during these times need to change at Parramatta, Strathfield or Wynyard for the T2 Inner West line.

Passengers travelling to Westmead on the T1 Western line between 0606 and 0802 (at Penrith) need to change at Seven Hills for T5 Richmond or T1 Richmond trains. In the PM peak, passengers travelling from Westmead to stations between Doonside and Penrith need to change at Seven Hills. For most of the day, passengers travelling from stations between Penrith – Doonside to Toongabbie, Pendle Hill or Wentworthville need to change at Seven Hills T1 services from Penrith and Richmond will not stop at Harris Park, Granville, Clyde and Auburn. Passengers travelling to these stations need to change at Parramatta for T2 Inner West services.

The last service from the City to Richmond departs Central at 2134. Passengers travelling to stations between Marayong and Richmond after this time need to change at Parramatta for T5 Richmond services.

T1 Western, Richmond and Blue Mountains services will not stop at Granville in peak periods.

More T1 Western services run on weekends. T5 Richmond-Leppington services running all day, Monday to Sunday. More bus services run during the day between Westmead and Parramatta on Route 711. Most suburban trains stop at Seven Hills to allow passengers to change between express and local services to Parramatta.

Weekends: Most services from Penrith will stop at Harris Park, Granville, Clyde, Auburn and Lidcombe. Only T5 Richmond trains service stations between Marayong and Richmond in the early morning and late evening. Passengers travelling to Richmond on T1 services need to change at Parramatta for T5 services.

The last direct service from the City to Richmond departs Central at 2136 on Saturdays and 1836 on Sundays. Passengers travelling to stations between Marayong and Richmond after this time need to change at Parramatta for T5 Richmond services.

An additional two trains per hour run towards Penrith (Western services).

New weekend 8-carriage express services on the Blue Mountains Line to support day trippers to/from the Blue Mountains.

Parramatta: More express services to City depart from platform 1, every 3 minutes during peak periods. Increased interchange for passengers will be required at different times of the day and night. Extension of Inner West service from Homebush will occur on weekdays. Services terminate and return to Circular Quay (via T2 Inner West) in operation until 2121 on weekdays from Platform 4. Platform 3 is bi-directional on weekdays. Trains travel to Leppington and Blacktown/Richmond from this platform

Westmead: Fewer T1 Western services in AM peak. No direct service to stations between Doonside and Emu Plains at certain times of the day. No Blue Mountains services stop at Westmead.

North Shore, Northern and Epping lines: More late night services will run on T1 Northern line.

Weekdays: In the AM peak between 0738 and 0838, and in the PM peak between 1657 and 1842, the all-stations T1 Epping services do not stop at Burwood. Passengers need to change at Strathfield. However in the AM peak, one train from the Central Coast (at 0800) and two trains from Epping (at 0812 and 0827) stop at Burwood towards Sydney Terminal. In the PM peak, three Central Coast services stop at Burwood (at 1710, 1740 and 1810).

More services will run late at night to/from Epping via Strathfield, and Hornsby via Macquarie University (from two trains per hour to four trains per hour on both lines).

Weekends: Hornsby services via Gordon extend to Berowra late at night. An additional two trains per hour will run towards Eastwood and Epping via Strathfield (Northern services). An additional two trains per hour will run towards the City and Chatswood (North Shore services). An additional two trains per hour turn around at North Sydney from Richmond. Two extra services of the Hornsby via Macquarie University to Chatswood shuttle are extended to Central. These services then form Western services.

Chatswood-Epping: Service remains between Chatswood and Epping (the mooted closure of the line for conversion to Metro-style does not yet take effect).

Inner West line: Leppington services will stop at Burwood.

Weekdays: Harris Park, Granville, Clyde and Auburn will now only be served by T2 Inner West-Leppington line for most of the day. Passengers travelling to stations west of Parramatta will need to change at Strathfield or Parramatta for most of the day. Homebush services extend to Parramatta (until 2121 at Homebush).

Weekends: T2 Inner West services do not stop at Harris Park, Granville, Clyde and Auburn. However T2 Leppington services will continue to stop at Auburn and Granville. Passengers travelling to/from Clyde and Harris Park need to travel on the T1 Western line.

Burwood: Passengers travelling to/from Burwood on the T1 Western need to change at Strathfield. In the AM and PM peak, T1 Epping services do not stop at Burwood. In the AM peak, two trains from Epping (at 0812 and 0827) and one train from the Central Coast (at 0800) stop at Burwood towards Sydney Terminal. In the PM peak, three services to the Central Coast stop at Burwood (at 1710, 1740 and 1810).

Leppington line: All South West Line services start and end at Leppington. Passengers travelling to/from Macquarie Fields, Ingleburn, Minto, Leumeah, Campbelltown and Macarthur need to change at Glenfield. T5 Leppington line will operate all day, Monday to Sunday.

Weekdays: T2 Leppington services to the city are slower than T3 Lidcombe Liverpool services. Passengers travelling from Liverpool, Warwick Farm

and Cabramatta will be encouraged to use the T3 Lidcombe Liverpool for fast services via Bankstown.

Weekends: Additional services to/from Leppington on T2 Leppington.

Glenfield: There will be a new interchange for Western Sydney passengers travelling to and from stations between Macquarie Fields and Macarthur. There will be different stopping patterns for trains on the T8 Airport South line.

Strathfield: Increased interchange for passengers travelling to/from Burwood. Passengers travelling on other lines (predominantly T2 Leppington) may choose to change at Strathfield to catch a fast T1 Western train in weekday peaks.

Lidcombe: Interchange for passengers changing between T1 Western Line, T2 Inner West Line and T3 Lidcombe lines. Different stopping patterns will occur on T1 Western Line and T2 Inner West line services. For most of the day, passengers travelling from stations between Liverpool and Sefton need to change at Birrong if their destination is Yagoona. In off-peak times, passengers travelling from stations between Liverpool and Sefton need to interchange at Bankstown if their destination is Punchbowl, Wiley Park, Belmore, Canterbury, Hurlstone Park, Dulwich Hill, St Peters or Erskineville.

Weekends: All-stations services will operate as T3 Liverpool via Bankstown (fast services not in operation).

City: Stations in the City will be busier with more passengers changing. Passengers will be encouraged to change at Wynyard where possible (especially for T2 and T3 services) to ease congestion at other CBD stations.

Cronulla, Eastern Suburbs and Illawarra lines: No changes.

Airport South line:

Weekdays: There will be more services in the PM peak and late at night. An additional two trains per hour from Campbelltown via Airport will run in off peak times. Services to the City from some stations will be slower. Changes to stopping patterns will occur. Additional stops at St Peters in the AM and PM peaks will be added. A 15 minute frequency will exist throughout the day.

Comment: The four trains an hour fast services to Macarthur via Revesby are only allowed 11 minutes from Wollie Creek to Revesby (13.36 km) compared to 16 minutes now with two intermediate stops. It's also 11 minutes on the Up. The fast off-peak trains on this line are not included. These four trains to Macarthur with 11 minutes in the Section, Wollie Creek to Revesby, would need to run on the outside "fast" tracks, hence the non-stop run to/from Revesby. Without these "fast" trains stopping at Riverwood and Padstow, anyone connecting with the fast train in the down direction off an all stations Revesby service, will need to walk up and over at Revesby, as the majority, if not all, Revesby services terminate on Platform 2 (Up Local Platform). The connections at Revesby, in

each direction, have now been increased to at least 10 minutes. The current "fast" off peak trains, even though they give a great train ride, are often fairly empty.

Revesby: A new interchange, allowing passengers to access Padstow and Riverwood (in the off peak and on weekends) and Kingsgrove (on weekends) will be introduced. More trains running on the T8 Airport South will improve the overall service, including more services late at night.

