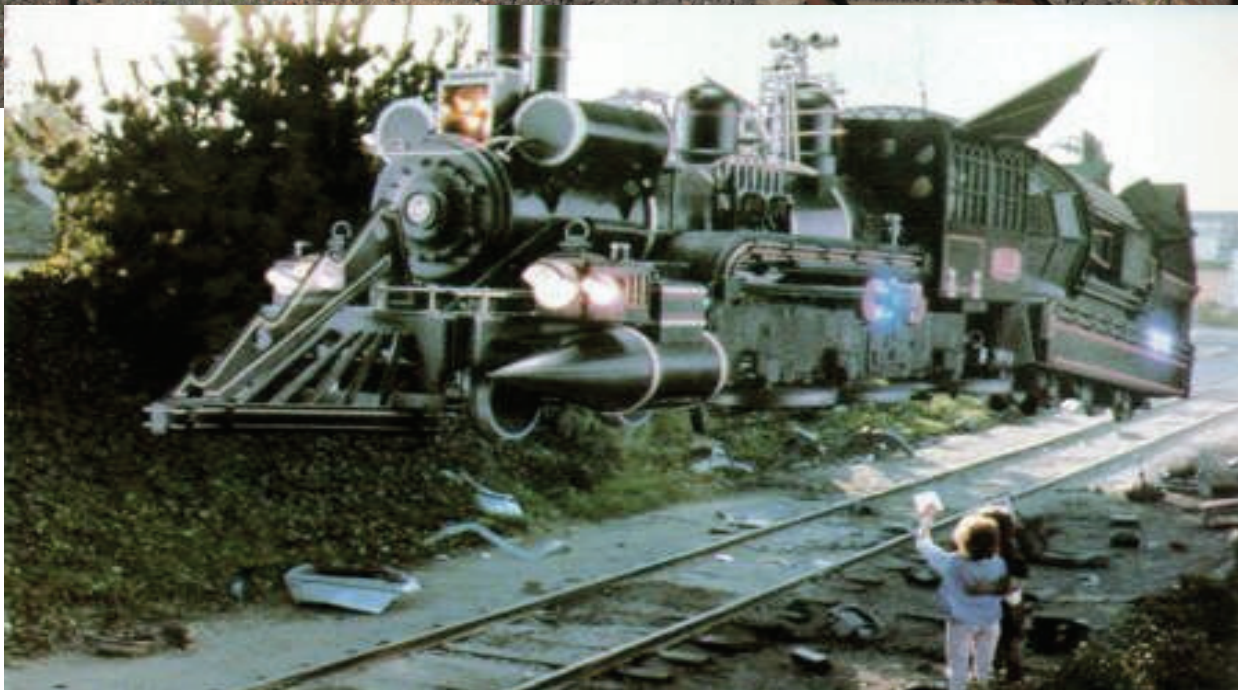




# The Times

October 2012

A journal of transport timetable history and analysis



***Back to  
the future-  
How V/Line  
will fix its  
Albury train  
services***

**Inside: Withered arms wriggle again  
Early Sunday Morning  
Metroliners revisited  
Dog Days of August**

RRP \$4.95  
Incl. GST

# The Times

Journal of the Australian Association of Time Table Collectors Inc. (A0043673H)

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October 2012

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## —Contents—

<b>WITHERED ARMS STILL WRIGGLING (LETTERS)</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>EARLY SUNDAY MORNING</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>METROLINERS AND SCOTRAIL (LETTERS)</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>DOG DAYS OF AUGUST</b>	<b>14</b>

### On the front cover

It's an old story—when you can't kick goals—move the goal posts. On Victoria's North East standard gauge (NESG) line, things are in a parlous state. In August, only 2.6% of V/Line's trains ran to time... and that is allowing for a rather generous 11 minute slippage in the definition of "on-time". A solution is nowhere in sight because the main cause—bad track—seems irredeemable... or at least fixable only in terms of months or years. The pointy heads are now getting together to decide what to do. It is likely they will choose the tried and true method of padding out the timetable. It always works. But, if they are to adhere to their target of having 92% of trains running "on-time", this will lead to schedules with running times of between 5 and 6 hours. In 1912, the fastest train on the line, the English Mail, scurried north on Sunday nights in 4 hours and 6 minutes. To find regular 5 and 6 hour timings, we have to go back to before 1900. That is too awful to think about, but it is the logical end-point reached from the current reality. In all probability some intermediate figure will be chosen. We may see times lengthened by (say) 40 minutes, which would see the incidence of "late" trains drop from 97% to 40%. Pretty horrible— but a lot better than what we had in the Dog Days. The Age said of the proposals, "*Days of steam return for train passengers*". The Age didn't know how right it was. For the latest news on this imbroglio, see October 2012 Table Talk.

### **From the V/Line service status web site:**

*Cancelled 17:20 Albury - Southern Cross. Please catch next service or call 1800 800 007 for rail-replacement coach information.*

Hmm... the next service is at dawn the next morning— this is scarcely helpful advice.

<b>Contributors</b> The Times	Ross Willson, Albert Isaacs & Stephen Ward, Jim Wells, Derek Scrafton, Dean Ogle, Geoff Lambert. welcomes articles and letters. Send paper manuscripts or word-processor files on disk or via e-mail to the editor at the address below. Illustrations should be submitted as clean sharp photocopies on white paper or scanned GIF or TIF format images with at least 300 dpi resolution on disk or via e-mail.		
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<b>The Times</b> on-line	AATTC's home page: <a href="http://www.aatc.org.au">http://www.aatc.org.au</a> has colour PDF versions of The Times		
<b>President</b>	Victor Isaacs	43 Lowanna Street BRADDON ACT 2612	abvi@inet.net.au
<b>Secretary</b>	Geoff Lambert	179 Sydney Rd FAIRLIGHT NSW 2094	G.Lambert@unsw.edu.au
<b>Editor, The Times</b>	Geoff Lambert		
<b>Editors, Table Talk</b>	Geoff Mann	19 Rix St GLEN IRIS VIC 3146	geoffwm@bigpond.com.au
	Victor Isaacs	43 Lowanna Street BRADDON ACT 2612	abvi@webone.com.au
<b>Distribution Officer</b>	Len Regan	PO Box 21 YEA VIC 3717	0409 209114 aatc.do@hunterlink.net.au
<b>Membership Officer</b>	Dennis McLean	P.O. Box 1253 NORTH LAKES 4503	(07) 3491 3734
<b>Webmaster</b>	Lourie Smit	lsmit@ozemail.com.au	(02) 9527 6636
<b>Adelaide Convenor</b>	Roger Wheaton	2C Bakewell Street, TUSMORE SA 5065	(08) 8331 9043
<b>Canberra Convenor</b>	Victor Isaacs	Address as above	
<b>Brisbane Convenor</b>	Brian Webber	8 Coachwood St KEPERA Qld 4054	(07) 3354 2140
<b>Melbourne Convenor</b>	David Hennell		(03) 983 01802
<b>Sydney Convenor</b>	Geoffrey Clifton	PO Box 5062 OLD TOONGABBIE NSW 2146	0405 387478



# Withered arms still wriggling

Our “*Withered Arms*” story in April has spawned more (and more varied) correspondence than any other. The saga continues with letters from **ROSS WILLSON, ALBERT ISAACS and STEPHEN WARD**

## From Ross Willson

I refer to the article published in the April issue of *The Times* which stated that the Westby line was one of the few lines built by the NSW Railways rather than by the Public Works Department and that “*This gave it a special status – it could be closed, whereas PWD lines could not be closed and never have been (Tumbarumba for instance).*”.

This statement needs some clarification. Prior to the enactment of the Public Works Act, 1888 and Government Railways Act, 1888, railways and tramways were constructed by what can conveniently be referred to as the NSW Railways. Thereafter they were constructed by the PWD. However, when it was in the NSW Railways’ interest to have a line built as a matter of urgency, its enabling Act provided for its being constructed by the NSW Railways. Under the Government Railways (Amendment) Act, 1916 the Railways regained direct responsibility for railway and tramway construction on 1 January 1917.

C.C. Singleton, speaking from direct personal knowledge, told me about the entrenched problems caused to the NSW Railways by the lack of consultation on the PWD’s part in relation to such matters as the location of loops and stations and locomotive watering facilities.

With regard to the Tumbarumba line, work commenced on 13 February 1912, the day when the resident engineer arrived in Wagga Wagga. The line was constructed using day labour. The PWD’s annual report for 1914/15 mentioned the line “of which the first section as far as Humula is approaching completion”. The line had been authorised by the *Wagga Wagga to Tumbarumba Railway Act, 1909*.

The SMH of 18 September 1914 refers to reduction in work on the line and the consequent suspension of the construction train. Rails had been laid for 37 miles from Wagga Wagga to about 2 miles beyond Tarcutta. However, arrangements were being made for a daily passenger service to Tarcutta.

An item published in the Argus of 13 July 1916 refers to the washing away of portion of the Humula line and the temporary suspension of traffic. It follows that the date (14 May 1917) quoted in the NSW Railways’ annual report for the opening of the line from Wagga Wagga to Humula conveys a mis-

leading impression of when railway traffic thereon commenced. This date is simply when the line was taken over for traffic purposes.

The section from Humula to Tumbarumba was included in the list (published in the SMH of 14 May 1915) of works to be constructed by Norton Griffiths. This initiative failed and the railway was completed by the NSW Railways. Thus the railway was built under 3 separate arrangements. The question of by whom a railway was constructed does not affect its status in relation to its closure.

Apart from being an obvious anachronism, the reference to Nurla having been opened on 31 December 1913 is an entrenched typing error. Weekly Notice No. 4 of 1932 refers to the provision on 31 December 1931 of a platform (8 feet long) at 378 miles 75 chains between Humula and Rosewood provided for cream can traffic “and is not to be used for Passenger traffic.”

## From Albert Isaacs and Stephen Ward

It was fascinating to read Bob Henderson’s letter (*The Times*, August 2012) regarding his Sydney-Canberra rail trip prior to the 1997 AATTTC AGM. Much of the fascination comes from the fact that the two people behind him and his wife, Katrina, who were taking times and other notes, were actually Yours Truly and Yours Sincerely.

Now, this letter is part of a long chain. Not

only is it written in response to Bob’s letter, but Bob’s letter was composed in response to an earlier epistle from one of the current correspondents, who, in turn, was writing in response to a letter in June *The Times* from Ben Lewis. Phew! That being said, I am sure that Bob’s letter was written to see if he could motivate us into a response

For many of those interested in TTs, it is only natural to also pay attention to the comparisons between the hypothetical (the TT) and the reality (the actual journey). Actually, it’s a chicken and egg situation because many enthusiasts have been attracted to the collection of TTs by this need to compare the theoretical with the actuality. The fact that Bob was so intrigued by something that is so mainstream to so many rail enthusiasts (including many Table Talk readers) proves the point made in an earlier letter, that keeping notes of rail journeys seems to be confined to the southern states. Perhaps it’s got something to do with the way one kicks a football! (Under no circumstances would I suggest that people from more northern Australian climes are unable to write.)

Bob intimates that he was intrigued that we took notes of the stop of 4¾ minutes (i.e. 1045¼-1050 – due 1043-1046) taken by the train at Tarago. He suggests that we actually discussed one of the crew going to the toilet. In reality, the long stop was in point of fact for something more central to the operation of the railway than going to the dunny; that is, safeworking! In the



absence of station staff, the train crew entered the staff hut and indulged in a self-service staff exchange. We still recall our actual discussion at the time, in which we expressed surprise that, at that point, NSW railways had not even contemplated the adoption of Train Orders, a system that had then been used on many Victorian lines of equal significance to the Canberra line, for many years (although it must be admitted that there are still some backsliding lines which still use Ordinary Train Staff and Ticket or Miniature Electric Staff, e.g. Traralgon-Bairnsdale and Wendouree-Ararat). Further, the Train Order system has been successfully used in South Australia ever since the Webb era of the late 1920s. As it happens, NSW has now introduced Train Orders on a number of lines, although the Canberra line did not get this system until as recently as 30 July this year, and the introduction has seen time savings of nine minutes for each journey as the three minute safeworking stops at Tarago, Bungendore and Queanbeyan have been eliminated. Ironically, in the interim, part of the Canberra line actually went backwards, so to speak, with the Bungen-

dore-Canberra section being demoted from Miniature Electric Staff to Ordinary Train Staff and Ticket.

