



TABLE TALK

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Chatswood to Epping

	5:50	6:05	6:20	6:35	6:50	7:05	7:20	7:35	7:50	8:05	8:20	8:35	8:50	9:05	9:20	9:35	9:50	10:05	10:20	10:35	10:50
Chatswood	5:50	6:05	6:20	6:35	6:50	7:05	7:20	7:35	7:50	8:05	8:20	8:35	8:50	9:05	9:20	9:35	9:50	10:05	10:20	10:35	10:50
North Ryde	5:58	6:13	6:28	6:43	6:58	7:13	7:28	7:43	7:58	8:13	8:28	8:43	8:58	9:13	9:28	9:43	9:58	10:13	10:28	10:43	10:58
Macquarie Park	6:00	6:15	6:30	6:45	7:00	7:15	7:30	7:45	8:00	8:15	8:30	8:45	9:00	9:15	9:30	9:45	10:00	10:15	10:30	10:45	11:00
Macquarie University	6:02	6:17	6:32	6:47	7:02	7:17	7:32	7:47	8:02	8:17	8:32	8:47	9:02	9:17	9:32	9:47	10:02	10:17	10:32	10:47	11:02
Epping	6:07	6:22	6:37	6:52	7:07	7:22	7:37	7:52	8:07	8:22	8:37	8:52	9:07	9:22	9:37	9:52	10:07	10:22	10:37	10:52	11:07

	11:05	11:20	11:35	11:50	12:05	12:20	12:35	12:50	1:05	1:20	1:35	1:50	2:05	2:20	2:35	2:50	3:05	3:20	3:35	3:50	4:05
Chatswood	11:05	11:20	11:35	11:50	12:05	12:20	12:35	12:50	1:05	1:20	1:35	1:50	2:05	2:20	2:35	2:50	3:05	3:20	3:35	3:50	4:05
North Ryde	11:13	11:28	11:43	11:58	12:13	12:28	12:43	12:58	1:13	1:28	1:43	1:58	2:13	2:28	2:43	2:58	3:13	3:28	3:43	3:58	4:13
Macquarie Park	11:15	11:30	11:45	12:00	12:15	12:30	12:45	1:00	1:15	1:30	1:45	2:00	2:15	2:30	2:45	3:00	3:15	3:30	3:45	4:00	4:15
Macquarie University	11:17	11:32	11:47	12:02	12:17	12:32	12:47	1:02	1:17	1:32	1:47	2:02	2:17	2:32	2:47	3:02	3:17	3:32	3:47	4:02	4:17
Epping	11:22	11:37	11:52	12:07	12:22	12:37	12:52	1:07	1:22	1:37	1:52	2:07	2:22	2:37	2:52	3:07	3:22	3:37	3:52	4:07	4:22

	4:20	4:35	4:50	5:05	5:20	5:35	5:50	6:05	6:20	6:35	6:50	7:05	7:20	7:35	7:50	8:05	8:20	8:35	8:50	9:05	9:20
Chatswood	4:20	4:35	4:50	5:05	5:20	5:35	5:50	6:05	6:20	6:35	6:50	7:05	7:20	7:35	7:50	8:05	8:20	8:35	8:50	9:05	9:20
North Ryde	4:28	4:43	4:58	5:13	5:28	5:43	5:58	6:13	6:28	6:43	6:58	7:13	7:28	7:43	7:58	8:13	8:28	8:43	8:58	9:13	9:28
Macquarie Park	4:30	4:45	5:00	5:15	5:30	5:45	6:00	6:15	6:30	6:45	7:00	7:15	7:30	7:45	8:00	8:15	8:30	8:45	9:00	9:15	9:30
Macquarie University	4:32	4:47	5:02	5:17	5:32	5:47	6:02	6:17	6:32	6:47	7:02	7:17	7:32	7:47	8:02	8:17	8:32	8:47	9:02	9:17	9:32
Epping	4:37	4:52	5:07	5:22	5:37	5:52	6:07	6:22	6:37	6:52	7:07	7:22	7:37	7:52	8:07	8:22	8:37	8:52	9:07	9:22	9:37

Weekdays and Weekends



Timetables of Sydney's new railway – page 5

About *Table Talk*

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

Editor, Rail and Tram, Air, Ferry: Victor Isaacs, 43 Lowanna St Braddon ACT 2612, abvi@webone.com.au

Editor, Bus: Geoff Mann, 19 Rix St Glen Iris Vic 3146, geoffwm@bigpond.com.au

Production and Mailout: Geoff and Judy Lambert.

Proofreaders: Geoff Hassall, Agnes Boskovitz.