Weekends: There will be an additional four trains per hour on the East Hills via Airport line in both directions all day.

An additional two trains per hour will run stopping at all stations to Revesby via Airport in both directions all day. Macarthur via Airport services will not stop at Padstow, Riverwood and Kingsgrove. Passengers travelling to these stations need to change at Revesby. Increased interchange at Revesby.

Passengers travelling from Kingsgrove, Riverwood and Padstow towards Macarthur will need to change at Revesby as Macarthur services do not stop at these stations.

Blue Mountains line:

Weekdays: An extra service will run at 0850 from Sydney to Lithgow, returning at 1311. Redfern will no longer be serviced by the Blue Mountains line.

Weekends: Express services will be 8 carriages. The promised additional express trains to the Blue Mountains depart Central at 0754, 1554 and 1654 for Katoomba, and 0854 and 0954 for Mt Victoria, returning from Mt Victoria at 1502, 1602 and 1702, and from Katoomba at 1022 and 1822. Redfern, Granville and Westmead will no longer be served by Blue Mountains trains.

Central Coast and Newcastle line, including the new Newcastle Interchange (which will open with the new timetable):

The line from Hamilton to the new Newcastle Interchange will be re-opened to the public (As distinct from empty workings which have operated since 25 September – see preceding item.)

Weekdays: A new express at 0503 from Newcastle Interchange to Central and return from Central at 1545. A feeder service will operate in front of the express service in the morning and behind the express service in the afternoon, allowing passengers from non-express stations to change to the faster service. A new connection from Telarah / Maitland to the Newcastle Interchange to connect with the express will be introduced. Passengers travelling to Wickham, Civic, Queens Wharf and Newcastle need to change at the Newcastle Interchange for bus services to these locations.

Hunter line: An additional service from Newcastle to Dungog and return will run on Sundays, ie, the Saturday only early afternoon train will now run on both days of the weekend.

South Coast line: No changes.

Southern Highlands line: Minor changes to the existing timetable.

TrainLink long-distance: No changes as far as is known.

New Map:

As the extent of the train timetable changes are significant, a new network map will be issued. There are now line direction labels to illustrate a train's direction in addition to its line.

T1 North Shore, Northern & Western Line is now called T1 Epping Northern North Shore Richmond Western; T2 Airport, Inner West & South Line is now called T2 Inner West Leppington; T3 Bankstown Line is now called T3 Lidcombe Liverpool; T4 Eastern Suburbs & Illawarra Line is now called T4 Cronulla Eastern Suburbs Illawarra; T5 Cumberland Line is now called T5 Leppington-Richmond; T6 Carlingford Line no change; T7 Olympic Park Line no change. There is a new line name T8 Airport-South.

T2 is now light blue rather than green; the new T8 Airport-South is green; T2 Inner West will now extend to Parramatta to boost access to Parramatta; T2 and T5 services will no longer operate to and from Campbelltown. This is to allow more T8 services between the City and stations from Campbelltown to Macquarie Fields; the T5 now extends to Richmond. This is the line providing services between Blacktown and Richmond late at night. T5 will end no further than Schofields at other periods; Sydney Metro City and Southwest has also been added to the map to show customers how it will fit in with the rest of the network in 2024.

Also see *Odd Spot* below.

Sydney Trains: NRL Grand Final 1 October

On Sunday 1 October the NRL Grand Final was held at Olympic Park. The Lidcombe-Olympic Park shuttle was replaced from 1300 with:

- 2 trains an hour from Penrith
- 2 trains an hour from Schofields,
- 2 trains an hour from Blacktown, and
- 8 trains an hour from Central.

Return trains from 2130 were:

- 2 trains an hour to Penrith
- 2 trains an hour to Schofields,
- 4 trains an hour to Penrith, and
- 8 trains an hour to Central, but 15 trains between 2200 and 2300.

Sydney public transport patronage

Commuters travelling to Sydney's central business district are increasingly choosing to leave their cars at home and take trains and buses each morning instead. The latest figures based on trips using Opal cards show an 11% fall in vehicles travelling to the CBD during the morning peak since 2015, when the government launched a campaign to encourage people to opt for public transport.

In contrast, patronage on all modes of public transport in and out of the CBD between 0500 and 1000 has

risen by more than 10% to 32.9 million trips in the first six months of this year, compared with the same period in 2015. Growth in public transport patronage during weekday mornings has been greatest between 0500 and 0600, which surged by 75% to 634,372 trips in the first half of this year, from the same period two years earlier. The traditional rush hour of 0800 to 0900 is still by far the busiest period, however. Almost 15.5 million trips were made in that 60-minute period in the first half of 2017, a 7.3% rise on the same period two years earlier but a slight decrease on the first half of last year. The data shows more people travelling in the shoulder period between 9am and 10am, with a 14% rise in since 2015.

Sydney South West Metro

A joint venture of John Holland and Laing O'Rourke has been awarded a \$240 million contract to upgrade Sydenham station for the next stage of the Sydney Metro project. The work covers signalling, utility relocations and train control systems installation. Platforms 1 and 2 will be upgraded to Sydney Metro standards, while 3, 4, 5 and 6 will continue to be used by Sydney Trains. The Sydney Metro platforms will be straightened and have platform screen doors. The contract also includes the reconfiguration of existing track and rail systems to segregate the T3 Bankstown Line and the goods line, installation of metro tracks and rail systems including crossover and turnbacks.

Sydney Inner West Light Rail

Capacity constraints are hampering efforts to run more trams on Sydney's inner west line rail line, a "sensitive" briefing document for the NSW transport and infrastructure minister reveals. Acquired by the *Sydney Morning Herald* under freedom-of-information laws, the document indicates that power supply, stabling facilities, fleet size, and a single track near Dulwich Hill are limiting an increase of services of the Central Station to Dulwich Hill line during the morning peak. According to the document, the line has experienced "unprecedented growth" in patronage over the last two years, exceeding the expectations of government transport plans. In 2013-14 there were a total of 3.9 million passenger journeys; in 2015-16, that figure reached 8.9 million. The report states that this comes to an approximate year on year increase in demand of 56%. The growth is expected to continue, with significant developments occurring or planned along the light rail route.

Extra services since 28 August provide trams every 8 minutes between 0700 and 1000. The document indicates this is the maximum that can be achieved by the current 12 trams that make up the light rail fleet, while the current power supply is able to support a maximum frequency of 6 minutes. Moreover, there is only a single track on the Dulwich Hill approach at Signal 51, causing vehicles arriving to wait while another vehicle is between Signal 51 and Dulwich Hill. "The eight-minute frequency cannot be improved on unless additional track is laid in this section," the document states. However, if shuttle services were to

operate between Central and Lilyfield, this would not be a constraint.”

Parramatta Light Rail

An Environmental Impact Statement has been released for comment on the NSW government’s proposed Parramatta Light Rail project. It is at http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=8285

The EIS proposes services every 7.5 minutes between 0700 and 1900, and every 15 minutes off-peak. It includes 16 stops, the creation of two light rail pedestrian zones within the Parramatta CBD, and a cycling and pedestrian link from Parramatta to Carlingford. The State government is hoping to start construction in 2018, to be operational by 2023. Planning work for Stage 2 of the project is also being developed, in collaboration with the proposed Sydney Metro West from the CBD to Parramatta.

Sydney South West Metro

On 13 September the NSW government released a revised 20 year strategy for redevelopment of the Sydenham to Bankstown corridor as part of the conversion of the Sydenham-Bankstown railway to metro operation. Details are at <http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/sydenhamtobankstown>

The NSW Premier claims commuter time savings of up to an hour a week and station upgrades as the pluses of a project that will bring months of disruption a year to tens of thousands of commuters. The Bankstown line (13.4 km) will be closed for between three and six months to be converted to carry single-deck metro trains from 2024. The Premier said the upgrades would be rolled out progressively from 2020, or four years before the mega-project is completed. When the overhaul is complete there will be 15 trains an hour, according to the state government’s projections. The report says track possessions will occur during each of the December-January school holidays between 2019 and 2024, as well as the two-week holidays in July of each year during the period. As well as more weekend possessions than the typical four a year, multiple tracks through Sydenham Station would be impacted during night times and "in some instances continuously for some days at a time".