Obviously, we are both well aware that there are those who consider notations of the type we took on our Saturday 20th September 1997 Canberra trip to be obscure and insignificant, but it must be remembered that these are the very type of things that train crews are actually required to record. (Crews usually take times to the nearest minute – some enthusiasts actually time to the very second – both of your letter writers take the middle ground and record to the nearest quarter minute.)

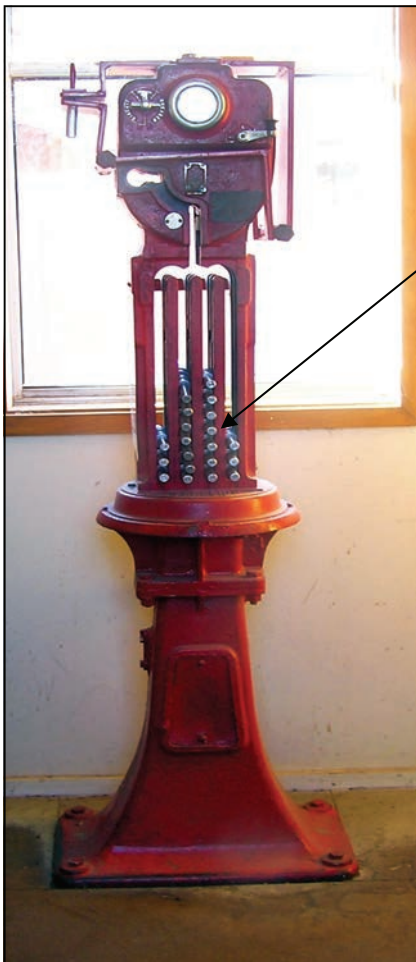
I suspect that the vast majority of *Table Talk* readers are interested in the comparison of the hypothetical and the reality, as we've already discussed. Therefore, here are some further notes on the trip. Scheduled to leave Central at 0743, the Explorer left ½ minute late, which, of course, is as near to on time as one usually gets. Because of the make-up time that is always built into schedules, the train arrived at Canberra at 1147¾, 2¼ early. The other safeworking stops on the branch were at

Bungendore, 1112-1114¼, (scheduled, 1110-1113 [so we made up most of a minute there]) and Queanbeyan 1137¾-1140¾ (1135-1138). Up movements were recorded at 0823 (on the Down side of Glenfield) with a Freight; at 0920 (on the Up side of Yerinbool) with the Up Explorer; at Wingello at 0958½ with a Freight; and with another Freight at 1002¾ (between Tallong and Marulan) – quite a lot of action for a Saturday morning!

Finally, we are reminded of the potential historical significance of such records. Don't forget that this long chain of letters started when Ben Lewis (a New South Welshman) came across notes of a 3rd January 1950 trip on the Uranquinty-Kywong line (a NSW branch), when he was doing research at the Railway Resource Centre (a NSW facility). Hey! Perhaps New South Welshmen are not as opposed to note-taking as was earlier implied.

In summary, Bob, we're sorry to spoil your good lavatory story with facts but the Tarago stop was indubitably for safeworking purposes!

Which calls the stronger at Tarago?- is it the Electric Staff or the Staff Facilities?





# Early Sunday morning

*In the catacombs of Sydney's Town Hall station, only the scuttling of the rats disturbs the pre-dawn silence. Then comes a booming clatter as the first train of the morning emerges from the tunnel. When does it arrive?... When should it arrive? By JIM WELLS*

See you on Sunday at 5 outside Town Hall (Sydney)"

"No you won't. I want a sleep in and, in any case, there's no public transport at that time."

"Sorry, mate, you can be there. Go and check the train timetable".

So we do and find *this* (right) for Sydney's North Shore line:

Yes, we can be there with 13 min to spare provided we aren't travelling from north of Hornsby. What's reassuring is that if we do sleep in a little the next train is only 30 min later. Ring my mate on the mobile to confirm.

Indeed, we find that the standard 15 min headway service starts at 5.01 am at Hornsby although the 5.45 am is missing.

This is typical of Sydney's suburban service. Not every line will get you to Town Hall by 5 am but it will not be too much after it.

The questions we are going to ask are (1) Is this exceptional? and (2) Is it justified?

The answer to (1) is that it certainly is by the standards of other Australian suburban railways. Let's look first of all Brisbane. First Sunday arrivals at Central are (from Ipswich 6.05 am (next in 60 min), Caboolture 5.56 am (60 min), and Ferny Grove 6.58 am (60 min).

Now to my old hometown: Melbourne. We have Glen Waverley at Flinders st 8.05 am (30 min), Dandenong also 8.05 am but via Loop (30 min), Werribee 8.16 am (via Loop, 40 min). It's clear they have a different attitude here.

Perth next: Fremantle 7.57 am (30 min) and Armadale 7.50 am (30 min). Are you happy with a sample size of two?

Now to the dear old city of churches: Adelaide which for many years had no public transport on Sunday mornings. Belair 9.06 am (60 min) Oh dear! They are still very conservative but the others don't look so bad, Noarlunga 7.42 am (60 min), and Gawler 7.54 am (30 min). Incidentally Metro's web site is by far the hardest to use to research this info.

Our friends across the Tasman are worth a look. Wellington's system has Johnson-

Stations	am	am	am
<a href="#">Wyong</a>	---	---	---
<a href="#">Tuggerah</a>	---	---	---
<a href="#">Ourimbah</a>	---	---	---
<a href="#">Lisarow</a>	---	---	---
<a href="#">Niagara Park</a>	---	---	---
<a href="#">Narara</a>	---	---	---
<a href="#">Gosford arr</a>	---	---	---
<a href="#">Gosford dep</a>	---	---	---
<a href="#">Woy Woy</a>	---	---	---
<a href="#">Berowra</a>	---	---	---
<a href="#">Mount Kuring-gai</a>	---	---	---
<a href="#">Mount Colah</a>	---	---	---
<a href="#">Asquith</a>	---	---	---
<a href="#">Hornsby arr</a>	---	---	---
<a href="#">Hornsby dep</a>	4.00	---	4.31
<a href="#">Waitara</a>	4.03	---	4.34
<a href="#">Wahroonga</a>	4.05	---	4.36
<a href="#">Warrawee</a>	4.07	---	4.38
<a href="#">Turramurra</a>	4.09	---	4.40
<a href="#">Pymble</a>	4.12	---	4.42
<a href="#">Gordon</a>	4.14	---	4.45
<a href="#">Killara</a>	4.16	---	4.47
<a href="#">Lindfield</a>	4.18	---	4.49
<a href="#">Roseville</a>	4.21	---	4.51
<a href="#">Chatswood</a>	4.24	---	4.54
<a href="#">Artarmon</a>	4.26	---	4.56
<a href="#">St Leonards</a>	4.28	---	4.58
<a href="#">Wollstonecraft</a>	4.31	---	5.01
<a href="#">Waverton</a>	4.33	---	5.03
<a href="#">North Sydney</a>	4.37	4.40	5.07
<a href="#">Milsons Point</a>	4.39	4.42	5.09
<a href="#">Wynyard</a>	4.44	4.47	5.14
<a href="#">Town Hall</a>	4.47	4.50	5.17
<a href="#">Central</a>	4.51	4.54	5.21

**Saturday, Sunday and Holidays, Effective May 14 - Sept**

Westbound To New York, Woodside & Flushing Weekends & Holidays	For explanation, see "Reference Notes."						
		AM	AM	AM	AM	AM	AM
PORT WASHINGTON		12:40	2:10	4:10	5:40	6:40	7:40
Plandome		12:45	2:15	4:15	5:45	6:45	7:45
Manhasset		12:47	2:17	4:17	5:47	6:47	7:47
Great Neck		12:50	2:20	4:20	5:50	6:50	7:50
Little Neck		12:52	2:22	4:22	5:52	6:52	7:52
Douglaston		12:54	2:24	4:24	5:54	6:54	7:54
Bayside		12:57	2:27	4:27	5:57	6:57	7:57
Auburndale		1:00	2:30	4:30	6:00	7:00	8:00
Broadway		1:02	2:32	4:32	6:02	7:02	8:02
Murray Hill		1:04	2:34	4:34	6:04	7:04	8:04
Flushing Main Street		1:06	2:36	4:36	6:06	7:06	8:06
Woodside		1:14	2:44	4:44	6:14	7:14	8:14
PENN STATION		1:25	2:55	4:55	6:25	7:25	8:25
Train #		AM	AM	AM	AM	AM	AM
		6401	6403	6405	6407	6411	6415

ville at 6.51 am (60 min) and Auckland has Henderson at 8.23 am (60 min). We don't often talk about New Zealand in "The Times".

And now to some overseas cities. The "city that never sleeps" is New York so let's look at a Long Island RR offering into Penn station. One is reminded of the line from *Maigret* who asked a restaurater "When do you close?" to be told, "We don't open!" Rather than me write about it let's look at the timetable (or schedule as the Yanks would say) for Port Washington (above).

Yes, it's sparse but you can get there. By the way, isn't Great Neck or Little Neck where the Great Gatsby used to hang out? [Yes, see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great\\_Neck,\\_New\\_York](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Neck,_New_York)—Ed]. Many (most?) subway lines in New York provide 24/7 service.

BART in San Francisco. Now we have something of interest. Some lines have no Sunday service at all. From Pittsburgh the earliest you can get to Market / Powell to connect with the cable car is 8.55 am (20

min). The cable car starts running on Sundays about 6.30 am.

The UK is well known for not having any trains on Christmas Day but what about Sundays? A lot of services don't run on Sundays but here's a couple of London first arrivals on Sundays – Chingford 7.06 am (15 min), Maidenhead 7.20 am (60 min).

Let's now turn to other modes in Sydney. The first Manly ferry arrives at Circular Quay at 8 am although it is possible to get to the City earlier by using connecting buses. [The Editor notes that Manly has an all-night hourly bus service to the city—more frequent on Saturday and Sunday mornings]. The first bus from Maroubra (Route 377) arrives at 6.54 am but the next one is over an hour later, and Glebe Point (431) arrives at 7.04 am – next 7.57 am. Top Ryde is better – the first 531 is in at 4.51 am, the second 5.46 am.

From this skimpy survey it's clear that Melbourne's offering to early Sunday morning travellers is most unattractive. This is not good – it needs to be fixed. Why, one can't even get to the first service at St Paul's Cathedral in time. It would be

hit or miss whether one could catch the Sydney XPT due out of Southern Cross. Forget about checking one's luggage in. Melbourne does have some NightRider bus services on certain major roads but these finish around 4.30 – 5.00 am on Sunday mornings.

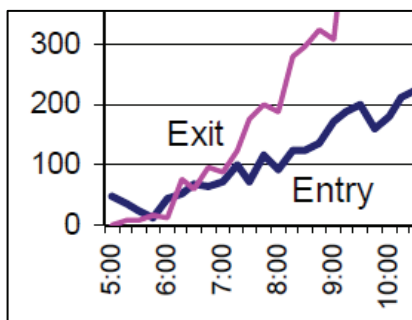
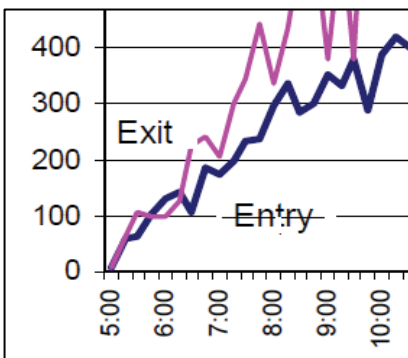
We turn now to the question of justification. The first question one needs to ask is what is the patronage or potential patronage on these early morning trains. Here, the *Compendium of CityRail Statistics June 2010* page 56 is a help. For a selected Sunday we have for Central in fifteen minute blocks in the diagram at lower left and, for Town Hall at lower middle. Care is needed here as this data is based on barrier entry and exits and may not be reliable.