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NEWS

RAIL & TRAM

Level crossings galore

The Federal Government's economic stimulus package announced on 3 February included funding for installation of around 200 new boom gates at high risk level crossings at a cost of \$150 million over two years.

ARTC Donnybrook Loop

ARTC brought into use the extension of Donnybrook Loop, Victoria NE line, from 800 m to 2 km, in December 2008.

Big, bigger, biggest

Queensland Rail is reported to be considering making a takeover offer for **Pacific National**. If this were to happen, the ACCC would probably insist on divestment of some assets, as otherwise it would control about 95% of rail freight in Australia.

QR Citytrain 23 Feb 09

The following additional services were added to the AM peak timetable from 23 Feb 09:

- 0601 from Caboolture arriving Central at 0705
- 0758 from Petrie arriving Central at 0843
- 0555 from Ipswich arriving Central at 0655
- 0749 from Corinda arriving Central at 0811
- The 0751 from Darra was extended to commence from Ipswich at 0742, and now arrives at Central at 0821.

All these trains stop at all stations.

QR Traveltrain washed out

In late January/early February, while southern Australia endured a run of record hot temperatures, Queensland endured record rain, with very extensive flooding. QR Traveltrain services were affected:

- 4 Feb: Westbound Spirit of the Outback terminated at Emerald, with buses beyond to Longreach.
- 5 Feb: Westbound Inlander cancelled.
- 5 Feb: Spirit of the Outback commenced from Emerald, with buses beyond..
- 6 Feb: Northbound Cairns Tilt Train from Brisbane cancelled.
- 6 Feb: Eastbound Inlander cancelled.

- 7 Feb: Southbound Sunlander from Cairns cancelled.
- 8 Feb: Southbound Cairns Tilt Train cancelled.
- 9 Feb: Northbound Cairns Tilt Train cancelled.
- 10 Feb: Northbound Sunlander cancelled.
- 10 Feb: Southbound Cairns Tilt Train cancelled.
- 11 Feb: Southbound Sunlander cancelled.
- 11 Feb: Westbound Spirit of the Outback terminated at Emerald, with no bus substitute possible.
- 12 Feb: Eastbound Spirit of the Outback commenced from Emerald.
- 14 Feb: Westbound Spirit of the Outback terminated at Emerald, with buses beyond.
- 16 Feb: Eastbound spirit of the Outback commence from Emerald, with buses beyond.
- 14 Feb: Southbound Sunlander commenced from Mackay, with buses beyond.
- 15 Feb: Northbound Sunlander terminated at Mackay, with buses beyond. Southbound Tilt Train commenced from Mackay, with buses beyond. Westbound Inlander cancelled.
- 16 Feb: Eastbound Inlander cancelled.
- 17 Feb: Southbound Sunlander commenced from Mackay, with buses beyond.
- 25 Feb Southbound Tilt Train from Cairns terminated in Mackay from where there were buses to connect with a special Electric Tilt Train departing Rockhampton at 0145.
- 26 Feb Westbound Inlander cancelled and replaced by bus.
- 27 Feb Eastbound Inlander cancelled and replaced by bus.

Issued again, but not a gain: QR TravelTrain Timetable by Albert Isaacs. In *Table Talk* February 2009 a review of the 1 October 2009 QR Traveltrain TT mentioned that there had not been regular, full-system Traveltrain TTs produced between June 1986 and April 2009 but that, since then, no less than three editions had been issued. Wrong! The 4th edition in nine months has now been sighted! Is this constant reissuing of hard copy TTs a symptom of the computer age where electronic documents are often modified more often than I change my socks?

So, when was this new edition issued? To answer that question one has to read the legalese in the fine print on the back page to ascertain that it was probably circulated from January 2009. Unlike the earlier editions that all have publication dates on the front cover, this edition says: "Valid until 31 March 2009". A little later on in this review, the author will postulate as to why there's an expiry date rather than a commencement time.

Confusingly, the January-March 2009 edition has the same cover illustrations and the same cover colour and layout as the 1 October 2009 version that it replaces, making it difficult to differentiate between the two.