The Environmental Impact Statement will be open for public feedback until 8 November.

John Holland Rail NSW Country Regional Network: 24 September WTT

At the request of **Pacific National**, commencing Sunday 24 September, the following additional trains will be applied to the 6 May Working Timetable:

- **DYN2** for S----- run as tabled by ARTC to pass CRN/ARTC boundary 1155, arrive Parkes 1200, depart 1245, arrive CRN/ARTC boundary 1250 then as tabled by ARTC
- **DYN2** for -M----- run as tabled by ARTC to pass CRN/ARTC boundary 0905, arrive

Parkes 0910, depart 0955, arrive CRN/ARTC boundary 1000 then as tabled by ARTC

- **DYN2** for --T----run as tabled by ARTC to pass CRN/ARTC boundary 0704, arrive Parkes 0709, depart 0755, arrive CRN/ARTC boundary 0800 then as tabled by ARTC
- **DYN2** for ----T—run as tabled by ARTC to pass CRN/ARTC boundary 0930, arrive Parkes 0935, depart 1020, arrive CRN/ARTC boundary 1025 then as tabled by ARTC

V/Line: Swan Hill line

Hopes Block Point on the Swan Hill line was brought into use at an unknown date, possibly 19 June, the date of the current Train Operating Data sheet for this line. It is at 216 km, between Dingee and the former station of Mitiamo, thus breaking the former lengthy section between Woodvale Block Point and Kerang. This location is included in current V/Line WTTs.

Pacific National in Victoria

The new Pacific National freight trains operating to/from Manangatang referred to in September *Table Talk* (page 7) are operating as a temporary replacement for services to/from the Merbein terminal near Mildura while the Mildura line is closed for conversion to standard gauge. The customer is Wakefield Transport which is operating road transfer between Merbein and Manangatang with a subsidy from the Victorian government. The other customer affected by the temporary closure, Peagrowers Co-operative at Donald, is transferring its freight by road to Wimmera Container line’s Doon terminal near Horsham.

Metro Trains Melbourne and V/Line: Plan your journey

A large number of closedowns took place concurrently during the Spring school holidays for planned engineering works. Bus substitutions were:

Metro Trains line	Dates
Essendon to Broadmeadows	Sat 7-Sun 8 Oct
Oakleigh-Cranbourne/Pakenham	Sat 23-Sun 24 Sept
Westall-Cranbourne/Pakenham	Mon 25-Thur 28 Sept
Caulfield-Oakleigh	1200 to last service Sun 1 Oct
Mordialloc-Frankston each night	Mon 25-Thur 28 Sept
Darling-Glen Waverley	Thur 5-Sun 8 Oct

Clifton Hill-Greensborough	2030 Fri 6-Sun 15 Oct
Clifton Hill-South Morang from 1945 to last service each night	Sun 24-Wed 27 Sept
Between Watergardens-Sunbury each night	Mon 2-Tue 3 Oct
North Melbourne-Werribee and Altona Loop each night	Sun 1-Wed 4 Oct
North Melbourne-Williamstown each night	Sun 1-Wed 4 Oct
Coburg-Upfield	Fri 6-Sun 8 Oct
V/Line	Dates
	Sat 23-
Melbourne-Bairnsdale	Thur 28 Sept
	Fri 29
Sale-Bairnsdale	Sept- Sun 8 Oct
Melbourne-Bendigo. Trains operated between Swan Hill/Echuca and Bendigo, connecting with buses Bendigo-Melbourne.	Sat 7 Oc

Metro Trains Melbourne: Stations closed

Wet and windy weather has been blamed for delaying the reopening of **Murrumbeena** sky rail station in Melbourne's southeast. Passengers face an extra month of disruption with the station, closed since mid-June, not set to reopen until 2 October. The Level Crossing Removal Authority had planned to reopen the station early next month following \$1.6 billion in works along the Cranbourne/ Pakenham lines. LXRA project director Brett Summers said crews were working around the clock to get train services back to normal at Murrumbeena station, but could not control the weather. "It's been a complex process to get some massive construction equipment up and running at Murrumbeena, but the end result will mean we can push ahead with building the new elevated line while trains keep running." During the station's closure, commuters have faced delays getting to and from the city, with replacement buses running between Murrumbeena and Caulfield, Carnegie or Hughesdale stations.

Rosanna station has now closed - from 6 October until March 2018 for level crossing removal works.

Metro Trains Melbourne fined

Metro Trains has been fined \$1.2 million for the catastrophic computer glitch which paralysed the Melbourne network in the evening peak period on 13 July. The outage led to 224 services being cancelled and 378 services running late. The fine is in addition to the \$627,000 Metro paid in compensation for 175,000 commuters who touched on.

PTV CEO Jeroen Weimar said the fine was the maximum monthly penalty it could impose for failing to meet performance targets. "On top of refunding 175,000 passengers affected by the unacceptable disruption to services on July 13, Metro has been penalised \$1.2 million by PTV for failing to meet its operational targets for the month. PTV will ensure any future agreement delivers improved services for all passengers," Mr Weimar said.

Despite this shutdown, Metro delivered 98.2% of its 65,000 services in July, above the minimum requirement of its performance threshold for compensation at 98%. Services "on time" was 89.8%, again above the minimum punctuality requirement for compensation at 88%. Without the outage, punctuality would have been greater than 90%.

Metro Trains Melbourne: Train delays 5 September

On Tuesday 5 September the theft of signal cables caused trains to be suspended and replaced by buses from Footscray to Werribee and Williamstown during the evening peak period.

Victoria: Fares and Ticketing Manual

A new edition of the Victorian Fares and Ticketing Manual was issued in July. It can be accessed at <https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/general-information/victorian-fares-and-ticketing-manual/>

Melbourne transport contracts

Metro Trains and Yarra Trams are required to improve their performance or face hefty fines under new \$7 billion contracts for Melbourne's public transport, announced on 12 September. The new contracts include a number of tougher standards, including increased punctuality targets, a ban on station skipping and higher maintenance requirements. Punctuality targets for trains have been lifted from 88% to 92% and trams from 77% to 82%. Metro could now be fined up to \$700,000 if half the network shuts down or is delayed more than half an hour within a two-hour period. It comes after a network-wide meltdown sparked chaos throughout Melbourne in July. Public Transport Minister Jacinta Allan said it was a "better deal for passengers". "These tougher penalties are being judged against tougher performance requirements," she said. "It is all designed to lift the performance of the tram and train network." The contracts also include increased maintenance budgets and new "passenger experience" penalties of up to \$9 million a year for Metro and up to \$3 million a year for Yarra Trams. Metro's monthly bonus — or penalty for poor performance — has increased to \$1.25 million while Yarra Trams' remains at \$500,00. The contracts are worth a combined \$7 billion. They run from 30 November until 2024. There is an option for a three-year extension to 2027, to be exercised by a State government at the time.

Melbourne Port shuttles

On 13 September the Victorian government called for Expressions of Interest to establish and operate port

rail freight shuttles. The Federal and State governments have allocated \$58 million towards this operation.

TasRail: Launceston

Toll Group will build a \$20 million intermodal hub in Launceston. TasRail CEO Damien White has welcomed the project, saying Toll would be increasing its usage of Tasmania's rail network. He said the development showed the company's growing confidence in freight rail in Tasmania. "Since TasRail recommenced rail services to Toll's Launceston facility in March 2012, more than 60,000 containers have moved through that facility on rail," White said.