It does suggest one thing that is quite believable and that is that Entries, i.e. for outbound passengers is higher than for exits (inbound). The outbound passengers are most likely to be late night revellers.

This has been the subject of intense debate in Sydney in recent times because of an unprovoked attack leading to death of an innocent pedestrian at Kings Cross. The debate has focussed on the question of the number of licensed premises and their opening hours as well as transport. Below is an example from the SMH of 18th July 2012

In addition to revellers there would be shift workers and people going to the airport or Central for CountryLink to be catered for. Check in times at airports for international economy passengers is typically two hours before flight time so for an 8 am departure one would be aiming to get to the airport by no later than 5.45 am. The first departure from Central for the airport is at 5.09 am with services at 14/15/16 minute intervals following. However, these sort of travellers shouldn't feel too put out if forced to use a taxi as most would do rather than public transport. [The Editor can't help interjecting again to recollect his travelling companions on the first train out of Grand Central at 4 A.M.— the warders of Sing Sing prison. Lovely chaps— no, but really!]

Does it cost a lot to run these early ser-



vices? Yes, it does. The real cost is not so much crewing or power but maintenance of both track, overhead, signals and rolling stock. Crewing probably wouldn't be impacted very much with a curtailment of these early services. With power and maintenance it doesn't help that RailCorp insists on running full eight car trains rather than four car ones at this time but that's a story for another time.

RailCorp runs NightRider bus services in the early hours each night. At right is the timetable for the North Shore (Up) – note that it doesn't service Wollstonecraft, Waverton or Milsons Point.

The 4.00 am and 4.45 am trips would seem to be a little redundant as the train service has started by then. The 11.45 pm is also redundant for the same reason but only on Saturday nights. A clear solution to the problem is to extend these services.

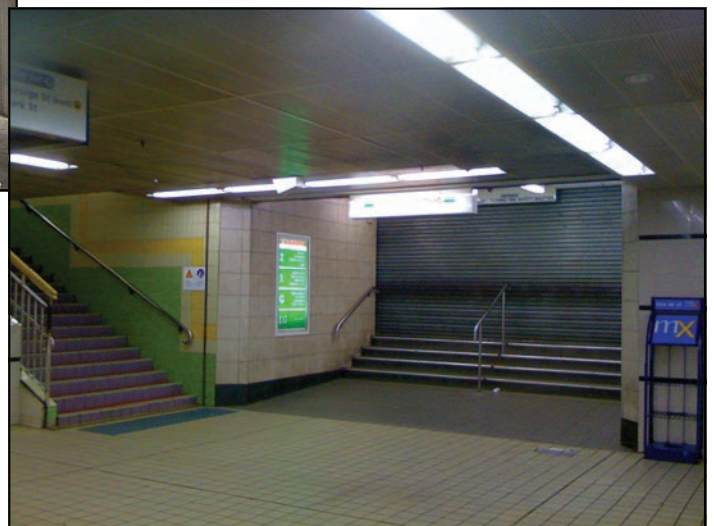
The issue with the trains is not so much the timing of the first service but more the extravagance of the service that follows.

Sydney should run the first train to arrive Central at around 6 am, the following an hour later. The next should run half an hour later with the normal off peak frequency commencing at 8.00 am. This is broadly what Brisbane does.

[The milkman's on his way: below are past and present photos of City Circle stations in the wee small hours.]

### Hornsby to Town Hall (via Chatswood)

	am	am	am	am	am	am
<b>Hornsby Station</b> Near Station Street	11.45	12.45	1.45	2.45	4.00	4.45
<b>Waitara</b> Pacific Highway, near Waitara Avenue	11.48	12.48	1.48	2.48	4.03	4.48
<b>Wahroonga</b> Pacific Highway, near Coonabarra Road	11.51	12.51	1.51	2.51	4.06	4.51
<b>Warrawee</b> Pacific Highway, near Eulbertie Avenue	11.53	12.53	1.53	2.53	4.08	4.53
<b>Turrumurra</b> 1337 Pacific Highway, near Ray Street	11.54	12.54	1.54	2.54	4.09	4.54
<b>Pymble Station</b> 985 Pacific Highway, near Livingstone Avenue	11.57	12.57	1.57	2.57	4.12	4.57
<b>Gordon</b> Pacific Highway, near Park Avenue	12.00	1.00	2.00	3.00	4.15	5.00
<b>Killara</b> Pacific Highway, near Powell Street	12.02	1.02	2.02	3.02	4.17	5.02
<b>Lindfield Station</b> Pacific Highway, near Beaconsfield Parade	12.03	1.03	2.03	3.03	4.18	5.03
<b>Roseville Station</b> 81 Pacific Highway, near Clanville Road	12.05	1.05	2.05	3.05	4.20	5.05
<b>Chatswood Station</b> Stand M, Railway Street, near Victoria Avenue	12.08	1.08	2.08	3.08	4.23	5.08
<b>Artarmon Station</b> Hampden Road	12.12	1.12	2.12	3.12	4.27	5.12
<b>St Leonards Station</b> 201 Pacific Highway, near Lithgow Street	12.16	1.16	2.16	3.16	4.31	5.16
<b>North Sydney Station</b> Pacific Highway, near Walker Street	12.20	1.20	2.20	3.20	4.35	5.20
<b>Wynyard Station</b> York Street, near Wynyard Street	12.26	1.26	2.26	3.26	4.41	5.26
<b>Town Hall Station</b> George Street, in front of Town Hall steps	12.31	1.31	2.31	3.31	4.46	5.31





# Metroliners and Scotrail

Two letters from **DEREK SCRAFTON** induced **DEAN OGLE** to comb through his old Metroliner timetables

## From Derek Scrafton

**Letter 1.** I really enjoyed the excellent articles in the August edition of *The Times* – they generated a few thoughts, memories and comments.

**Metroliner:** The non-stop Metroliner described in your article did not appear in the Penn Central PTT at the time, nor in the PC schedules in the Official Guide (e.g. in the June 1969 edition). It is more likely that a separate Form would have been issued – more like a promotional flyer – I will take a look and see if I have anything in my collection. The train number 2-131 suggests the Metroliner was operated as a second section of train 131 (The Morning Congressional) that departed Penn Station at 0630 and arrived in Washington at 1020, just ahead of the 0730 Metroliner. By 1971 the 0630 was also a Metroliner (as in your Table 4), arriving in Washington 46 minutes earlier than the old 131. I think the 0730 continued to be the fastest Metroliner from New York to Washington (with stops inserted at Metropark and Beltway, but not stopping at Philadelphia and Baltimore) until Amtrak introduced a standard stopping pattern for the Metroliner service.

Although I rode Metroliners in the PC years, my strongest memories are in the Amtrak 1970s, when I always found the service on board and at stations did not match the promise of the new technology. The greatest feature of the Budd Metroliners was their ability to run consistently at or close to the maximum permissible speeds and so (as you mention) to maintain a high average speed over the NY-Washington corridor.

**Scotrail- minor comment.** The 0911 Edinburgh-Glasgow *via* Carstairs train originates in Newcastle (not Darlington). Also, there are very few HSTs on this route - most of the Cross Country services (including the 0911) are operated by Class 221 Voyager DMU sets.,

### Form 80 Metroliners

1/16/1969  
2/10/69  
4/2/69 +2  
6/2/69  
7/14/69 +3  
Form discontinued; to Form 79

### From PRR Form 79

4/28/1968 +3  
10/27/68  
12/1/68 +2  
4/27/69  
6/22/69 +2  
10/26/69 +3  
3/16/70  
5/17/70 +2  
8/24/70  
10/25/70  
1/24/71  
5/1/71 A  
6/7/71 +2 A  
11/14/71 A  
12/17/71 A  
1/13/72+3 A  
4/30/72 A  
6/11/72+3 A  
9/10/72 A  
9/29/72 A  
Form discontinued; to Amtrak Form 1

while the remaining East Coast train is rostered for a Class 91 + IC225 set.

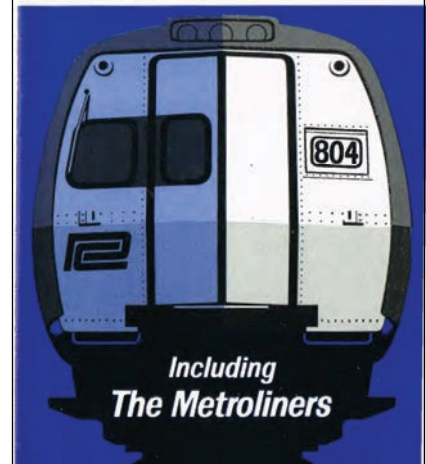
This ex-Caledonian route has a fond memory for me, as I had one of the best meals of recent years in a traditional dining car – a late lunch on the 1400 Glasgow Central – Kings Cross train in August 2005: soup and steamed fish course that was superbly prepared and served. Was it still GNER, or had National Express taken over by then? Whomever, the same dining car crew (probably Newcastle-based) would have served the incoming franchisee.

**Letter 2.** I did not find an early 1969 timetable, form or flyer for the first Metroliner, but stuff I did find showed my early comments to be far too simplistic. The PC management (and US DoT, who had a stake in the early services) must have altered the service pattern several times in the early years as more sets were introduced on the New York – Washington run. The

### The ground shuttle:

New York NEWARK  
TRENTON  
Philadelphia  
WILMINGTON BALTIMORE  
Washington

Effective Date: October 26, 1969



following are a sample of the changes that took place:

Effective 26th October 1969 there were six Metroliners in each direction (M-F). Southbound four of them called at Newark, Trenton, Philadelphia (30th St), Wilmington and Baltimore, the 0730 stopped at Newark, Philadelphia and Baltimore, while the 1700 was non-stop and completed the trip in 2hrs 30 mins. Northbound the 1700 was non-stop, while the other five stopped at the five intermediate stations.

Just a few months later (eff.16th March 1970) the non-stops had disappeared. The 0730 continued to stop at Newark, Philadelphia and Baltimore, with a trip time that was 10 minutes longer (2h 40m), and the 1700 was now scheduled to stop at Philadelphia and Capital Beltway.



By 13th January 1972, the 0730 southbound (by now one of a dozen Amtrak Metroliners) stopped only at Metropark, but its journey time was extended by an additional four minutes (2h 44 m).

Perhaps one of our US –based members, or their NAOTC colleagues, would be willing to summarise the changes that took place in the early (PC) Metroliner services. It is clear that experience showed the early trip times to be too ambitious – the technology had the power but traffic conditions and demand dictated the slower schedule times and influenced the stopping patterns. A similar trend can be found in the UK ECML services when HST was first introduced by BR – travel times today are several minutes slower than the earliest runs, with the accent on frequent service to many destinations and intermediate points at the expense of saving a few minutes in the end-to-end timings (the 0540 Edinburgh –KX is a recent exception).

**F**rom Dean Ogle  
Have scanned various items. First is page 35 of Volume 6 of the NAOTC Compendium of Public Timetables, listing Penn Central Form 79 and Form 80 timetables.

+2 indicates first and second editions were published, +3 indicates first second and third editions.

A indicates a timetable published by Penn Central, but showing only Amtrak service.

[Here are the] scans of the six Form 79 issues that are accessible to me. Each scan is missing one panel, which contained reservation and fare information. I don't have any Form 80.

I'm intrigued by the 2-131 you see under the sticker revision for train 2005 in the PC working timetable illustration. Derek suggests it was an earlier Metroliner schedule, operating as the second section of train 131. I'll have to respectfully disagree, as that flies in the face of standard North American operating practice.

First, some definitions (which may have varied slightly from road to road).