There are two changes to actual times but, as well, someone appears to have proofread the whole TT and made a number of changes, some of which are quite minor. The modifications are:

- The Cairns Tilt Train table (pages 10/11) has been changed to show it running twice-weekly instead of thrice a week. This is probably the reason for yet another issue! This change was caused by major damage to the diesel tilt train set involved in a level crossing smash. A return to three trains a week has been promised and, so, this is probably the reason for a TT expiry date on the cover. A footnote now appears under the Cairns Tilt Train table: "Minor changes may apply to enroute stations from 5 April 2009. Please confirm times closer to your actual date of travel." Now, as it's clearly stated on the TT cover that the publication is only valid until 31 March 2009, this raises an interesting question: should TTs only reflect changes within their period of currency, or should known changes be foreshadowed? *Table Talk* readers may like to comment on this.
- The eastbound/southbound *Spirit of the Outback* (page 17) is tabled to now save 25 minutes in the Caboolture-Brisbane section. This is in concert with similar changes to other trains, as per the review of the October TT in February *Table Talk*.
- The former schematic map has been replaced with a better, albeit similar map. I suspect that this railway map may have been adapted from a plan designed for a non-railway publication; this would explain the un-legended plane symbols for airports at Brisbane, Gladstone/Rockhampton, Mackay/Proserpine, Townsville, Cairns, Charleville, Longreach and Mount Isa, just as it may justify the inclusion of those obscure non-railway towns, Thargomindah, Windorah and Burketown. The heading for this map in the Contents (as

noted in the February *Table Talk* review) has been changed from “Australian Travel Map” to “Queensland Travel Map”. Yes, there’s much less parochialism and more reality in the present nomenclature.

- Each page, in all editions, has an 11 mm coloured border at the foot of each page. The first three versions had a stylised railway within this border but this is removed from the latest edition.
- Another similar move has seen the elimination of the full-colour photographs on pages 4/5, 14/15 and 17 and of an internal advertisement from page 23. Blank spaces now appear in all these spots. It has been suggested that they may have been deleted so as to make the printing of the TT cheaper.
- The opposite is the case on pages 26/27 which were previously blank except for the border at the bottom of the page but which now have a title “Travel Notes” and ruled black lines. Does QR really believe that people will make notes here? I don’t think so!
- Similarly, the back page (p.28) used to be blank for the top two-thirds. This space (and a little bit more) has now been filled with the geographical details of QR Travel Centres. However, to make room for this directory, the list of legal conditions has been reduced in size and is now quite hard to read. This is unfortunate because, as the February *Table Talk* review explained, this section does contain important information such as luggage limits and advance booking information. How ironical that QR should currently appear to be hiding this type of information from its passengers. Anyone who has studied the *traditional* QR country TT will be familiar with the thick section at the back of each edition which always makes interesting reading because of the hundreds of obscure conditions, by laws and complicated freight and baggage provisos.
- Now we come to the most bizarre change of all! On page 13 we read that the prices of Austrail Flexipasses has been reduced from \$950.00 to \$949.30 (15 day pass) and from \$1,330.00 to \$1,329.90 (22 day pass). At first, the author assumed that these 70¢ and 10¢ changes were something beyond QR’s control. However, to add to the conundrum, the relevant Rail Australia page (<http://www.railaustralia.com.au/flexipass.php>) not only shows the costs as \$950.00 and \$1,300.00 respectively, but also confirms that these prices apply until 31 March 2009; ironically the same day up to which the Traveltrain TT is valid. What’s really going on here!
- All internet links have been modified by deleting ‘www.’ from them all. This recognises that most search engines, including Google, have now been modified so that one no longer has to include this detail. Nevertheless, QR appears to be one of the first organisations to delete the ‘www.’.
- In all tables, “arrive” and “depart” have now become “**arr**” and “**dep**”. A few more **arrs** and **deps** now appear with no apparent pattern.
- A few additional bits of information have been added, presumably to cover perceived legal gaps. For example, a note has been added on page 20 to the effect that the “Fare Information” conditions do not apply to Kuranda, *Savannahlander* and *Gulflander* services, that is the privately operated trains. Presumably, this would be particularly relevant to concession conditions. Also, amongst the fine print conditions on the back page, a sentence has been added explaining that the booking conditions and terms are available from QR Travel Centres.
- A number of other minor proofreading type changes have been made. For example, on page 6 “Inseat Audio Entertainment” rightly becomes “inseat audio entertainment”. Despite the fact that the TT has obviously been checked by a proof-reader, the minor error on page 13 (Austrail Flexipass), as pointed out in the February *Table Talk* review, persists; that is, the legal entity is referred to as QR Limited rather than its current name, QR Passenger Pty Ltd.

In conclusion, I suppose the questions that we now have to ask are: will another Traveltrain TT be published soon after 31 March 2009; what changes will it cover?

Sydney Rail construction projects

On 5 February the Federal Minister for Transport, Anthony Albanese, announced:

- The allocation of \$15 million to accelerate planning and design work on the \$840 million project for a new dedicated freight line between North Strathfield and possibly Gosford. This will provide access for four freight trains an hour for 22 hours a day; and

- Work to start in March/April on a \$27.2 million upgrade to the Port Botany line including track rearrangement and signalling work. This will increase the average train load from 40 to 60 containers.