South Australian freight

The **Genesee and Wyoming Australia** gypsum train from Rankin Dam to Outer Harbor has ceased running because of contractual issues at the mine. It is expected to re-commence in January 2018.

Thevenard jetty in the west of SA on the Eyre Peninsula network was closed in early July for reconstruction, due to its very poor condition. GWA's gypsum train continued to run until 28 July when the stockpile there was full. It is hoped to re-open the jetty in October, after which train operation will re-commence.

The grain haulage contract for rail transport from 15 wheat silos on the Eyre Peninsula between GWA and grain-handling company Viterria has been extended by fifteen months to expire in March 2019.

Western Australia: Budget

The WA Budget was delayed by the change of State government. It was presented on 7 September. A centrepiece of the Budget was an allocation of \$1.34 billion over the next four years to start work on stage one MetroNet suburban railway priority projects.

Railway and public transport related funding is:

- The Forrestfield-Airport Link, as the first MetroNet project, is estimated to have \$406.5 million expended in 2017-18, with completion expected in late 2020;
- The \$535.8 million Thornlie-Cockburn link (with \$423 million over four years);
- The \$520.2 million Yanchep rail extension (with \$440.8 million over four years);
- \$22.1 million allocated for detailed planning and design work of the Morley-Ellenbrook line and Byford rail extension;
- \$70 million to remove the Denny Avenue level crossing and planning for the future removal of level crossings at Caledonian Avenue, Oats St and Wharf St;
- \$28.2 million towards the Midland station project, involving the relocation of the existing Midland station to Cale St and an extension of the line to Bellevue;
- Planning for the new Karnup station on the Mandurah line, as part of \$101.3 million towards new stations and existing station upgrades;

- A new multi-storey car park at Mandurah station, with \$16.1 million allocated, subject to a matching contribution from the Federal government;
- \$7.4 million to undertake planning for an automatic train control system to allow increased service frequencies on the future MetroNet network. This would replace the existing signalling system and allow trains to run more often;
- \$508.2 million to develop a local rail car manufacturing strategy, including purchasing 102 new carriages. This includes \$32 million towards replacing the Australind train with new rolling stock;
- Upgrades to three South-West stations, Yarloop, Cookernup and North Dandalup, in the first stage of the Rail Future Fund revamp for the line.

TransPerth: Plan your journey

From the evening of Thursday 21 September until last service Monday 25 September, there will be a complete shutdown of the Midland line to facilitate works for the East Perth station upgrade. Replacement buses will operate.

Freight to Fremantle

The WA government will attempt to put more freight on rail and reduce truck congestion to Fremantle port by increasing the freight rail subsidy. In the recent state budget, \$19.4 million was allocated. The will increase the container rail subsidy, from \$30 to \$50 per twenty-foot equivalent unit. Transport Minister Rita Saffioti said, "In the last year, just over 15% of the Inner Harbour container traffic was transported by rail and we are aiming to increase this to 20% in the coming years."

Auckland patronage increases

Auckland ridership figures for June were interesting as there were the same number of working days in the month as last year. In June 2017, compared to 2016, total trips were 7.7m, up 11.1%; Rail was 1.8m, up 20.6%; Busway was 441,000 up 18.9%; Other buses were 5.1m, up 8.0%; and Ferry was 434,000, up 4.8%.

On an annual basis, the train network recorded 20 million train trips, a milestone Auckland Transport didn't expect until 2020. New train stations, electric trains, and the new HOP contactless ticketing card are being credited for the growth.

Wellington improvements

Greater Wellington Regional Council will introduce changes to rail services some time after Easter 2018. Off-peak trains will run every 20 minutes, rather than every 30, on the Johnsonville, Kapiti and Hutt Valley lines. Peak services are to have more regular headways. The Council is also considering increasing the premium that Hutt Valley passengers pay to use Wairarapa bound trains instead of Hutt trains, with the aim of having fewer Wairarapa trains stopping in the Hutt Valley. Timekeeping on the Wairarapa line

(between Wellington and Masterton), has become so bad that only 64% of trains arrived on time between July 2016 and May 2017, a decrease of 18% over the previous 12 months. While the line beyond Upper Hutt will ultimately need a major upgrade, a number of short-term solutions have been proposed. These include running extra peak trains, possibly using surplus DMUs from Auckland. Timetable changes are also being considered to prevent Wairarapa trains being delayed by Hutt stopping trains. Low-cost track improvements are also being looked studied.

Swiss Timetable: Printed version returns

It appears that reports of the death of Swiss Federal Railways' printed Public Timetable have been premature. Despite the announcement in 2016 that the 2017 edition would be the last, a slimmed-down version will appear in November for 2018. The new book will give the times for every public train, bus, boat and cable car journey in the country. It will be published by the Public Transport Interest Group, rail lobby group Pro Bahn Switzerland and the Swiss Environmental Transport Association. They say that despite the popularity of the Federal Railways' SBB Mobile app, the printed timetable remains irreplaceable for many customers. The 2018 edition, which will have a limited print run, was possible thanks to the "friendly support" of the Federal Railways, which has made travel data available.

Unlike this year's three-volume 2.7 kg doorstopper, bus lines will be dropped next year, resulting in a lighter edition, weighing 900g. It will be available in 60 stations in Switzerland. It can be ordered from the traffic association's website for CHF19 (\$19.80), excluding postage and packaging.

The Federal Railways announced the end of the printed timetable last November. It said that while it received 360 million digital queries a year, demand for the printed timetable had dropped from around half a million copies in the 1980s and 1990s to a print run of 25,000. The Federal Office of Transport said the sales revenue from the timetables no longer covered printing costs. However, it said it would still be downloadable, and regional and city printed timetables – as well as posters in stations – would continue to exist. Passengers will also still be able to download time tables from the SBB website.

Thanks to Tony Bailey, Paul Brown, Scott Ferris, Geoff Hassall, Victor Isaacs, Geoff Lambert, Len Regan, Jim Wells, www.railexpress.com.au, www.railpage.com.au, *Catchpoint*, *Railway Digest*, *Transit Australia*, *Age*, *Australian*, *Courier-Mail*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Herald Sun*, *Sydney Morning Herald* for Rail news.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Melbourne on-train announcements

Albert Isaacs writes: The June 2017 *Table Talk* (page 7) contained the strange news about morning counter-peak (Down) trains Flinders St-Ringwood that Metro Trains runs as placement trains but that are not required by the PTV to be run, and that are thus not found in PTTs. Most of these trains operate to a peculiar stopping pattern –stopping all stations from Flinders St to Camberwell except East Richmond; express Camberwell to Box Hill; express Box Hill to Ringwood. The June *Table Talk* pointed out that there is not an on-train VDU message announcement that covers the stopping patterns of these extras! They usually run with the DVU stating that they are "Stopping all stations to Ringwood except East Richmond; a usual PTV stopping pattern. Not only is this message wrong, but it is extremely confusing! However, it must be admitted that most users of these services appear to be regulars who know just what is really going on. That being said, there is the occasional driver who does what little he/she can to compensate for the wrong announcement by turning off the DVU altogether, or by changing the message to read "Special".

The following news is going to move these services from the *very strange* to the *absolutely bizarre!* Virtually all services on this line are operated by X'Trapolis 100 trains. However, on Thursday 7

September, one of these un-tabled Ringwood services was run by a Comeng – a rare visitor to the eastern suburbs! Believe it or not, the Comeng had VDU messages and even accompanying recorded announcements which described the correct stopping pattern for this unusual train! However, the following day, Friday 8 September, the service was again operated by the usual X'Trapolis 100, and the DVU once more showed the incorrect stopping pattern!