TIMETABLE – the authority for the

New York—Washington										Equipment
	New York, N.Y. (Penn. Sta.)	Newark, N.J.	Trenton, N.J.	North Philadelphia (Penn. Central Sta.—30th St.)	Philadelphia (Penn. Central Sta.—30th St.)	Wilmington, Del.	Baltimore, Md.	Washington, D.C.		
177	Mondays thru Saturdays	3:23 AM	3:38	4:24	4:57	5:09	5:48	6:59	7:50 AM	Sleeping Car New York to Washington
131	Mondays thru Saturdays except Nov. 27, Dec. 25 and Jan. 1	6:30 AM	6:45	7:32	8:00	8:10	8:38	9:44	10:25 AM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
101	Metroliner Mondays thru Fridays	7:30 AM	7:40	—	—	8:32	—	9:38	10:10 AM	Metroliner and Metro Snack Bar Coach
133	Daily	8:00 AM	8:16	8:59	9:26	9:35	10:18	11:18	12:00 Noon	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
103	Metroliner Daily	8:30 AM	8:42	9:18	—	9:46	10:10	10:57	11:29 AM	Metroliner and Metro Snack Bar Coach
135	Daily	9:30 AM	9:46	10:31	11:00	11:10	11:45	12:48	1:30 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
137	Daily	10:45 AM	11:01	11:45	12:12	12:21	12:51	1:51	2:40 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
105	Metroliner Daily	11:30 AM	11:42	12:18	—	12:46	1:10	1:57	2:29 PM	Metroliner and Metro Snack Bar Coach
171	Daily	12:45 PM	1:01	1:46	2:13	2:22	2:53	3:58	4:40 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
107	Metroliner Daily	1:00 PM	1:12	1:48	—	2:16	2:40	3:27	3:59 PM	Metroliner and Metro Snack Bar Coach
173	Daily	3:00 PM	3:16	4:00	4:29	4:39	5:08	6:09	6:50 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
109	Metroliner Daily	4:15 PM	4:27	5:03	—	5:31	5:55	6:42	7:14 PM	Metroliner and Metro Snack Bar Coach
111	Metroliner Mondays thru Fridays	5:00 PM	—	—	—	—	—	—	7:30 PM	Metroliner and Metro Snack Bar Coach
175	Daily	5:45 PM	6:01	6:48	7:15	7:24	7:52	8:53	9:35 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
159	Sundays and Nov. 27, Dec. 25 and Jan. 1	6:30 PM	6:46	7:29	7:57	8:07	8:36	9:40	10:20 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
139	Mondays thru Saturdays except Nov. 27, Dec. 25 and Jan. 1	6:30 PM	6:45	7:33	8:07	8:26	8:54	10:00	10:50 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
155	Daily	7:30 PM	7:46	8:29	8:57	9:06	9:39	10:40	11:20 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
147	Daily	9:00 PM	9:15	10:04	10:41	11:01	11:29	12:37	1:35 AM	Coaches only
161	Sundays and Feb. 23 will not run Feb. 22	10:00 PM	10:16	11:05	11:33	11:46	12:15	1:26	2:10 AM	Coaches only

Reference Notes: \* Stops only to receive passengers. \* Stops Saturdays, Sundays and Nov. 27, Dec. 25 and Jan. 1. \* Meals and Beverages served at seats. For purchase of tickets on Metroliners between Trenton and Washington, consult Ticket Agent at Newark or Trenton.

**Penn Central's Ground Shuttle... 34 trains a day between New York and Washington**

Any Penn Central ticket office will be glad to arrange your Metroliner Car reservations. Please make your reservations as much in advance as possible. If your plans change, please cancel your reservations promptly.

Telephone numbers for Metroliner Car reservations in principal cities are listed at right.

Coach seats on Metroliners are not reserved, but tickets must be purchased in advance of departure.

METROLINER INFORMATION		TRAIN INFORMATION		METROLINER CAR RESERVATIONS	
New York, N.Y.	(212) 694-7902	New York, N.Y.	(212) 694-7902	New York, N.Y.	(212) 694-7902
Newark, N.J.	(908) 483-0245	Newark, N.J.	(908) 483-0245	Newark, N.J.	(908) 483-0245
Trenton, N.J.	(609) 864-8528	Trenton, N.J.	(609) 864-8528	Trenton, N.J.	(609) 864-8528
Philadelphia, Pa.	(215) 671-1869	Philadelphia, Pa.	(215) 671-1869	Philadelphia, Pa.	(215) 671-1869
Wilmington, Del.	(302) 485-7121	Wilmington, Del.	(302) 485-7121	Wilmington, Del.	(302) 485-7121
Baltimore, Md.	(410) 837-3117	Baltimore, Md.	(410) 837-3117	Baltimore, Md.	(410) 837-3117
Washington, D.C.	(202) 393-2335	Washington, D.C.	(202) 393-2335	Washington, D.C.	(202) 393-2335

Washington—New York										Equipment
	Washington, D.C.	Baltimore, Md.	Wilmington, Del.	Philadelphia, Pa. (Penn. Central Sta.—30th St.)	North Philadelphia	Trenton, N.J.	Newark, N.J.	New York, N.Y.		
140	Daily	2:25 AM	3:05	4:14	4:50	5:23	5:50	6:39	7:00 AM	Sleeping Car Washington to New York
170	Daily	7:00 AM	7:41	8:42	9:10	9:25	9:55	10:40	10:55 AM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
100	Metroliner Mondays thru Fridays	7:30 AM	7:38	—	—	—	—	—	10:00 AM	Metroliner and Metro Snack Bar Coach
162	Metroliner Daily	8:30 AM	8:52	9:47	10:10	—	10:39	11:16	11:29 AM	Metroliner and Metro Snack Bar Coach
126	Daily	8:35 AM	9:10	10:19	10:48	10:57	11:25	12:10	12:25 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
172	Daily	10:00 AM	10:40	11:41	12:14*	12:23	12:51	1:35	1:50 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
130	Daily	11:40 AM	12:21	1:35	2:03	2:15	2:45	3:30	3:45 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
104	Metroliner Daily	12:00 Noon	12:32	1:17	1:40	—	2:09	2:46	2:59 PM	Metroliner and Metro Snack Bar Coach
106	Metroliner Daily	1:00 PM	1:32	2:17	2:40	—	3:09	3:46	3:59 PM	Metroliner and Metro Snack Bar Coach
174	Daily	1:45 PM	2:26	3:27	4:00	4:10	4:39	5:24	5:40 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
132	Daily	3:00 PM	3:41	4:41	5:09	5:18	5:47	6:30	6:45 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
152	Daily	4:00 PM	4:40	5:39	6:06	6:26	6:53	7:41	7:56 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
108	Metroliner Daily	4:30 PM	5:02	5:47	6:11	—	6:39	7:16	7:29 PM	Metroliner and Metro Snack Bar Coach
154	Sundays thru Fridays	5:00 PM	5:45	6:48	7:17	7:27	7:55	8:40	8:55 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
110	Metroliner Mondays thru Fridays	6:00 PM	6:32	7:17	7:40	—	8:09	8:46	8:59 PM	Metroliner and Metro Snack Bar Coach
168	Saturdays and Sundays	6:00 PM	6:40	7:45	8:14	8:24	8:58	9:50	10:05 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
158	Daily	7:30 PM	8:11	9:12	9:43	9:53	10:21	11:15	11:30 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
176	Daily	9:50 PM	10:30	11:35	12:08	12:49	1:21	2:09	2:30 AM	Sleeping Cars Washington to Boston

Reference Notes: \* Stops only to discharge passengers. \* Stops Mondays thru Saturdays. \* Meals and Beverages served at seats. For purchase of tickets on Metroliners between Trenton and Newark, consult Ticket Agent at Newark or Trenton.

**The Fastest Phone in the East—**  
Touch-Tone® coin telephones are available on every Snack Bar Car and Metroliner Car on the Metroliner.  
You can dial your own calls directly from the train, and receive incoming calls as well. The local telephone company mobile service operator will connect your party when they ask for the Metroliner.  
For as little as one dollar plus tax you can enjoy this entirely new telephone service.

**CHILDREN**—Under 6 years of age travel free when accompanied by a parent or guardian. However, when one or more children under 6 years of age occupy exclusively a Parlor Car seat (one-half (1/2) fare rule), in addition to the full fare charged for the child, a 10% fare is charged for children 6 years of age and under 11.

**RESPONSIBILITY**—The Penn Central cannot assume responsibility for unaccompanied, excessive or damage resulting from items stored on board trains. Passengers are responsible for their own baggage and equipment. The schedules and equipment shown in this time table are subject to change without notice.

Form 79 1st Ed. 10/10/69

movement of regular trains subject to the rules. It contains the classified schedules of trains ...

SCHEDULE – that part of a timetable which prescribes class, direction, number and movement for a regular train.

REGULAR TRAIN – a train authorized by a timetable schedule.

SECTION – one of two or more trains running on the same schedule .....

Now: train 131 can be operated in any number of sections, BUT it can have only one schedule. That is, train 131

can only be due to leave New York at 6:30AM.

A train leaving New York at 7:10AM cannot appear in the timetable as 2-131 because #131 leaves at 6:30 and all sections of a train run on the same schedule. It will have to have a different number. I wonder if what you're seeing isn't just "2131" or "2731"?

Regarding the X in the square symbol, I doubt it means "non-stop". The "S" adjacent to various times indicates "stop" at that location. No "S" (or other symbol authorizing a conditional stop), no stop. The engineer of train

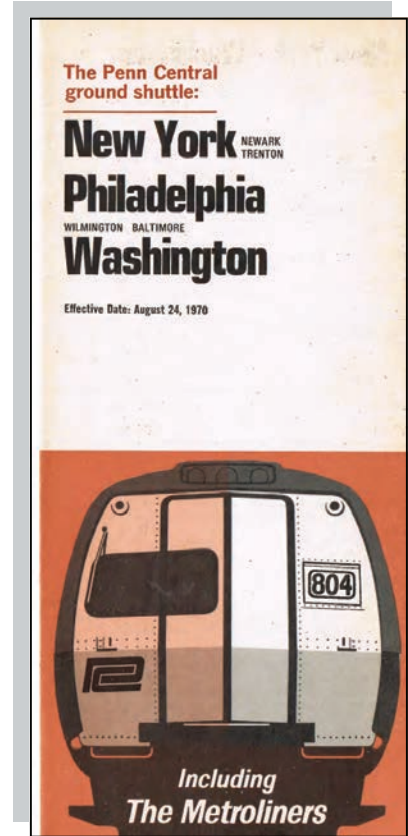
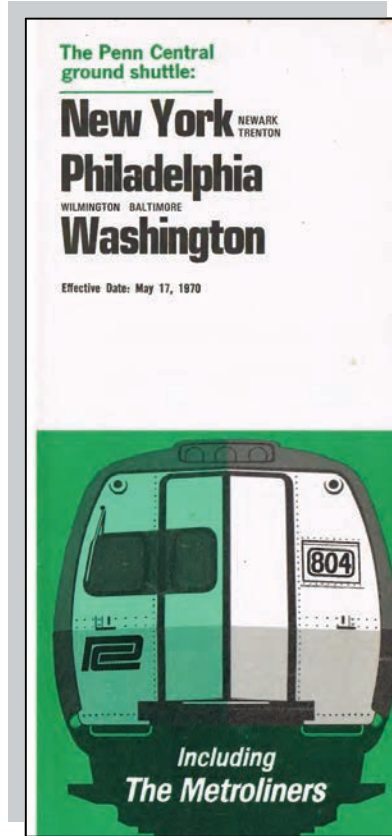
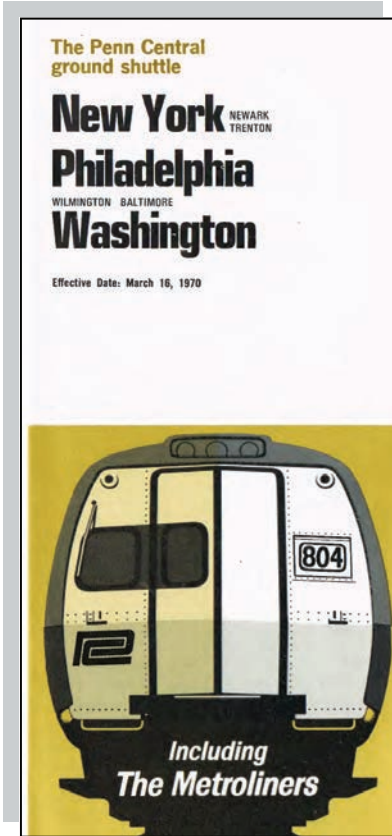


2005 does not need to refer to a reference mark to know his train is non-stop; he can tell by the lack of "S"'s along his schedule. I suspect it means "Metroliner". Note that every other train except #25 has at least one symbol adjacent to its number. For instance, in the illustration train 201 has a double dagger and a diamond. In

Penn Central New York Region Timetable No 1, April 28 1968, the double dagger means "will not run May 30, July 4 or September 2" (all holidays) and the diamond means "no train baggageman". The black circle next to 3853, 4241 and others means "no baggage service". An asterisk (not used in

your example illustration) meant "passenger train – with passenger and freight equipment". A symbol resembling an iron cross (again, not illustrated) meant "passenger train – rail motor cars".