And still they come: RailCorp WTTs 22 Feb & 22 March 09

The NSW RailCorp Working Timetable version 2.6 of **1 February** (see February *Table Talk* page 5) only lasted until **22 February** when it was replaced with a new edition, version 2.7. Version 2.8.1 of the WTT has already been foreshadowed and is likely to come into effect from **22 March** 2009.

CityRail 2008 updates to timetables

During the last few months of 2008, CityRail re-issued most of its timetable books of 28 May 2006 with various 'update' dates. Many stations do not stock the latest updated versions. As stocks can be obtained, they will be included on the AATTC Distribution List. The known latest updates are:

CityRail <i>Timetable books 28 May 2006</i>	
Suburban	Updated
Eastern Suburbs & Illawarra	November 2008
Airport and East Hills	September 2008
Bankstown	September 2008
Inner West, South and Cumberland	September 2008
Western and Cumberland	November 2008
Carlingford	August 2008
Northern	November 2008
North Shore	August 2008
InterCity	Updated
South Coast	August 2008
Southern Highlands	September 2008
Blue Mountains	August 2008
Central Coast & Newcastle	November 2008
Hunter	November 2008

From 15 December 08 the 0506 ex Sydney Terminal was altered to run empty as far as Lidcombe before resuming Passenger running to Liverpool.

CityRail Chatswood-Epping 23 Feb 09

The initial timetable of the Chatswood-Epping line from Monday 23 Feb has trains every 15 minutes on an identical schedule every day of the week. Trains run from 550 to 2120 from Chatswood and 601 to 2131 from Epping.

Before and after the public service, trains run for station staff. Running time is 17 minutes. Four OSCAR sets are required for the service.

The official opening train departed Epping at 1000 on 23 Feb. The first public trains departed Chatswood at 1105 and Epping at 1116. The official opening was deferred 24 hours from 22 February as that was the official national day of mourning for victims of the Victorian bushfire disaster.

In probably a first, the STN (Special Train Notice) 0678-2009 for the opening day services when it was scheduled for 22 February included a colour picture, showing the spectacular exterior of the new Macquarie University station. The amendment Tables Telegram 051-09GM for the 23 Feb opening did not repeat the illustration.

There are two public timetable brochures:

- A full fold-out version in 16 panels 100 x 170 mm giving full times and connections in separate tables for weekdays and weekends (because some connecting times are different). This is available on the March Distribution List.
- A "mini timetable" in 12 panels 55 x 90 mm giving only times between Chatswood and Epping and in only one table for every day.

Brochures describing the layout of, and facilities provided at, each station, are available.

At Chatswood after terminating, the "up" ECRL shuttles proceed south to the terminating siding and then shunt to platform 3 from the south.

The first scheduled weekend closedown for maintenance is to be only three weeks after the line opened.

Travel on the new line is free for the first 100 days.

As a consequence of the opening of the Chatswood-Epping line, the following alterations to Northern line trains were also introduced from 23 Feb 09:

- The 0756 from Newcastle departs Hornsby one minute earlier at 0952 and makes an additional stop at Epping at 1002.
- The 0819 from Newcastle departs Hornsby one minute earlier at 1034 and makes an additional stop at Epping at 1044.
- The 0928 from Newcastle departs Hornsby one minute earlier at 1134 and makes an additional stop at Epping at 1144.
- The 1720 from Newcastle makes an additional stop at Epping at 1944.
- The 1828 from Newcastle departs Hornsby one minute earlier at 2034 and makes an additional stop at Epping at 2043.
- The 1145 to Wyong makes an additional stop at Epping at 1210.
- The 1245 to Gosford makes an additional stop at Epping at 1310.
- The 1345 to Wyong makes an additional stop at Epping at 1410.
- The 1845 to Wyong makes an additional stop at Epping at 1912.
- The 1945 to Wyong makes an additional stop at Epping at 2010.
- The 2045 to Wyong makes an additional stop at Epping at 2110.

Sydney Metro

The proposed Sydney CBD Metro will have stations at Central, Town Hall, Martin Place, Barangaroo, Pyrmont and Rozelle. (The City of Sydney is buying the Woolworths site at Town Hall for the new station). Construction is scheduled to commence in 2010 with completion by 2015. Five carriage driverless trains will operate every two to three minutes in the peak and every five minutes off-peak.

Countrylink North Coast 1 Dec 08

CountryLink has issued an update of its North Coast timetable brochure dated 1 December 2008. The reason for this update is not easily evident.

Hunter 4-cars

The first operation of a four-car set with the new Hunter Valley DMUs occurred with no publicity on Monday 9 February on the 0746 Telarah-Newcastle.