One must assume that drivers are able to alter the DVUs on Comengs but not on the X'Trapolis. Whether this is correct or not, Metro Trains is not treating their commuters with any respect by not making any attempt to do something to show the correct stopping pattern on all of their passenger-carrying trains; in particular these non-tabled Ringwood expresses!

Stephen Ward writes: The answer is very simple and was explained to me by a gunzel spark driver. I understand the system has different versions. I further understand that the Comeng trains run on a higher version than either the X'Trapolis or Siemens trains so they can run on any line in the Metro network. When the X'Trapolis trains first ran on the Frankston line they showed "special" when travelling in either Up or Down, directions as they were unable to display the correct stopping patterns and/or destinations. This has now been fixed. My last ride on an X'Trapolis on the Frankston line had the system announcing all stations and destinations correctly.

Maryborough



Maryborough to Melbourne via Ballarat and Castlemaine

Effective 27/08/17

Service	Monday to Friday				M, Tu, Th, F	Mon-Fri	Fri	Saturday	Sunday
	COACH	COACH	COACH	COACH	COACH	COACH	COACH	COACH	COACH
Service information	△M	△M			△D				
HIGHVIEW COLLEGE dep	04:07	04:07	05:45	06:37	08:19	09:37	15:30H	18:15	04:07
Maryborough (3)	04:10	04:10	05:50	06:45	07.11	08.24	09.45	14:46	15.25
Maryborough Station						08.29			04.10
Maryborough (1)			05:52	06:47			09:47		07.10
Maryborough (5)							15:42	18:22	
Talbot	04:23	04:23			08:40				08.29
Talbot Station	04:24	04:24			07.21	08.41	14:56		08.40
Clunes Station					07.33	08.56	15:08		07.32
Clunes	04:38	04:38			08:57				08.57
Creswick North					09:09				09:09
Creswick Station					07.46	09:12	15:21		07.44
Creswick	04:51	04:51			09:15				09:15
Creswick Novotel					09:17				09:17
BALLARAT STATION arrive	05:03	05:03			08.02	09.33	15:37		05.03
Change service	TRAIN				TRAIN				TRAIN
Service information	△				△				△
BALLARAT STATION dep	05:19	05:35			08.18	10.18	15.52		05.35
Carisbrook			05:58	06:53		09:53	15:48	18:28	08.18
Moolort Turn Off			06:06	07:03		10:03	15:58	18:38	08.43
Newstead (2)			06:18	07:13		10:13	16:08	18:48	08.53
Strangways			06:21	07:16		10:16	16:11		09:03
Guildford			06:30	07:25		10:25	16:20		09:06
CASTLEMAINE STN arrive			06:42	07:37		10:37	16:32	19:03	09:15
Change service			TRAIN	TRAIN		TRAIN	TRAIN	TRAIN	09:27
Service information									18:57
CASTLEMAINE STN dep			06:53	08:06		10:51	17:07	19:09	09.40
SOUTHERN CROSS	06:33	07:05	08:24	09:28	09:39	11:40	12:23	17:16	18.42
									20.43
									07.05
									09.40
									11.40
									11.23
									20.33
									10.40
									20.44

Melbourne to Maryborough via Castlemaine and Ballarat

Service	Mon-Fri	M, Tu, Th	Fri	Mon-Fri	Fri	Mon-Fri	Saturday	Sunday
	TRAIN	TRAIN	TRAIN	TRAIN	TRAIN	TRAIN	TRAIN	TRAIN
Service information	△	△	△	△	△	△	△	△
SOUTHERN CROSS dep	06:16	09:16	11:20	13:16	15:20	16:25	16:33	16:54
CASTLEMAINE STN arrive	07:47		12:46		16:47	17:50		20:06
Change service	COACH		COACH		COACH	COACH	COACH	COACH
CASTLEMAINE STN dep	07:55		13:00		17:00	18:00		20:15
Guildford			13:12					20:27
Strangways			13:20					20:35
Newstead (2)	08:10		13:24		17:15	18:15		20:39
Moolort Turn Off	08:20		13:33		17:24	18:24		20:48
Carisbrook	08:30		13:42		17:33	18:33		20:57
BALLARAT STATION arrive		10:39		14:39		17:38	18:00	22:40
Change service			COACH			COACH		COACH
Service information			△			△		△
BALLARAT STATION dep		10:45		15:00		17:45	18:10	23:05
Creswick Novotel				15:16			18:26	23:05
Creswick				15:18			18:28	23:19
Creswick Station		11:00		15:21		18:00	18:31	23:19
Creswick North				15:23			18:33	23:19
Clunes				15:35			18:44	23:30
Clunes Station		11:12		15:37		18:12	18:46	23:30
Talbot Station		11:24		15:52		18:24	19:01	23:44
Talbot				15:53			19:02	23:45
Maryborough (1)								23:45
Maryborough (5)	08:38		13:46		17:39	18:39		23:45
MARYBOROUGH STN arrive	08:40	11:36	13:50	16:07	17:41	18:41	18:38	19:17
MARYBOROUGH STN dep								21:05
Highview College	08:44							21:05
MARYBOROUGH (3)	08:47		13:55	16:12	17:46	18:46		19:22
								21:10
								23:58
								10:50
								12:07
								20:40
								20:33
								20:35
								20:26
								20:35
								00:01

★ - First Class / ☆ - Catering / △ - Wheelchair accessible / D - To/From Donald / H - During school holidays this service does not stop at Highview College / M - To/From Mildura

Coach services shown in red / □ Reservations required

Note: Off-peak fares are available for trips covering at least three zones. Off-peak fares are not available with myki touch on in Zone 1 between 4pm and 6pm on a weekday, and touch off must not occur in Zone 1 before 9am on a weekday. Altered timetables may apply on public holidays. Please check vline.com.au prior to travelling.

Coach stop locations: Carisbrook - General Store, Green Street / Clunes - Butcher Shop, Service Street / Creswick - Bus Stop, Albert Street / Creswick North - Corner Clunes-Creswick and Creswick-Smeaton Roads / Guildford - General Store / Maryborough (1) - Corner Derby Road and Napier Street / Maryborough (3) - Clarendon Street (Bus Terminal) / Maryborough (5) - Sutton Road / Strangways - Corner Newstead-Guildford Road and Daylesford-Newstead Road / Talbot - Corner Store, Scandinavian Crescent



For more information visit ptv.vic.gov.au or call 1800 800 007



V/Line's timetable of 27 August showing the new weekday Melbourne-Maryborough return train. (see August Table Talk pages 8-9).

Northam – Midland

AvonLink

From Northam	Mon – Fri		From Midland	Mon – Fri	
	AV02			AV01	
	AM			PM	
Northam	Dep	6:30	Midland Station	Dep	5:50
Toodyay	Dep	6:50	Toodyay	Dep	6:43
Midland Station	Arr	7:50	Northam	Arr	7:10

AvonLink services connect with urban train services at Midland

East Perth Terminal – Merredin

MerredinLink

From East Perth Terminal	Mon Wed Fri		From Merredin	Mon	Wed	Fri	
	M01			M02	M04	M06	
	AM			PM	PM	PM	
East Perth Terminal	Dep	8:55	Merredin	Dep	1:10	1:10	1:05
Midland Station	Dep	9:12	Hines Hill* •	Dep	1:20	1:20	1:15
Toodyay	Dep	10:07	Doodlakine*	Dep	1:30	1:30	1:25
Northam	Dep	10:27	Kellerberrin*	Dep	1:41	1:41	1:36
Meckering*	Dep	10:49	Tammin*	Dep	1:59	1:59	1:54
Cunderdin*	Dep	11:01	Cunderdin*	Dep	2:12	2:12	2:07
Tammin*	Dep	11:14	Meckering*	Dep	2:26	2:26	2:21
Kellerberrin*	Dep	11:38	Northam	Dep	2:46	2:54	2:41
Doodlakine*	Dep	11:49	Toodyay	Dep	3:06	3:14	3:01
Hines Hill* •	Dep	12:01	Midland Station	Dep	4:00	4:10	3:55
Merredin	Arr	12:10	East Perth Terminal	Arr	4:20	4:30	4:20

* Trains only stop at intermediate stations if advance bookings are made.