Anyway, I hope this helps, and here come the Metroliners!



New York—Washington										
	New York, N.Y. (Penna. Sta.)	Newark, N.J.	Trenton, N.J.	North Philadelphia (Penn Central Sta.—30th St.)	Philadelphia (Penn Central Sta.—30th St.)	Wilmington, Del.	Baltimore, Md.	Capital Beltway, Md.	Washington, D.C.	Equipment
	Leave	Leave	Leave	Leave	Leave	Leave	Arrive	Arrive	Arrive	
177 Mondays thru Saturdays	3:23 AM	3:38	4:27	5:00	5:09	5:48	6:59	—	7:50 AM	Sleeping Car New York to Washington (Open 10:30 pm)
131 Mondays thru Saturdays except May 30 and July 4	6:30 AM	6:45	7:32	8:00	8:10	8:38	9:38	—	10:30 AM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
101 <i>Metroliner</i> Mondays thru Fridays	7:30 AM	† 7:42	—	—	8:43	—	9:49	—	10:20 AM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
133 Daily	8:00 AM	8:16	8:59	9:26	9:35	10:18	11:18	—	12:00 Noon	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
103 <i>Metroliner</i> Daily	8:30 AM	† 8:42	9:18	—	9:46	10:10	10:57	—	11:29 AM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
135 Daily	9:30 AM	9:46	10:31	11:00	11:10	11:45	12:48	—	1:30 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
137 Daily	10:45 AM	11:01	11:45	12:12	12:21	12:51	1:51	—	2:40 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
105 <i>Metroliner</i> Daily	11:30 AM	† 11:42	12:18	—	12:46	1:10	1:57	—	2:29 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
171 Daily	12:45 PM	1:01	1:46	2:13	2:22	2:53	3:58	‡ 4:27	4:45 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
107 <i>Metroliner</i> Daily	1:00 PM	† 1:12	1:48	—	2:16	2:40	3:27	—	3:59 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
173 Daily	3:00 PM	3:16	4:00	4:29	4:39	5:08	6:09	—	6:50 PM	Parlor, Parlor Room Bar Lounge (Except Sat.) Dining Car
109 <i>Metroliner</i> Daily	4:15 PM	† 4:27	5:03	—	5:31	5:55	6:42	—	7:14 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
111 <i>Metroliner</i> Sundays thru Fridays	5:00 PM	—	—	—	6:10	—	—	‡ 7:35	7:50 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
175 Daily	5:45 PM	6:01	‡ 6:48	7:15	7:24	7:52	8:53	—	9:35 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
159 Sundays and May 30 and July 4	6:30 PM	6:46	7:29	7:57	8:07	8:36	9:40	—	10:20 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
139 Mondays thru Saturdays except May 30 and July 4	6:30 PM	6:45	7:33	8:07	8:26	8:54	10:00	‡ 10:40	10:55 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
155 Daily	7:30 PM	7:46	8:29	8:57	9:06	9:39	10:40	—	11:20 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
147 Daily	9:00 PM	9:15	10:04	10:41	11:01	11:29	12:37	—	1:35 AM	Coaches only
161 Sundays only	10:00 PM	10:16	11:05	11:33	11:46	12:15	1:26	—	2:10 AM	Coaches only

Reference Notes † Stops Mondays thru Fridays to discharge passengers. ‡ Stops Saturdays and Sundays. † Stops only to receive passengers. ‡ Stops only to discharge passengers. \* Meals and Beverages served at seats. For purchase of tickets on Metroliners between Newark and Trenton, consult Ticket Agent at Newark or Trenton.

METROLINER RESERVATIONS		METROLINER INFORMATION	
Any Penn Central ticket office will be glad to arrange your Metroliner reservations. Please make your reservations as much in advance as possible. If your plans change, please cancel your reservations promptly.		Train Information	
Telephone numbers for Metroliner reservations in principal cities are listed at right.		New York, N. Y. . . . .	(212) 684-7302
		Newark, N. J. . . . .	(201) 643-0345
		Trenton, N. J. . . . .	(609) 984-8520
		Philadelphia, Pa. . . . .	(215) EV 2-1600
		Wilmington, Del. . . . .	(302) 655-7121
		Baltimore, Md. . . . .	(301) 837-3117
		Washington, D. C. . . . .	(202) 393-2335
		Metroliner Reservations	(212) PE 6-4441
			(201) 622-7357
			(609) 396-6800
			(215) EV 2-9015
			(302) 652-0600
			(301) 837-6178
			(202) 393-0013

**Penn Central's Ground Shuttle . . . 34 trains a day between New York and Washington**



The Penn Central  
ground shuttle:

**New York** NEWARK  
TRENTON  
**Philadelphia**  
WILMINGTON BALTIMORE CAPITAL BELTWAY  
**Washington**

Effective Date: October 25, 1970

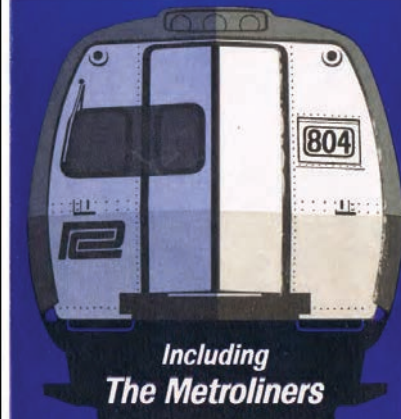


Including  
The Metroliners

The Penn Central  
ground shuttle:

**New York** NEWARK  
TRENTON  
**Philadelphia**  
WILMINGTON BALTIMORE CAPITAL BELTWAY  
**Washington**

Effective Date: January 24, 1971



Including  
The Metroliners

## Washington—New York

	Washington, D.C. Leave	Capital Beltway, Md. Leave	Baltimore, Md. Leave	Wilmington, Del. Leave	Philadelphia, Pa. (Penn Central Sta.—30th St.) Leave	North Philadelphia Leave	Trenton, N.J. Leave	Newark, N.J. Arrive	New York, N.Y. Arrive	Equipment
140 Daily	2:25 AM	—	3:05	4:14	4:50	5:23	5:50	6:39	7:00 AM	Sleeping Car Washington to New York (Except Sundays) (Open 10:00 pm)
170 Daily	6:40 AM	—	7:21	8:22	9:05	9:15	9:45	10:40	10:55 AM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
100 <i>Metroliner</i> Mondays thru Fridays	7:30 AM	7:40	8:06	8:51	9:15	—	—	10:16	10:29 AM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
102 <i>Metroliner</i> Daily	8:30 AM	—	9:02	9:47	10:10	—	10:39	11:16	11:29 AM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
126 Daily	8:40 AM	8:54	9:25	10:29	10:58	11:07	11:35	12:22	12:38 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
172 Daily	10:00 AM	—	10:40	11:41	12:14	12:23	12:51	1:35	1:50 PM	Parlor, Parlor Room Bar Lounge (Except Sat.) Dining Car
130 Daily	11:40 AM	—	12:21	1:35	2:03	2:15	2:45	3:30	3:45 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
104 <i>Metroliner</i> Daily	12:00 Noon	12:11	12:37	—	1:42	—	2:09	2:46	2:59 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
106 <i>Metroliner</i> Daily	1:00 PM	—	1:32	2:17	2:40	—	3:09	3:46	3:59 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
174 Daily	1:45 PM	—	2:26	3:27	4:00	4:10	4:39	5:24	5:40 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
132 Daily	3:00 PM	3:14	3:45	4:45	5:13	5:22	5:51	6:34	6:49 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
152 Daily	4:00 PM	—	4:40	5:39	6:15	6:26	6:53	7:41	7:56 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
108 <i>Metroliner</i> Daily	4:30 PM	—	5:02	5:47	6:11	—	6:39	7:17	7:29 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
154 Sundays thru Fridays	5:00 PM	—	5:47	6:50	7:19	7:29	7:56	8:40	8:55 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
110 <i>Metroliner</i> Sundays thru Fridays	6:00 PM	—	6:32	7:17	7:43	—	8:09	8:46	8:59 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
166 Saturdays and Sundays	6:05 PM	—	6:45	7:50	8:19	8:29	9:03	9:55	10:10 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
158 Daily	7:30 PM	—	8:11	9:12	9:43	9:53	10:21	11:15	11:30 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
176 Daily	9:50 PM	—	10:30	11:35	12:39	12:49	1:21	2:14	2:35 AM	Sleeping Cars Washington to Boston

Reference Notes:   
 b Stops Mondays thru Saturdays.   
 c Stops only to receive passengers.   
 d Stops only to discharge passengers.   
 e Stops Mondays thru Fridays to receive passengers.   
 \* Meals and Beverages served at seats.

For purchase of tickets on Metroliners between Trenton and Newark, consult Ticket Agent at Trenton or Newark.

**THE TIME** from 12:01 am to 12 o'clock noon, inclusive, is indicated by light face type; from 12:01 pm to 12 o'clock midnight, inclusive, by dark face type.

**REFUND OF TICKETS**—Requests for the redemption of unused portions of tickets should be sent to the Manager—Passenger Accounting, 3025 Walnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19104.

**ADJUSTMENT OF FARES**—Should any question arise as to the proper fare or ticket privileges, please pay fare requested, obtain receipt and communicate with Manager—Passenger Accounting, 3025 Walnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19104.

**ANIMALS**—Small animals are permitted in coaches (not reserved seat coaches or Metroliners) but cannot occupy seat or cause annoyance to other passengers. Blind persons traveling at regular fare with a Guide or Seeing Eye Dog, will be permitted on Metroliners.

### The Fastest Phone in the East—

Touch-Tone® coin telephones are available on every Snack Bar Car and Metroclub Car on the Metroliner.

You can dial your own calls directly from the train, and receive incoming calls as well. The local telephone company mobile service operator will connect your party when they ask for the Metroliner.

For as little as one dollar plus tax you can enjoy this entirely new telephone



**CHILDREN**—Under 5 years of age travel free when accompanied by a parent or guardian. However, when one or more children under 5 years of age occupy exclusively a Parlor Car seat one-half (½) fare rail ticket, in addition to the full seat charge, is required. One-half fare is charged for children 5 years of age and under 12.

**RESPONSIBILITY**—The Penn Central cannot assume responsibility for inconvenience, expense or damage resulting from errors in time tables, delayed trains, failure to make connections, or for shortage of equipment. The schedules and equipment shown in this time table are subject to change without notice.