Hunter Transport Guide

The Lower Hunter Transport Guide has been updated (Version 2) to include the new bus network introduced by Newcastle Buses in November 2008. Other information has been updated where necessary. It has been expanded from 64 to 72 pages and now includes the information about transport services at the University of Newcastle previously published in the University's own Transport Guide up until 2007.

The train, bus and ferry timetables that were previously included in the University Guide are now only available on the University's website at www.newcastle.edu.au/service/transport/ They retain the same format as in the previous guides. Each of the 23 tables can be downloaded as a pdf file.

The Lower Hunter Transport Guide is available from the March 2009 AATTC Distribution List.

NSW wheat transport inquiry

The Federal Government (because of its interest in the ARTC) is conducting an inquiry into wheat transport in NSW. Even the preliminary background paper provides useful information about rail transport of wheat in NSW. See www.infrastructure.gov.au The deadline is tight, with a report due by the end of May.

V Line train and bus alterations 1 Feb 09

From 1 February, the Sunday 1035 Seymour to Melbourne train was altered to depart ten minutes earlier at 1025 and arrive in Melbourne ten minutes earlier at 1158.

The weekday 1515 Seymour to Melbourne train was altered to depart 26 minutes later at 1541 and arrives Southern Cross 34 minutes later at 1713.

New Working Timetables with these alterations are on the V Line website www.vline.com.au/rna/rna/information_pack.html

An additional bus service departs Sale town at 0800 via Rosedale, returning from Traralgon at 1735 via Rosedale to Sale. These connect with trains at Traralgon (more details in Bus News Victoria Regional).

The following changes occurred to bus schedules:

- 0705 Canberra to Seymour departs 10 minutes later at 0715 and apparently now forms the 1203 ex Albury. (This might be because of decreased patronage while the V Line bus makes the train connection at Seymour rather than Albury).
- 1137 Albury to Seymour departs 26 minutes later at 1203 and arrives Seymour 26 minutes later at 1516, connecting with the altered 1541 train.
- 1210 Mulwala to Seymour coach departs 15 minutes later at 1225. This maintains the connection with the above altered buses.
- 1900 Sale-Traralgon departs 8 minutes later at 1908.
- 1010 Dandenong to Inverloch departs 10 minutes earlier at 1000.
- The connecting 1140 Anderson to Cowes departs 10 minutes earlier at 1130.
- 1055 Cowes to Anderson (in effect a placement run for the bus mentioned above) departs 10 minutes earlier at 1045.
- 1235 Inverloch to Lang Lang departs 10 minutes earlier at 1225 (thus lengthening the connection time at Lang Lang).
- 1228 Cowes to Anderson, which connects into the bus mentioned above, departs 13 minutes earlier at 1215.

Victorian bushfire disaster

The Victorian bushfire disaster which climaxed on the weekend of 7 & 8 February had the following effects on **V Line train** operations:

- 6 & 7 Feb: V Line recommended deferral of all non-essential travel to Gippsland as train or replacement bus operations might be suspended
- 7 Feb: Gippsland line closed from Traralgon to Bairnsdale, Seymour/Shepparton line closed, Marshall-Warrnambool line closed.
- 8, 9 & 10 Feb: Seymour/Shepparton and Warrnambool lines closed, but Gippsland line restored.
- 11-15 Feb: Due to track damage, the Seymour/Shepparton services not operated while fire remained close and repairs carried out. Two bridges and 1,200 sleepers were destroyed and Wandong station damaged. Substitute bus services were provided. However, the adjacent standard gauge line was less damaged, and trains continued on this, albeit with delays. Limited services only on Warrnambool line (morning up, evening down) while repairs carried out (300 sleepers destroyed).
- 16 Feb: Full train services resumed.
- 27 Feb: Recommendation that non-essential travel in Gippsland be deferred.

The effect on **V Line bus** services was:

- 8 to 10 Feb: V Line's buses to Mansfield and Eildon (which may or may not be a V Line service, see June 2008 *Table Talk*) suspended.
- 11 to 13 Feb: Mansfield bus one service daily via Benalla (a very long round).
- 14 Feb: Mansfield services resumed, but express from Melbourne to Yea (probably via the Hume Freeway). Eildon service resumed.
- 19 Feb: Mansfield services now express only between Melbourne and Flowerdale (via the Hume Freeway).

- 25 Feb: Mansfield services operate as normal. Morning Daylesford – Woodend buses cancelled.
- 27 Feb: Warrnambool-Apollo Bay & v.v. cancelled.