Amendments may apply on public holidays and during school holidays. Passengers are advised to be ready to board 15 minutes prior to departure.

Wheelchair accessible toilet facilities available

* Low Level Platform – not wheelchair accessible

transwa.wa.gov.au

2930-200-006 Rev 3.00

TransWA's timetable of 3 July following the withdrawal of the augmented service to Northam and re-instatement of the MerredinLink thrice weekly (see July Table Talk page 7).

ODD SPOT

The **Staff Pocket Guide** issued by Sydney Trains to explain timetable changes to be introduced on 26 November 2017 says that from 12 November staff should be “Creating a sense of urgency and encouraging customers to plan.” Passengers do not exist on the Sydney Trains network any more.

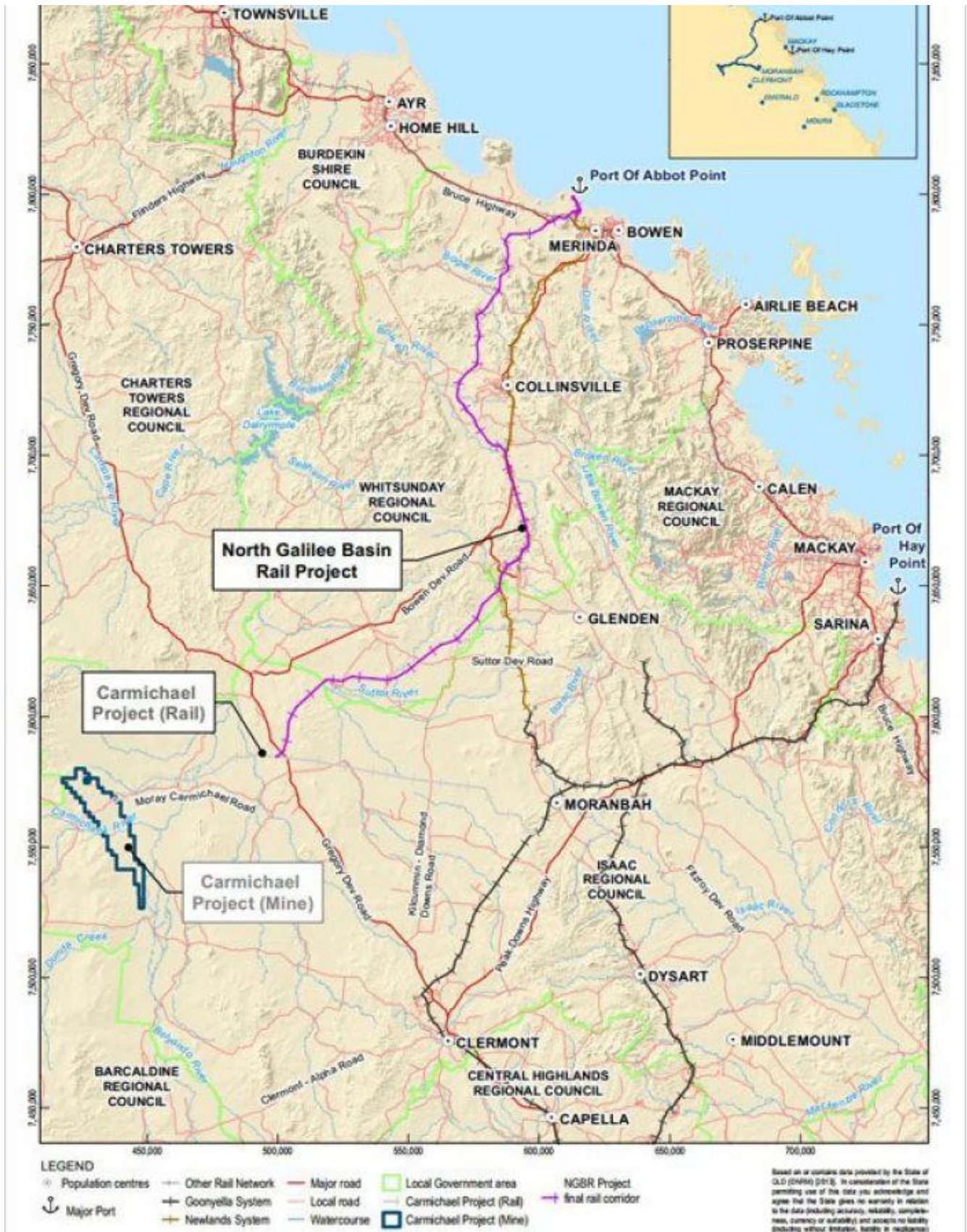
Throughout this Guide there are many references to “customers”.

The strangest aspect of this Guide is a photograph that appears on page 24. It is a nice shot of trains in Newcastle station - the station that was closed amidst much controversy three years ago.

RECOMMENDED READING

Freight Rates in Australia presents an estimate of interstate freight rates for road, rail, sea and air back to 1965. Models of the first three modes are also presented, allowing an understanding of the level and movement of freight rates in Australia. These show that following rapid declines in real freight rates from 1975 to 1985 for road and 1985 to 1995 for rail and

sea, the trend since has been basically sideways—higher or lower due to trends in technology, fuel prices and the economy. Rail freight rates are considerably less than for road, with sea slightly lower again. This information sheet from the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics can be download from https://bitre.gov.au/publications/2017/is_090.aspx



The proposed Adani coal railway project (see July Table Talk page 1).

BUS NEWS

Australian Capital Territory

ACTION: Network 17 will be introduced from 7 October. This is the first of a series of improvements towards the ACT government's objective of developing an integrated public transport system. Some services have been modified to allow for changes in public transport infrastructure. Changes include the introduction of two new Rapid services, changes to high frequency connections, modifications to individual routes to allow for better services and improvements to meet patronage demand and services into new residential suburbs.

Previously core Blue Rapid services were:
300 Tuggeranong-Woden-City-Belconnen-Kippax,
313 Tuggeranong-Woden-City-Belconnen-Kippax-
Charnwood-Fraser, and
343 Tuggeranong-Woden-City-Belconnen-Kippax-
Macgregor-Dunlop-Fraser.

Each of these routes operated every thirty minutes during the Monday to Friday off-peak, providing a ten-minute service over the common section. On weekends, 300 was renumbered 900 and operated a fifteen-minute frequency between Tuggeranong and Belconnen with a supplementary thirty-minute Woden-City-Belconnen service on Saturdays in the middle of day, providing an average ten-minute service over this section. Now 313 and 343 extend from Tuggeranong to Lanyon and 319 replaces the 300 off-peak service operating Banks-Lanyon-Tuggeranong- Woden-City-Belconnen-Kippax. To provide a direct link to Lanyon 19 and 319 no longer serve Bonython, with Bonython now served by 18 and 318. 300 Tuggeranong-Woden-City-Belconnen now operates on weekends, replacing the 900. The section of the 900 serving Wanniasa and Erindale is now replaced by an extension of 971 Tuggeranong-Theodore-Erindale to Woden.

Red Rapid Services

In addition to the weekday 200 Gungahlin-Northbound Avenue-City-Fyshwick services operating at a 15-minute frequency, 200 Gungahlin-Northbourne Avenue-City services now operate at a 15-minute frequency on weekends, replacing 950 Gungahlin-Northbourne Avenue-City operating at a 30-minute frequency.