Form 79 1st Ed. 3-2-70



	New York, N.Y. (Penna. Sta.)	Newark, N.J.	Trenton, N.J.	North Philadelphia, Pa.	Philadelphia (Penn Central Sta.—30th St.)	Wilmington, Del.	Baltimore, Md.	Capital Beltway, Md.	Washington, D.C.	Equipment
	Leave	Leave	Leave	Leave	Leave	Leave	Arrive	Arrive	Arrive	
77 Mondays thru Saturdays	3:23 AM	3:38	4:27	5:00	5:09	5:48	6:59	—	7:50 AM	Sleeping Car Boston to Washington
31 Mondays thru Saturdays except Sept. 7, Nov. 26, Dec. 23 and Jan. 1	6:30 AM	6:45	7:32	8:00	8:10	8:38	9:39	—	10:20 AM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
01 <b>Metroliner</b> Mondays thru Fridays except Sept. 7 and Jan. 1	7:30 AM	7:42	—	—	8:43	—	9:49	10:13	10:25 AM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
33 Daily	8:00 AM	8:16	8:59	9:26	9:35	10:18	11:18	—	12:00 Noon	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
03 <b>Metroliner Daily</b>	8:30 AM	8:42	9:18	—	9:46	10:10	10:57	—	11:29 AM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
35 Daily	9:30 AM	9:46	10:31	11:00	11:10	11:45	12:48	—	1:30 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
37 Daily	10:45 AM	11:01	11:45	12:12	12:21	12:51	1:51	—	2:40 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
05 <b>Metroliner Daily</b>	11:30 AM	11:42	12:18	—	12:46	1:10	1:57	—	2:29 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
71 Daily	12:45 PM	1:01	1:46	2:13	2:22	2:53	3:58	4:27	4:45 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
07 <b>Metroliner Daily</b>	1:00 PM	1:12	—	—	2:13	2:36	3:23	3:47	3:59 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
63 Runs Sept. 4, 7, Nov. 25, 29, Dec. 23, 24, 27, 30, 31, and Jan. 3 only	2:00 PM	2:16	3:00	3:29	3:40	4:09	5:10	—	5:50 PM	Coaches only
73 Daily	3:00 PM	3:16	4:00	4:29	4:39	5:08	6:09	—	6:50 PM	Parlor, Parlor Room Bar Lounge (Except Sat.) Grill Car
09 <b>Metroliner Daily</b>	4:15 PM	4:27	5:03	—	5:31	5:55	6:42	—	7:14 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
65 Runs Sept. 4, 7, Nov. 25, 29, Dec. 23, 24, 27, 30, 31, and Jan. 3 only	4:30 PM	4:45	5:28	5:55	6:15	6:43	7:44	8:14	8:30 PM	Coaches only
11 <b>Metroliner Sundays thru Fridays</b>	5:00 PM	—	—	—	6:10	—	7:12	7:35	7:50 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
75 Daily	5:45 PM	6:01	6:48	7:15	7:24	7:52	8:53	—	9:35 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
59 Sundays and Sept. 7, Nov. 26, Dec. 23 and Jan. 1	6:30 PM	6:46	7:29	7:57	8:07	8:36	9:40	10:09	10:25 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
39 Mondays thru Saturdays except Sept. 7, Nov. 26, Dec. 25 & Jan. 1	6:30 PM	6:45	7:33	8:07	8:26	8:54	10:00	10:40	10:55 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
55 Daily	7:30 PM	7:46	8:29	8:57	9:06	9:39	10:40	—	11:20 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
13 <b>Metroliner</b> Sundays thru Fridays except Sept. 6, Dec. 25 and Jan. 1	8:30 PM	8:42	—	—	9:43	10:06	10:53	11:16	11:29 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
47 Daily	9:00 PM	9:15	10:04	10:41	11:01	11:29	12:37	—	1:35 AM	Coaches only
61 Sundays and Sept. 7 will not run Sept. 6	10:00 PM	10:16	11:05	11:33	11:46	12:22	1:29	—	2:15 AM	Coaches only

Reference Notes: c Stops only to receive passengers. d Stops only to discharge passengers. e Stops Saturdays, Sundays and Sept. 7, Nov. 26, Dec. 25 and Jan. 1. \* Meals and Beverages served at seats. For purchase of tickets on Metroliners between Newark and Trenton, consult Ticket Agent at Newark or Trenton.

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Telephone numbers for Metroliner reservations in principal cities are listed at right.

IN	Train Information	Metroliner Reservations
New York, N. Y. . . . .	(212) 684-7902	(212) PE 6-4441
Newark, N. J. . . . .	(201) 643-0345	(201) 622-7357
Trenton, N. J. . . . .	(609) 984-8520	(609) 396-6800
Philadelphia, Pa. . . . .	(215) EV 2-1600	(215) EV 2-9015
Wilmington, Del. . . . .	(302) 655-7121	(302) 652-0600
Baltimore, Md. . . . .	(301) 837-3117	(301) 837-6178
Washington, D. C. . . . .	(202) 393-2335	(202) 393-0013

	Washington, D.C.	Capital Beltway, Md.	Baltimore, Md.	Wilmington, Del.	Philadelphia, Pa. (Penn Central Sta.—30th St.)	North Philadelphia, Pa.	Trenton, N.J.	Newark, N.J.	New York, N.Y.	Equipment
	Leave	Leave	Leave	Leave	Leave	Leave	Leave	Arrive	Arrive	
140 Daily	2:25 AM	—	3:05	4:14	4:50	5:23	5:50	6:39	7:00 AM	Coaches only
170 Daily	6:55 AM	—	7:36	8:37	9:10	9:20	9:50	10:38	10:55 AM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
100 <b>Metroliner</b> Mondays thru Fridays except Sept. 7 and Jan. 1	7:30 AM	7:40	8:06	8:51	9:15	—	—	10:16	10:29 AM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
102 <b>Metroliner Daily</b>	8:30 AM	—	9:02	9:47	10:13	—	10:39	11:16	11:29 AM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
126 Daily	8:40 AM	8:54	9:25	10:29	10:58	11:07	11:35	12:22	12:38 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
172 Daily	10:00 AM	—	10:40	11:41	12:14	12:23	12:51	1:35	1:50 PM	Parlor, Parlor Room Bar Lounge (Except Sat.) Grill Car
130 Daily	11:40 AM	—	12:21	1:35	2:03	2:15	2:45	3:30	3:45 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
104 <b>Metroliner Daily</b>	12:00 Noon	12:11	12:37	—	1:42	—	2:09	2:46	2:59 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
106 <b>Metroliner Daily</b>	1:00 PM	—	1:32	2:17	2:43	—	3:09	3:46	3:59 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
174 Daily	1:40 PM	—	2:21	3:22	4:00	4:10	4:39	5:24	5:40 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
132 Daily	3:00 PM	3:14	3:45	4:45	5:13	5:22	5:51	6:34	6:50 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
152 Daily	4:00 PM	4:14	4:44	5:52	6:19	6:28	6:55	7:40	7:55 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
108 <b>Metroliner Daily</b>	4:30 PM	—	5:02	5:47	6:13	—	6:39	7:17	7:29 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
114 Sundays thru Fridays	5:00 PM	—	5:47	6:50	7:19	7:29	7:56	8:40	8:55 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
110 <b>Metroliner</b> Sundays thru Fridays	6:00 PM	—	6:32	7:17	7:43	—	8:09	8:46	8:59 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
166 Saturdays, Sundays and Sept. 7 will not run Sept. 6	6:05 PM	—	6:45	7:50	8:19	8:29	9:03	9:55	10:10 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
158 Daily	7:25 PM	7:38	8:11	9:12	9:42	9:58	10:26	11:20	11:35 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
112 <b>Metroliner</b> Sundays thru Fridays except Sept. 6, Dec. 25 and Jan. 1	8:30 PM	—	9:02	9:47	10:13	—	10:39	11:16	11:29 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
176 Daily	10:15 PM	—	10:55	12:04	12:51	1:01	1:31	2:24	2:49 AM	Sleeping Car Washington to Boston (Except Saturday)

Reference Notes: b Stops Mondays thru Saturdays. c Stops only to receive passengers. d Stops only to discharge passengers. e Stops Mondays thru Fridays except Sept. 7, Nov. 26, Dec. 25 & Jan. 1 to receive passengers. \* Meals and Beverages served at seats. For purchase of tickets on Metroliners between Trenton and Newark, consult Ticket Agent at Trenton or Newark.

**THE TIME** from 12:01 am to 12 o'clock noon, inclusive, is indicated by light face type; from 12:01 pm to 12 o'clock midnight, inclusive, by dark-face type.

**REFUND OF TICKETS**—Requests for the redemption of unused portions of tickets should be sent to the Manager—Passenger Accounting, 3025 Walnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19104. Tariff regulations provide that the refund value will be determined by deducting the value of the portion which has been used plus a small service charge, when applicable, from the original price of the ticket.

**ADJUSTMENT OF FARES**—Should any question arise as to the proper fare or ticket privileges, please pay fare requested, obtain receipt and communicate with Manager—Passenger Accounting, 3025 Walnut St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19104.

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**ANIMALS**—Small animals in containers are permitted in coaches (no reserved seat coaches or Metroclub cars) but cannot occupy seat or cause annoyance to other passengers. Blind persons traveling at regular fare with a Guide or Seeing Eye Dog, will be permitted on Metroliners.

**CHILDREN**—Under 5 years of age travel free when accompanied by parent or guardian. However, when one or more children under 5 years of age occupy exclusively a Parlor Car seat one-half (1/2) fare rail ticket, in addition to the full seat charge, is required. One-half fare is charged for children 5 years of age and under 12.

**RESPONSIBILITY**—The Penn Central cannot assume responsibility for inconvenience, expense or damage resulting from errors in time table, delayed trains, failure to make connections, or for shortage of equipment. The schedules and equipment shown in this time table are subject to change without notice.



	New York, N.Y. (Penna. Sta.)	Newark, N.J.	Trenton, N.J.	North Philadelphia, Pa.	Philadelphia (Penn Central Sta.—30th St.)	Wilmington, Del.	Baltimore, Md.	Capital Beltway, Md.	Washington, D.C.	Equipment
	Leave	Leave	Leave	Leave	Leave	Leave	Arrive	Arrive	Arrive	
177 Mondays thru Saturdays	3:23 AM	3:38	4:27	5:00	5:09	5:48	6:59	—	7:50 AM	Sleeping Car Boston to Washington
131 Mondays thru Saturdays	6:30 AM	6:45	7:32	8:00	8:10	8:38	9:39	—	10:20 AM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
101 <b>Metroliner</b> Mondays thru Fridays	7:30 AM	€ 7:42	—	—	8:43	—	9:49	¶10:13	10:25 AM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
133 Daily	8:00 AM	8:16	8:59	9:26	9:35	10:18	11:18	—	12:00 Noon	Parlor Club Car * (N.Y. to Phila.) Snack Bar Coach
103 <b>Metroliner</b> Daily	8:30 AM	€ 8:42	9:18	—	9:46	10:10	10:57	—	11:30 AM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
135 Daily	9:30 AM	9:46	10:31	11:00	11:10	11:45	12:48	—	1:30 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
137 Daily	10:45 AM	11:01	11:45	12:12	12:21	12:51	1:51	—	2:40 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
105 <b>Metroliner</b> Daily	11:30 AM	¶11:42	12:18	—	12:46	1:10	1:57	—	2:30 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
171 Daily	12:45 PM	1:01	1:46	2:13	2:22	2:53	3:58	¶ 4:27	4:45 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
107 <b>Metroliner</b> Daily	1:00 PM	€ 1:12	—	—	2:13	2:36	3:23	¶ 3:47	4:00 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
163 Runs Feb. 12 and 15 only	2:00 PM	2:16	3:00	3:29	3:40	4:09	5:10	—	5:50 PM	Coaches only
173 Daily	3:00 PM	3:16	4:00	4:29	4:39	5:08	6:09	—	6:50 PM	Parlor, Parlor Lge to Phila. (Ex. Sat. & Sun.) Grill Car
109 <b>Metroliner</b> Daily	4:15 PM	€ 4:27	5:03	—	5:31	5:55	6:42	—	7:15 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
165 Runs Feb. 12 and 15 only	4:30 PM	€ 4:45	¶ 5:28	5:55	6:15	6:43	7:44	¶ 8:14	8:30 PM	Coaches only
111 <b>Metroliner</b> Sundays thru Fridays	5:00 PM	—	—	—	6:10	6:33	7:17	¶ 7:40	7:55 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
175 Daily	5:45 PM	6:01	¶ 6:48	7:15	7:24	7:52	8:53	—	9:35 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
159 Sundays only	6:30 PM	6:46	7:29	7:57	8:07	8:36	9:40	¶10:09	10:25 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
139 Mondays thru Saturdays	6:30 PM	6:45	7:33	8:07	8:26	8:54	10:00	¶10:40	10:55 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
155 Daily	7:30 PM	7:46	8:29	8:57	9:06	9:39	10:40	—	11:20 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
113 <b>Metroliner</b> Sundays thru Fridays	8:30 PM	€ 8:42	—	—	9:43	10:06	¶10:53	¶11:16	11:30 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
147 Daily	9:00 PM	9:15	10:04	10:41	11:01	11:29	12:37	—	1:35 AM	Coaches only
161 Sundays and Feb. 15 will not run Feb. 14	10:00 PM	10:16	11:05	11:33	11:46	12:22	1:29	—	2:15 AM	Coaches only

Reference Notes: € Stops only to receive passengers. ¶ Stops only to discharge passengers. \* Meals and Beverages served at seats. For purchase of tickets on Metroliners between Newark and Trenton, consult Ticket Agent at Newark or Trenton. ¶ Stops Saturdays, Sundays and Feb. 15.