In addition:

- **Connex's** line between Ringwood and Belgrave in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne was closed on 8 Feb.
- The **Yarra Valley Tourist Railway** was extensively damaged near Healesville, including seven bridges destroyed. It will be closed for the indefinite future.
- On the **Daylesford Spa Country Railway** 1.6 km of track was burnt out. Services are suspended.

Bushfire victims have free travel on Victorian public transport until 1 October.

Victorian heritage railway timetables

The latest timetables for **Puffing Billy** are September 2008 – March 2009, and for the **Mornington Railway** January 2009 – January 2010.

Car-Go train

After three years Motorail was restored to GSR's Overland between Melbourne and Adelaide & v.v. from 16 February.

Tram route 3/3A 31 Jan 09

From 31 January tram route 3 Melbourne University – East Malvern via Balaclava Road has on weekends been diverted to travel via St Kilda. Designated route 3A, the weekend diversion traverses Fitzroy St, St Kilda Esplanade and Carlisle St. The diversion will increase journey time by eight minutes, but will serve popular entertainment/tourist/restaurant areas. Daytime frequency will be increased from every 15 to every 12 minutes. To reduce congestion at Luna Park, route 79 (St Kilda Beach-North Richmond) was altered to only operate from 1900 to last tram seven days a week while route 78 (Prahran-North Richmond) was altered to operate seven days a week from first tram to 1900. Previously route 79 had taken over from Route 78 from 1310 Saturdays and all day Sundays.

Tasmania: non-decision on rail future

Asciano has decided to discontinue the sales process for its Tasmanian rail assets and exit Tasmanian operations in the medium term. The State government is now negotiating directly with the company, and has stated its intention to continue funding the rail improvement program.

Perth well trained

In 2007-08 there were 28,458,000 fare-paying boardings in Perth compared to 22,659,000 the year before. There was an average of 7200 weekly services in 2007-08 (5488 in 2006-07).

New Zealand

- The new National Party Government has withdrawn funding of \$NZ121 million for KiwiRail announced by its predecessor. The money would mainly have been used to buy new locomotives.
- The new peak-hour Helensville-Auckland passenger trains have not attracted much patronage and may not continue.
- Geyserland Express Trust commissioned a report from Maunsells Engineering on re-opening the line from Putaruru to Rotorua for passenger trains. This would cost \$NZ 8.3 million.
- Daylighting of tunnels through the Manawatu Gorge means that Napier-Wellington freight trains can now travel via the mainline via Palmerston North. Consequently, there are currently no scheduled trains between Woodville and Masterton.

IE Ireland timetable

The IE Irish Railways public timetable book of December 2008 is a large publication with spiral binding. This makes it arguably the most elaborate public timetable published.

DB Germany timetable

Since the demise of the hard copy DB German Rail timetable (see *Table Talk* September 2008, page 8), they are producing an electronic version in similar format – see kursbuch.bahn.de

ÖBB Austria timetable

ÖBB published its printed timetable book for the current European timetable change in December 2008. However it is valid only until June 2009, when a new issue will be published. This brings an end to the free supplement usually published in June, which had in fact covered more than 90% of lines. ÖBB will now sell a completely new timetable in June.

US rail stimulus

The economic stimulus plan signed by President Obama on 17 February includes \$US 9 billion for public transport and \$US 2 billion for railways. Of this, \$US 800 million is for Amtrak and \$US 300 million for state government projects. Projects must commence within six months. The package also includes \$US 8 billion for high speed railways. The Budget presented in February provided for an additional \$US 5 billion for high speed rail.

Canadian rail stimulus

The Canadian Budget presented on 27 January increased funding to VIA Rail by \$C 407 million to support improved services, including higher train frequencies and enhanced on-time performance and speed, particularly in the Montréal–Ottawa–Toronto corridor; provided \$C 7.9 million for new capital projects of two First Nations railways: the Keewatin Railway Company in Manitoba and the Tshuettin Rail Transportation in Quebec and Labrador; and provided \$C 72 million over five years to improve railway safety.

The Federal government will also contribute to upgrading GO Toronto commuter rail stations and tracks, and to construction of a new rapid transit line in Vancouver, the Evergreen line, Lougheed-Pt Moody-Coquitlam.

Thanks to Tony Bailey, Kevin Eadie, Scott Ferris, Geoff Lambert, Dennis McLean, Michael Marshall, Len Regan, Lourie Smit, Victor Isaacs, *Courier-Mail*, *International Railway Journal*, *mX* (Sydney edition), *NZ Railway Observer*, *The Westland* and *Today's Railways Europe* for Rail news.

BUS NEWS

ACT

Belconnen Busway: Further to news last month of the cessation of weekday services, the Busway was closed to all buses after the last services on Routes 907 and 902 on Sunday 1 February.