New Green Rapid Service

New Green Rapid service 6 City-Parkes-Griffith-Narrabundah-Canberra Hospital-Woden has been introduced operating every 15 minutes weekdays. It is a simplified route 5, now discontinued, which had operated every 30 minutes City-Russell-Griffith-Narrabundah-Canberra Hospital -Woden. Weekday route 4 previously City-Russell-Red Hill-Canberra Hospital-Woden has been altered to operate City-Parkes-Red Hill-Narrabundah-Fyshwick. Route 4 now serves Kotara Crescent, Narrabundah, previously part of route 5 and not served on the new route 6.

New Black Rapid Service

250 Gungahlin-Belconnen, previously operating every 20 minutes weekdays, has become the new Black Rapid Service, operating at a 15-minute frequency, directly along William Slim Drive, in lieu of Baldwin Drive. Baldwin Drive is serviced by 54 (and 254 peak) Gungahlin-Crace-Belconnen, and 30 City-Kaleen North-Giralang-Belconnen. 54 and 30 both have an increased frequency of 30 minutes instead of 60 minutes. 54 and 254 no longer serve McKellar, now aligning with the 954 weekend service. McKellar is now served by 52 (and 252 peak) Gungahlin-Nichols-Belconnen, which operate directly along William Slim Drive, now aligning with 952 weekend service.

Weston Line

182 City-Molonglo Valley-Coolleman-Woden now extends into Denman Prospect.

Xpresso Services

712 Barton-Russell-City-McKellar-Evatt Spence, 714 Barton-Russell-Flynn Fraser, 717 Barton-Russell-City-Weetangara-Hawker-Kippax, 743 Barton-Russell-City-Macgregor-Dunlop-Fraser, 744 Barton-Russell-City-Holt-Macgregor-West Kippax all terminate at and commence from the City, no longer serving Russell and Barton.

Other Changes

Weekday route 1 Dickson-Lyneham-Turner-City-Yarralumla-Hughes-Woden has an increased frequency of 30 minutes instead of 60 minutes. Weekend 932 Woden-Curtin-Yarralumla-City-Kaleen-Giralang-Belconnen has been split into 930 City-Kaleen North-Giralang-Belconnen, City-Kaleen South-Belconnen and 932 City-Yarralumla-Curtin Woden. On 7 October the Dickson Interchange opened to serve weekday routes 1, 7, 8, 30, 31, 39, 56, 57, 58, 200, 251, 252, 254, 255, 259, 712 and 714, and weekend routes 200, 930, 931, 936, 937, 956, 958 and 980.

City Bus Station platforms 10 and 11 are no longer in use for services in preparation for works on the Northbourne Plaza tram station. Charter services will remain in service from these platforms. School services have a number of minor timing changes.

New South Wales

State Transit: On 4 June route 170 was introduced on weekends, being an all stop service between Manly and Wynyard. Services depart Manly at 1000 then every 30 minutes until 1830 Saturday and Sunday. Services depart Wynyard at 1052 then every 30 minutes until 1922 Saturday and Sunday. This service is additional to the weekday E70 express service.

It is claimed that Transport for NSW frustrated attempts by State Transit to improve their on-time running, A report obtained by the Greens under freedom of information laws says Transport for NSW refused a request two years ago for \$5 million in savings to be funnelled back into improving running times and timetables. "[Transport for NSW] would not

invest all or part of the \$5m saving in more realistic running times," the State Transit report says. A year earlier, Transport for NSW did not formally respond to advice by State Transit for a full-service review to improve on-time running of buses. Instead, the report says the transport authority informally advised State Transit that proposed service reviews were "not supported for the first two years" of the city's bus service contracts.

The report, *On Time Running Service Reviews 2016-17*, claims State Transit's efforts to improve running times were frustrated until, "following persistent efforts", it was agreed at a meeting in August 2015 to form an "on-time running working group". Transport for NSW then agreed to commit up to \$7.5 million to improve on-time running. But the report says "many adverse findings and customer experiences would have been averted" if Transport for NSW had responded pro-actively to proposals in 2014 to improve on-time running of buses.

"The majority of State Transit bus services are operating timetables constructed by archaic methodologies," the report says. "In many instances, buses' scheduled running times no longer reflect actual running times. This has resulted in frustrating customer experiences and misleading reports that State Transit is able to control and therefore improve service reliability."

A spokesman for Transport for NSW said the report about on-time running of buses was prepared by State Transit in response to ongoing discussions at the time. "As a result of these discussions, Transport for NSW allocated [in 2015] an additional \$7.5 million recurrent annual budget allocation above contract payments to implement improvements identified by an on-time working group set up in 2015 to lift STA's performance across its four contracts," he said. "All bus operators are expected to negotiate the challenges posed by changing traffic environments, including congestion. STA is no different."

Queensland

A new route commenced in **Logan City** on 17 July. This is 567 from Beenleigh station via a circuit around Holmview, then return to Beenleigh station. On Monday to Friday the first trip starts at Holmview at 0634, then Beenleigh station at 0725 and hourly to 1825. On Saturdays the first trip starts at Holmview at 0734, then Beenleigh station at 0825 and hourly to 1725. It uses an 18 seat Hino Poncho bus.

Logan Coaches has introduced a new timetable on its Beenleigh – Tamborine service. This operates via Loganholme, Loganlea, Buccan and Yarrabilla. It operates seven services on Mondays to Fridays and four on Saturdays.

Victoria

Crosstown split

Public Transport Victoria, umbrella agency Transport for Victoria, and Transdev undertook consultation during August for proposed changes that would see

the crosstown 216, 219, 220 services split into several shorter routes. For several years now, both corridors have suffered significant late running, a problem that also existed under former operator Melbourne Bus Link. The changes will isolate delays and provide opportunities for recovery. Timetable updates since July 2014 have seen Transdev add 15 minutes to some peak trips to manage the problem. The route split will also prevent long-term Metro Tunnel works on St Kilda Road impacting passengers in the west – the corridor will be reduced to just one traffic lane each way in early 2018. Route 220 (Sunshine - Gardenvale) will be split in the City, now running Sunshine – City (Flinders Lane) and Queen Victoria Market – Gardenvale, the latter numbered 604. The 216 (Caroline Springs – Brighton) and 219 (Sunshine – Gardenvale) corridor will be now be covered by numerous shorter services:

- 426 (Caroline Springs – Sunshine), which will alternate with 456 to provide a 20 minute headway along Ballarat Road. This was first proposed late last year as part of route changes in Caroline Springs, which would also see the service extended to the town centre.
- 428 (Sunshine Park – Sunshine), a local feeder route for the Sunshine Park estate.
- 216 (Sunshine – City), replacing the combined 216/219 service along South Road, Essex St and Dynon Road.
- 603 (Alfred Hospital – Gardenvale), passengers travelling to the CBD will need to interchange with new 604 at Alfred Hospital, providing co-ordinated connections.
- Passengers on New St south of Bay St, North Brighton will need to travel on routes 600 or 923 (St Kilda – Southland) or access the parallel Sandringham line nearby. This section of the route carries very few passengers outside school times and serves an area filled with multi-million dollar mansions.

The proposed changes also acknowledge higher loadings in the working class western suburbs compared to the more affluent inner south-east, where the services compete against tram services and the Sandringham line, a legacy of the former Melbourne Brighton Bus Lines routes 601 (Gardenvale) and 602 (Brighton) that offered cheaper fares to the competing routes until the 1980s. Data suggests a small number of customers travel through the CBD.

On Sundays, services between Sunshine and the City on the shortened 216 and 220 will be boosted to every 20 minutes from half-hourly. On Saturday afternoons, the 216 will now run every quarter hour instead of every 20 minutes. Routes 603 and 604 in the south-east will be downgraded from 15 minutes to 20 minutes between the peaks and on Saturdays, and operate every half hour after 2100 rather than every 15 to 20 minutes. The Sunday service will remain twice an hour.