**METROLINER INFORMATION AND RESERVATIONS**

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 (202) 347-3000 (202) 763-4600  
 For reservations call  
 In New York State call FREE 800-522-6444 In New York City call LOCAL Plaza 2-9100  
 In the Continental U.S. call FREE 800-221-2662

Any Penn Central ticket office will be glad to arrange your Metroliner reservations. Please make your reservations as much in advance as possible. If your plans change, please cancel your reservations promptly.

The new CAPITAL BELTWAY STATION is located near the intersection of the Capital Beltway (I-495) and John Hanson Highway (U.S. 50) Information and Reservations—(301) 577-9247 Mon.-Fri. 7:00 AM—12:30 PM, 1:15 PM—9:30 PM

IN	Information	Reservations
New York, N. Y. ....	(212) 684-7902	(212) PE 6-4441
Newark, N. J. ....	(201) 643-0345	(201) 622-7357
Trenton, N. J. ....	(609) 984-8520	(609) 396-6800
Philadelphia, Pa. ....	(215) EV 2-1600	(215) EV 2-9015
Wilmington, Del. ....	(302) 655-7121	(302) 652-0600
Baltimore, Md. ....	(301) 837-3117	(301) 837-6178
Washington, D. C. ....	(202) 393-2335	(202) 393-0013

**Washington — New York**

	Washington, D.C.	Capital Beltway, Md.	Baltimore, Md.	Wilmington, Del.	Philadelphia, Pa. (Penn Central Sta.—30th St.)	North Philadelphia, Pa.	Trenton, N.J.	Newark, N.J.	New York, N.Y.	Equipment
	Leave	Leave	Leave	Leave	Leave	Leave	Leave	Arrive	Arrive	
140 Daily	2:25 AM	—	¶ 3:05	¶ 4:14	¶ 4:50	¶ 5:23	¶ 5:50	¶ 6:39	7:00 AM	Coaches only
170 Daily	6:55 AM	—	7:36	8:37	9:10	9:20	9:50	10:38	10:55 AM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
100 <b>Metroliner</b> Mondays thru Fridays	7:30 AM	€ 7:40	8:06	8:51	9:15	—	—	¶10:16	10:30 AM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
102 <b>Metroliner</b> Daily	8:30 AM	—	9:02	9:47	10:13	—	10:39	¶11:16	11:30 AM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
126 Daily	8:40 AM	€ 8:54	9:25	10:29	10:58	11:07	11:35	12:22	12:38 PM	Parlor Club Car * (Phila. to New) Snack Bar Coach
172 Daily	10:00 AM	—	10:40	11:41	12:14	12:23	12:51	1:35	1:50 PM	Parlor Car Grill Car
130 Daily	11:40 AM	—	12:21	1:35	2:03	2:15	2:45	3:30	3:45 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
104 <b>Metroliner</b> Daily	12:00 Noon	¶12:11	12:37	—	1:42	—	2:09	¶ 2:46	3:00 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
106 <b>Metroliner</b> Daily	1:00 PM	—	1:32	2:17	2:43	—	3:09	¶ 3:46	4:00 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
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152 Daily	4:00 PM	€ 4:14	4:44	5:52	6:19	6:28	¶ 6:55	7:40	7:55 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
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154 Sundays thru Fridays	5:00 PM	—	5:47	6:50	7:19	7:29	7:56	8:40	8:55 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
110 <b>Metroliner</b> Sundays thru Fridays	6:00 PM	—	6:32	7:17	7:43	—	8:09	¶ 8:46	9:00 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
166 Saturdays, Sundays and Feb. 15 will not run Feb. 14	6:05 PM	—	6:45	7:50	8:19	8:29	9:03	9:55	10:10 PM	Snack Bar Coach
158 Daily	7:25 PM	€ 7:38	8:11	9:12	9:42	9:58	10:26	11:20	11:35 PM	Parlor Club Car * Snack Bar Coach
112 <b>Metroliner</b> Sundays thru Fridays	8:30 PM	—	9:02	9:47	10:13	—	10:39	¶11:16	11:30 PM	Metroclub Car * Metro Snack Bar Coach
176 Daily	10:15 PM	—	10:55	12:04	12:51	1:01	1:31	2:24	2:49 AM	Sleeping Car Washington to Boston (Except Saturday)

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 N.Y.C.



# The Dog Days of August

*Sirius glared down balefully on Victoria's North East Standard Gauge line recently. GEOFF LAMBERT analyses his influence.*

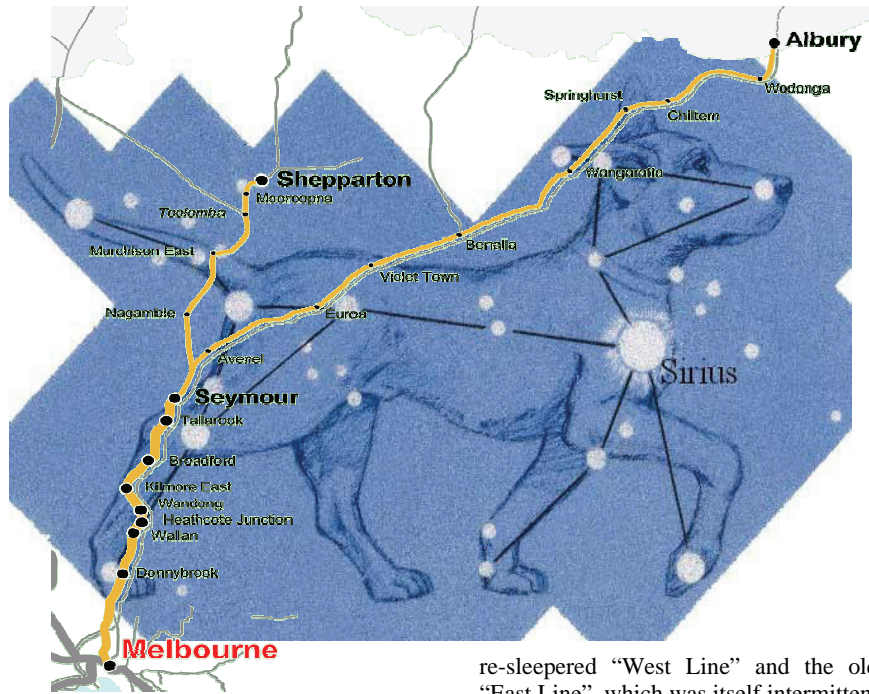
According to the Authorized Version of the Bible, the Dog Days begin on July 17th and end on September 16th (these are Bible dates transformed to the Gregorian calendar). The really bad days for the NESG stretched from about August 25 to September 10 this year.

The trouble actually started back in 2000 when ARTC announced plans for a Wodonga by-pass. Nothing happened. Next year, the Victorian Government signalled its intention to convert the Seymour-Albury line to standard gauge. Nothing happened. In June 2004, ARTC announced its intention to upgrade the Junee-Tottenham single track with "Passing Lanes". Nothing happened.

Finally something happened in late 2005 when ARTC commenced work on the NSW portion of its track. Then, in September 2008, the Victorian Government announced that it would hand over its broad gauge track north of Seymour to ARTC to convert to standard gauge and to operate the line as dual-track. This, it was hoped, would make everybody's problems go away. The last broad gauge train ran in November 2008. These trains had been generally scheduled for about 3¾ hours transit and it was hoped that the gauge conversion would shorten this.

V/Line passenger services were replaced by buses— a "temporary expedient". For the most part CountryLink's XPT service continued to operate and offered limited seating at V/Line prices to and from Benalla, Wangaratta and Albury.

They were heady days, as the gauge conversion proceeded rapidly south, being essentially complete by May 2009. However, there was *Trouble at Mill* almost straight away and the new line remained unused. Part of the problem was the need to re-sleeper the gauge-converted line. There were also reports that higher management in V/Line were opposed to the very idea of running their trains over track controlled by somebody else. This was a sentiment shared by many in the organisation. One V/Line staff member said to me "We used to be masters of our own destiny here— but not any more." VicTrack (the track owner) squabbled with ARTC (the lessee) about the signalling system. The re-sleepering was completed in about September 2009. The Wodonga bypass was completed in March 2010 but the first train did not run over it until August. Finally agreement was reached over the signalling system— VicTrack won. ARTC drew up schedules for the 3 trains per day which



were to replace the buses and began publishing these schedules in its Master Train Plan in April 2010.

"Limited" commissioning of the new West line occurred in September 2010. Although notionally bi-directional dual track, the two lines were not equal— traffic against the "normal" direction on each was severely hampered by unduly long sections.

Things went badly pear-shaped as soon as the last rail was laid. First, V/Line still seemed curiously reluctant to come to the party and to prepare for the new services. It made no move to convert locomotives and carriage sets (3 of each needed) to standard gauge. Then, when *La Nina* returned, the infamous "mud-holes" began to develop in both the newly- converted and

re-sleepered "West Line" and the older "East Line", which was itself intermittently closed for upgrading. Those in the know blamed the re-sleepering process for this.

For over two years CountryLink's XPT services over the line were an *on-again off-again affair*. CountryLink was reluctant to operate trains in the "wrong" direction when one line was closed. This particularly affected day-time XPT services. Buses between Albury and Melbourne ran when this happened— which was often and often for weeks at a time. The line was finally fully commissioned in March 2011.

After 30 months, the long-suffering folk of the North East became accustomed to the lack of trains. Those needing to make a day trip to Melbourne preferred first and foremost to drive to Seymour and to catch a commuter train from there. Others used

**MyLine Seymour**

SOUTHERN CROSS DOWNBROOK STATION CRAGGEBURN WALLAN WANDONG BROADFORD SEYMOUR EUROA BENALLA SPRINGHURST WODONGA ALBURY

WANGARATTA CHILTERN NAGAMBIE MURCHISON EAST MOOROOOPNA SHEPPARTON

**Seymour line commuter portal**

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V/Line Seymour Line **vline\_seymour**

vline\_seymour UPDATE: Approx. delay now 55 mins - 18:01 Southern Cross - Albury #vline  
9 hours ago · reply · retweet · favorite

vline\_seymour DELAY: 20:30 Seymour - Southern Cross train is currently delayed approx 14 mins #vline  
9 hours ago · reply · retweet · favorite

vline\_seymour DELAY: 18:01 Southern Cross - Albury train is currently delayed approx 26 mins #vline  
10 hours ago · reply · retweet · favorite

vline\_seymour DELAY: 18:52 Southern Cross - Seymour train is currently delayed approx 16 mins #vline  
11 hours ago · reply · retweet · favorite

vline\_seymour DELAY: 17:20 Albury - Southern Cross train is currently delayed approx 45 mins #vline  
13 hours ago · reply · retweet · favorite



the buses while grumbling loudly. The local newspaper complained endlessly, but the response from politicians was usually “it is somebody else’s problem.”