New South Wales – Sydney

Sydney Buses: Changes to bus routes in Sydney Buses' Eastern Region will be introduced. from Sunday 26 April 2009

- 302 Pagewood (Eastgardens) to Circular Quay via Kingsford
- 303 Sans Souci to Circular Quay via Mascot.

The current diversion via Lenthall, Virginia and Baker Streets in Kensington will be discontinued. Route 302 and Route 303 buses will run directly along Todman Avenue in both directions.

- X03 AM peak express - Sans Souci to City, via Southern Cross Drive.
Route X03 AM peak express services to the City will be retained on a trial basis until November 2009. During this time, patronage will be closely monitored to determine whether there is sufficient demand to retain the service. Two new Route X03 PM peak express services from the City to Sans Souci will be introduced on a trial basis until November 2009. Patronage of the new afternoon services will be monitored to determine whether there is sufficient demand to retain the service.

- 311 Railway Square to Circular Quay via Elizabeth Bay
Route 311 buses will terminate and start from Gresham Street, City, instead of Circular Quay. Route 311 buses will no longer operate along Ithaca Road, Billyard Avenue or Onslow Avenue in Elizabeth Bay.

- X43 Peak hour express service - Kingsford to City via Rosebery
All Route X43 services will be converted to all-stops Route 343.

- 348 Peak hour service – Alexandria to Bondi Junction

Route 348 will be extended from Alexandria to Wollri Creek Railway Station; and will be redirected to operate via High Street (University of NSW), Todman Avenue and O'Dea Avenue. Route 348 buses will no longer operate along Dacey Avenue, Lachlan Street and Bourke Street, Waterloo. Route 348 services will be increased to provide a regular two-way daytime service Monday to Friday.

- 357 Eastlakes to Bondi Junction (peak hour to Sydenham Station)

The current Route 357 diversion operating via Barker, Avoca and Rainbow Streets in Randwick will be made permanent. Services will no longer operate on Kennedy Street. Route 357 trips to and from Sydenham Station will operate via Mascot Station. Additional Route 357 services will be provided to compensate for the withdrawal of Route 359.

- 359 Pagewood (Eastgardens) to Bondi Junction via Maroubra Junction

Route 359 is to be withdrawn due to poor patronage. Alternative services are available on Routes 357 and 400. Route 357 will operate along part of Avoca Street and additional Route 357 early evening services will be provided. A new school special service will maintain current links for students (Route 659).

New timetables will be introduced for routes operating along the Botany Road, Crown Street, Anzac Parade and New South Head Road corridors. The new timetable for Route 301 will incorporate extra services on weekdays in response to increased demand. New timetables will be available on the Sydney Buses website, two weeks before the service changes are introduced.

New South Wales – Regional

Wagga Wagga: The express coach service between Wagga, Canberra and Sydney, operated by Fearnese Coaches (Busabout), ceased as from 25 February 2009. The services had been heavily subsidised by Fearnese. Subsequently, there have been efforts to reinstate a daylight service which would include small towns. Firefly Express has daylight services between Melbourne and Sydney which call at Wagga Wagga and Gundagai.

Queensland – Brisbane

New bus services in the **TransLink** network have been introduced as from 23 February 2009. These include a new limited stop service Route 363 Herston to Brisbane and two new prepaid services 157 Runcorn to Brisbane and 343 Apsley to Brisbane. There are also significant improvements to the 140 (Browns Plains to Brisbane) bus corridor with 10 to 15 minute frequencies all day, seven days a week. There are additional trips and adjustments to numerous other routes including 66, 124, 142, 150, 153, 156, 161, 162, 199, 305, 425 and 426. Routes 372, 373 Oakleigh to City and 377, 378 Ashgrove to City are extended to operate off-peak. Routes 365, 366, 368 & 369 Ashgrove Loop services have been discontinued.

Queensland – Regional

Noosa: An \$11 million transit centre project, developed in conjunction with Translink, is to be built at Noosa Junction. The existing transit centre had a fundamental capacity problem and timetables were disrupted because of heavily congested roads during peak holiday periods. The aim is to bring large numbers of people into the Junction via a gateway that integrates all transport modes and which catered for interstate and backpacker buses. Work is expected to start in the second half of this year.

Tasmania by Ian Cooper

TassieLink introduced significant improvements to some of its services in the commuter belt around Hobart and Launceston from 10 February 2009.

The Cressy- Longford – Perth – Launceston service has almost doubled in frequency, partly as a result of the addition of peak period mixed commuter/school services and the operation of extra middle of the day services. Previously three buses departed Cressy for Launceston each weekday. There are now six departures. The Longford service has increased from four to seven departures. The new timetable provides much more information regarding intermediate set down and pick up locations within the Launceston metro area.