To co-ordinate with trains at Sunshine, route 429 from Sunshine Park will operate every 40 minutes outside

peak times, compared to the current 30 minutes weekday off-peak and Saturday morning service offered by route 219. The existing midnight finish will be maintained - presumably the location of the depot means trips from Sunshine station can run at minimal cost. As with the Caroline Springs proposal, 426 will depart every 20 minutes in peaks, 40 minutes daytime and hourly at night, combining with 456 to/from Melton on the same headway.

Associated with these changes, 232 (North Altona – City) will be downgraded in peaks from a 10 minute headway to a 12 to 13 minute headway, reflecting falling patronage as the route suffers ever-increasing congestion on the West Gate Bridge. This will free up buses to be reallocated to busy portions of Routes 216 and 220 through Footscray, West Footscray, Tottenham and Braybrook.

Shortly before the brief three-week consultation period ended, Bayside Council criticised the cuts along New St along with the lack of a drop-in feedback session within the municipality. However, PTV failed to extend the consultation period. The changes are expected to commence in early 2018.

More 27 August timetable updates

Adding to the list of routes in August *Table Talk*, further timetables effective 27 August have been sighted:

Frankston Line

Ventura Routes 811 and 812 (Brighton – Dandenong) and 828 (Berwick – Hampton).

Ararat Line

Christians' Ararat town routes 1, 2 and 3 to meet the later Saturday night train arrival from Melbourne.

New Chadstone – Moorabbin route proposal

Labor State Member for the Bentleigh Electorate, Nick Staikous, has announced community consultation for a new route from Chadstone to Moorabbin, which would traverse Poath Road, North Road, East Boundary Road, McKinnon Road, Tucker Road and South Road. Funding for a new route in the area was part of the 2017/8 state budget. It will provide access to Hughesdale Station, Glen Eira Aquatic Centre, McKinnon Secondary College, Holmesglen TAFE (Moorabbin campus) and Moorabbin Private Hospital. Journeys on the 10.5 km route are forecast to take around half an hour. As the route overlaps services by both Ventura and CDC Melbourne, it is not clear who will be the operator.

Transdev

Transdev, Melbourne's second biggest bus operator, has been ordered to take buses off the road due to serious defects that posed a danger to passengers. A blitz by safety inspectors on two Transdev depots found 33 defective buses, with 12 in such poor condition they were ordered off the road for urgent repairs. Victoria's transport safety watchdog, Transport Safety Victoria, said it was the highest number of defective buses it had ever taken off the road in a blitz. Transdev, which operates one-third of Melbourne's bus network under a \$1.7 billion contract with the state government, has been forced to hire a mix of buses and coaches from other companies to plug holes in its timetables. It has also cancelled services due to "operational issues".

Transport Safety Victoria said it would increase its inspection regime of Transdev's fleet of buses until it is satisfied the company's maintenance standards are adequate. It is currently inspecting about 40 buses a day for potential safety problems. Defects included engine and transmission faults, fluid and air leaks, loose fitting panels and suspension faults. Transdev said it was working to get the defective buses back in service, and had repaired four buses already.

Transdev's seven-year contract with the state government is unique among Melbourne bus operators. It is performance-based, with bonuses and penalties for meeting punctuality and reliability targets, similar to Metro Trains and Yarra Trams. The decision to put a third of Melbourne's bus routes out to competitive tender was made by Public Transport Victoria in 2013, and was meant to usher in a new improved service level. However, Transdev has largely failed to meet its performance targets. It has never met its contractual monthly punctuality target of 85% and has overseen an annual decline in patronage of tens of thousands on key routes. Under the terms of its contract the company is meant to grow bus passenger numbers on its routes. The State government is contemplating opening Melbourne's other bus contracts to more competition to improve service standards.

Western Australia

Swan Transit was awarded the contract to operate **Albany** regional town bus services in May. Timetables and routes remain the same, but connectivity and timetabling is being reviewed.

Thanks to Jason Blackman, Agnes Boskovitz, Jonathan Fee, Hilaire Fraser, Alan Gray, Craig Halsall, Victor Isaacs, Peter Parker, Age and various contributors on *Australian Transport Discussion Board*.

AIR NEWS

International

Qantas is dropping Dubai from its network and will instead have its Europe-bound aircraft stopover in Singapore from 25 March 2018, in a major shake-up that repositions it towards the booming Asian market. That service will replace one of its two daily Sydney-Singapore A330 flights. Flights to Singapore from Melbourne are also being ramped up as part of the overhaul, with Qantas' daily service upgraded from a 235-seat A330 to a 484-seat A380 and its thrice-weekly A330 service increased to a daily service. Melbourne passengers will have the option to transfer

in Singapore onto a flight to London as an alternative to the 17-hour non-stop flight out of Perth. Qantas codeshare partner Emirates will continue to fly 77 weekly services to its base in Dubai, connecting to destinations in Europe, the Middle East and Africa, which passengers will be able to book through Qantas.

Hainan Airlines commenced direct Brisbane to Shenzhen flights on 21 September.

Thanks to Fairfax newspapers for Air news.

FERRY NEWS

Redcliffe2Moreton Express' new ferry service commenced on Sunday, 24 September from the Redcliffe Jetty on Sundays at 1000, arriving at Bulwer about 1100. The ferry departs Bulwer, Moreton Island on Sundays at 1500, arriving at Redcliffe Jetty about 1600. The operators hope to increase services as soon as possible, depending on demand.

In early August **Captain Cook Cruises** introduced a service between the Sydney International Convention Centre at Darling Harbour and Circular Quay. It appears to be designed for visitors attending conferences and exhibitions rather than the general public.

SeaLink commenced a daily Barangaroo fast ferry service from Manly to Barangaroo in September. Ferries operate every 30 minutes in the peaks and hourly off-peak, from 0645-2000 on weekdays and 0930-1800 on weekends/holidays.

A car ferry between the Mornington Peninsula and **Phillip Island** has been proposed. The Mornington Peninsula and Bass Coast shire councils, and the Victorian government, are looking at developing a business case. There is already a ferry between Stony Point and Cowes, but it doesn't accommodate cars.

Thanks to Tony Bailey, *Transit Australia*, *Courier-Mail* and *Herald Sun* for Ferry News.

About Table Talk

Table Talk is published monthly by the Australian Timetable Association Inc. (Registration No. A0043673H) as a journal of record covering recent timetable news items. The ATA also publishes the **Times** covering timetable history and analysis. Contributions are invited and are very welcome. Please send these to the appropriate Editor. ABN 74248483468.

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

Editor, Rail and Tram, Air, Ferry: Victor Isaacs, tabletalk@ Austta.org.au 11 Blacket St Downer ACT 2602.

Editor, Bus: As an interim arrangement, please send your Bus news to tabletalk@ Austta.org.au

Production and Mailout: Geoff and Judy Lambert.

Proofreaders: Agnes Boskovitz, David Cranney and Geoff Hassall.

Original material appearing in **Table Talk** may be reproduced in other publications but acknowledgement is required.

Membership of the Australian Timetable Association includes monthly copies of the *Times*, *Table Talk*, the Distribution List of timetables, and Auction catalogues. The membership fee is \$60 (Adult) and \$36 (Junior) pa. Membership enquiries should be directed to the Membership Officer, Len Regan, at treasurer@ Austta.org.au

Back issues of **Table Talk** are available on the Australian Timetable Association's website, [Austta.org.au](http:// Austta.org.au), after two months.

Table Talk Newswire is an advance monthly email of Rail news. To obtain this, contact the Rail Editor.