In July 2010, it had been announced that the 3 new services would be introduced successively after the line was fully opened, with all 3 running within “a couple of months.” As these things go, all of these dates slipped considerably— to June 2011, October 2011 and April 2012. The new trains scarcely ever ran to time and, to make matters worse, there a number of irregularities occurred in ARTC’s management of the line, including a near-miss between a V/Line service and a track machine just north of Seymour. The *Dismal Jimmies* in V/Line must have nodded sagely and whispered “I told you so”.

### Where’s the beef?

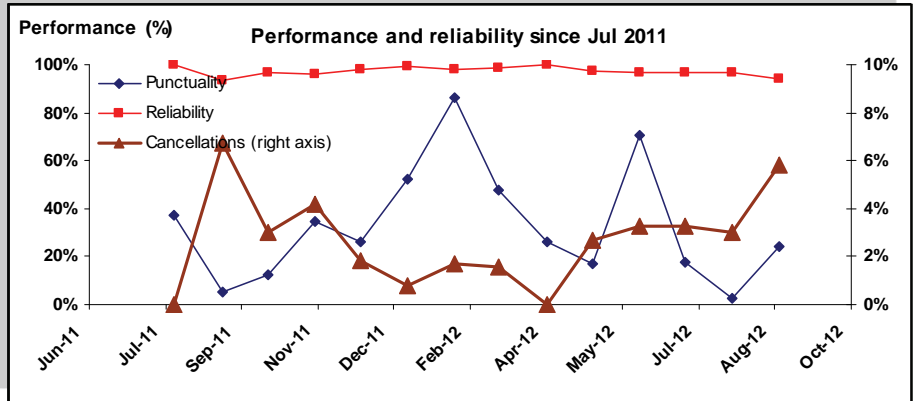
V/Line regards longer-distance services as being on time (*punctual*) if they travel within 10 minutes and 59 seconds of schedule. This overly-precise figure is a way of saying “within 11 minutes” so that its computers are not confused by a “boundary problem”. The criterion presumably applies to all timing points, but this is not explicitly stated. V/Line aims to have 92% of trains meet this criterion. It sets a target for 96% of scheduled services to actually run— a measure of *reliability*.

The punctuality figures never even came close to target, with the nadir of 2.6% being reached in the Dog Days of August. This figure, I suppose, does not take into account reliability, which was 97%, meaning that 6 services were totally or partially cancelled rather than being late. These dismal statistics meant that only 4 trains out of 186 scheduled ran to time. The best performance was in February 2012, with 86% punctuality. The chart above illustrates this sorry state of affairs

Few of the causes of poor performance in the Dog Days were new— it just seemed they were each worse in that month. V/Line must have felt like Spiral Agnew, who remarked during the Watergate crisis— “It’s just one damn thing after another”. The causes can be classed as follows:

**Temporary speed restrictions.** The mud-holes have never gone away despite ARTC’s best efforts to correct them. ARTC is now blaming *La Niña* and past Governments for allowing the sub-ballast road-bed to deteriorate over decades. It continues to hotly deny any culpability.

The maximum possible speed over much of the line is 130 km per hour for XPTs and 115 for V/Line trains, although ARTC timetables both identically. The average speed for these timetables, allowing for stops, uphill sections and permanent speed restrictions is 95 and 84 kph respectively. In the Dog Days, northbound trains faced



some 90 km of speed restricted track, with limits as low as 40 km per hour in mud-hole areas. Southbound trains on the East line fared somewhat better and faced only 80 km of restrictions. All other things being equal, these two figures would add 36 minutes and 28 minutes to Down and Up transit times respectively. These figures apply to both V/Line and CountryLink services.

**Prior late running.** CountryLink’s XPT services tend to arrive at Albury somewhat late— the average in the Dog Days was about 16 minutes. It is unusual, but not unheard of, for trains which turn around at Southern Cross and Albury, to run so late on the incoming run that the outbound run can be delayed departing. Scheduled same-day turn around times average 87 minutes— which is long enough to cope with all but the most recalcitrant incoming trains. For V/Line, actual arrival and departure times at Albury are hard to come by.

**Crossing delays.** The standard gauge line is still single from Tottenham to Seymour, with 7 crossing loops and “Passing Lanes.” Passing lanes were supposed to ameliorate crossing delays and allow “running crosses”, but they have never worked in practice and running crosses have never even been scheduled. Apart from the afternoon Up XPT (ST23) and evening Up V/Line (8630) trains, passenger trains are not actually scheduled to wait in loops. However late running of other trains can force them to do so. Analysis of this is a difficult task. The situation is reversed for ST23 and 8630 — these two trains can catch up time when their scheduled crosses do not occur. This is particularly true for ST23 which is timed to pause at Seymour loop for 17 minutes each day— but only has a cross there on Mondays. 8630 has 30 minutes up its sleeve. In consequence, these two trains experienced the shortest transit delays during the Dog Days.

**Train management.** A host of woes can be grouped under this banner— running out of fuel (yes!), running out of crew, locomotive breakdown, damage to rolling stock. Most of these are problems experienced by V/Line alone. Locomotive breakdowns are a particular hazard for V/Line—

there are only 3 locos. available— they work turn and turn about with each loco having one day off every third day. They have to be re-fuelled after 3 one-way trips and this takes time because they have to go to Dynon for refuelling. Mud-holes are often the cause of breakdowns, mainly due to damage of springs— mud-hole track is very poor riding. In most instances, these problems affect reliability rather than punctuality— i.e. trains are cancelled. Because V/Line has only two indivisible car sets, even minor damage to one carriage on one of them will cause cancellation of half the services while the problem is fixed.

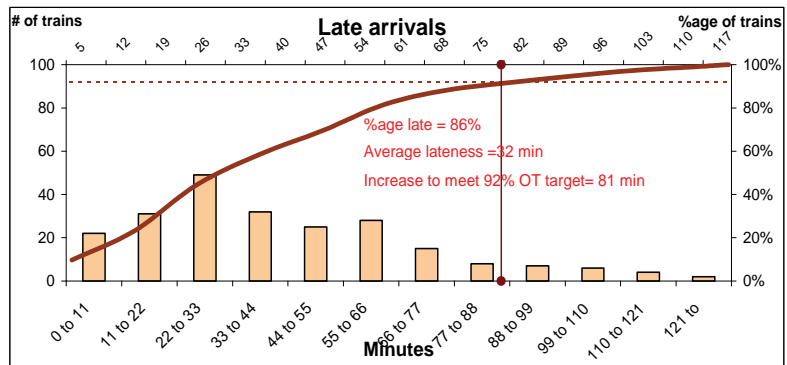
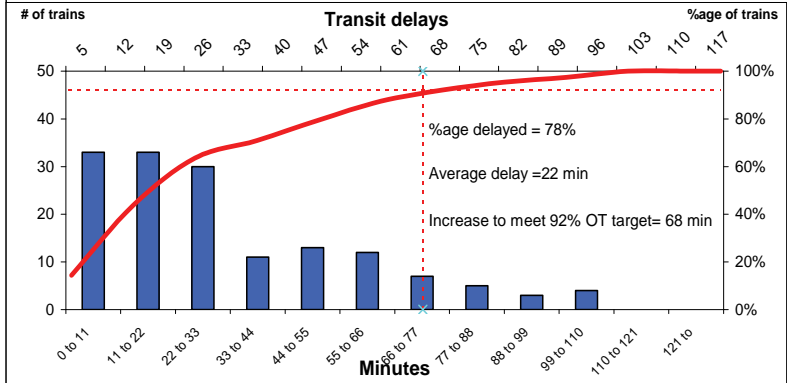
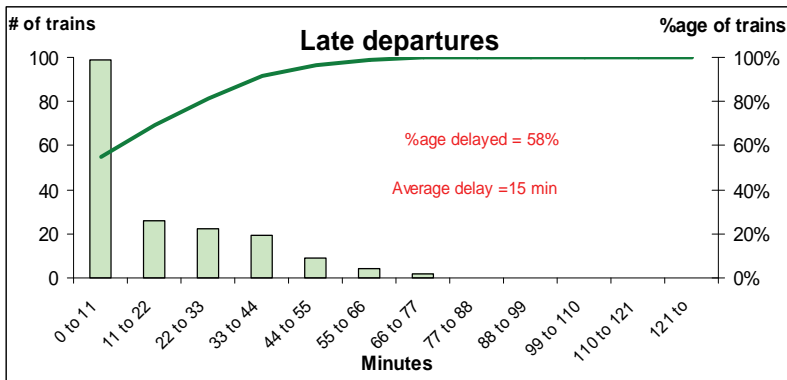
**Force majeure.** Accidents (sometimes to other trains), sick passengers, lightning strikes and other Acts of God.

The problems are not confined to passenger trains of course. ARTC quarterly-based all-train delay statistics for the Melbourne-Sydney track, show an average transit delay of 9 minutes for every hour of transit. Only 48% of trains were within tolerance which, in ARTC-speak, means that they arrive no more than an hour late. The delay statistics equate to roughly half an hour for the Albury-Melbourne segment. This is, as I will show later, is somewhat greater than for passenger trains alone; t thus freight traffic must be even worse off than passenger traffic.

### Dog Days

Was August really so special and what could account for such an appalling record? The following analysis is for V/Line and CountryLink for late August to mid-September. The numbers were compiled from blogs, observations, V/Line’s train running public site (sample page 14), the Bunbury Street Tunnel web-cam (“Buncam”) and ARTC’s “Crystal Ball”— see September *The Times* for a description of this device. These methods are especially spotty for V/Line times at Albury

I have presented the data in the form of delay frequency histograms, based on V/Line’s 11 minute criterion— that is to say how many trains were 0 to 11 minutes late, how many were 11 to 22 minutes late, etc. Also presented are cumulative percentage figures— these will come in handy later in



the analysis. Three charts are presented: Departure delays, Transit delays and the result of these two- Arrival delays.

**Departure delays.** The average delay for all departures was 15 minutes; and 31% of trains departed “late” on the 11-minute criterion. CountryLink trains performed worse than V/Line trains on this criterion.

**Transit delays.** The average delay for all transits was 22 minutes; and 78% of trains were “delayed” on the 11-minute criterion. V/Line trains performed very badly- 98% were late and their running time was 40

minutes greater than scheduled. Summary graphs showing how the problems grew during August and improved temporarily during September appear below.

**Arrival delays.** The average delay for all arrivals was 32 minutes; and 86% of trains were “late” on the 11-minute criterion. V/Line trains performed very badly- only 1 train arrived on time out of 113 known arrival times (1%!); their arrival times were 40 minutes greater than scheduled.

**Cancellations.** Nineteen trains (7%) were cancelled, started from an intermediate

station or were terminated short of their destinations. These were all V/Line trains.

**Are we there yet?**

No, we are not there yet. The performance figures are parlous in the extreme and have long been a source of vexation for travellers on the line. But the Dog Days finally pushed the operators over the cliff in the 3rd week of September, when a crisis meeting between ARTC and the Victorian Government was held. Both V/Line and CountryLink said that it was impossible for them to operate their services to time over the NESG track. CountryLink extended its complaints to ARTC’s NSW track as well. ARTC has said the situation will not improve significantly until well into 2013 and the skeptics believe it never will.

The generally-agreed band-aid solution is to pad out the running times so that more trains will be “on time”. CountryLink has already notionally done this, although it has not publicized this fact, nor have the revised times appeared in timetables. V/Line is to rewrite its timetable “in coming weeks” to improve punctuality. In theory, this would surely be ARTC’s task.

What would any new timetable look like? “Antediluvian”- that’s what. If operators refuse to alter their punctuality criteria, then the only solution is to lengthen the running time so that 92% of trains do not run late. This is where the line chart on the transit delay graph comes in handy. If track conditions remain as they are, the scheduled running times will have to be padded out by 68 minutes to meet the 92% criterion. This situation is much worse for V/Line, which will have to have its schedules padded out by an average 91 minutes, with the ghastly 8605 Down lunchtime service needing an injection of almost two hours to bring it up to scratch

This is “back to the future” stuff. The average scheduled transit time for V/Line trains would have to be padded out to 5½ hours. One has to go back to before the First World War to find trains this slow. CountryLink trains would have to be padded out by 51 minutes to 4¼ hours. These are 1920s standards.