The Coal River Valley service to Richmond and Campania has also been improved. The 1200 service to Richmond from Hobart has been extended to Campania, returning at 1245. An extra return service to Richmond departs Hobart at 1400. The return service from Swansea to Hobart via Richmond now appears on the Richmond timetable as well as on the East Coast timetable.

Following the completion of a trial period some changes have been made to the new Cambridge Park service to and from Hobart. The new timetable appears under the banner Tassielink Transit for the first time and shows that some services have been deleted and others added.

Minor adjustments to some departure times have been made to some services in the Huon Valley, East Coast and Tasman Peninsula areas.

Derwent Valley Link: O'Driscoll Coaches, the new operator of the New Norfolk – Hobart bus service, introduced a new timetable on its Derwent Valley Link on 10 February 2009.

As is occurring elsewhere in Tasmania, there has been some consolidation in preparing O'Driscoll's new timetable of former school only and general passenger services into one timetable. O'Driscoll's are in a position to make this move as they now have a single contract to supply all services in a prescribed area of the Derwent Valley.

Not only are there more services on the trunk New Norfolk – Hobart service, there is a new general passenger service, Monday to Friday, to/from Glenorchy Bus Station from Ellendale, Westerway, Bushy Park and New Norfolk. It is many decades since a public bus service has operated to Ellendale. Another new general passenger service is operating between Hobart and New Norfolk via the Boyer Road on the northern side of the River Derwent. Again, the services are obviously intended to cater, primarily, as a school student service, but should also be useful for other residents.

O'Driscoll's new Saturday service is a considerable improvement over the previous Metro timetable with a much better spread of hours, together with an extra trip in both directions.

Re-routing Metro services in West Moonah and Howden: As from 16 February several Metro services have been re-routed due to difficulties Metro bus drivers were having in accessing areas in West Moonah and Howden.

All diversions on Routes 24, 26 and 29 to Purdie Street, West Moonah have been deleted, due to low passenger numbers and difficulties experienced by drivers in turning buses around in the dead end street. Buses continue to operate on nearby Ripley Road, Springfield Avenue and Corinda Grove.

That section of Brightwater Road between Burwood Drive and Woodlands Drive has been deleted from Route 89 in Howden due to operational difficulties experienced with Brightwater Road. Buses will now travel along Brightwater Road, Burwood Drive, Woodlands Drive and Roslyn Avenue. As a result the service on Edison Avenue and Garnett Street has also been deleted.

School Services: There has been a re-organisation of school services statewide following an enquiry into the provision of scheduled bus services throughout Tasmania and the implementation of new contracts between the Department of Infrastructure and bus operators. In a generalised summary of service changes advertised in Tasmania's three main print media, there is a reference to the removal of the previous student only restriction applying to some services with the aim of catering for the transport needs of the wider community. There is no indication in the media publicity of the services affected.

Victoria – Melbourne

Whittlesea Bus Review: Routes 520 (Yan Yean – Greensborough), 572 (Bundoora RMIT – Mill Park Lakes and 575 (Thomastown – Epping North) are to have extensions into developing areas and extended hours of operation. Seven days a week services will be provided. These changes are expected to be introduced on 20 April 2009.

Victoria – Regional

Public Transport Guides: Booklets titled 'Your guide to local public transport' have been produced for Portland and Ararat. They are to be distributed to all households. Viclink booklets will be progressively delivered throughout the State over the next two years.

Gippsland: A trial of two new bus services in Wellington Shire began in early February and will continue for 18 months. The government has responded to a council request for better peak hour services between Sale and the Latrobe Valley since a Council report showed that there were 3000 work trips between Sale and Traralgon each day. A service will depart Sale at 0800 arriving Traralgon Station at 0845 and Traralgon Plaza at 0850 connecting with the 0900 bus to Morwell and

Moe. The return trip departs Traralgon Plaza at 1730 and the railway station at 1735 (meeting the 1728 train arrival from Melbourne), arriving Sale at 1815.

A twice weekly town service on Tuesdays and Thursdays has also been introduced in Maffra. The route will include residential areas, shopping strip, hospital and medical precinct.

A new bus service (in addition to the regular suburban services) from Morwell Railway Station to Monash University Gippsland and Churchill shopping centre will operate during the academic year. The bus departs Morwell at 0850, connecting off the 0849 train arrival from Melbourne. The bus returns from Churchill at 0915. The afternoon trip departs Churchill shops at 1645, Monash Uni at 1650 and arrives Morwell Station at 1710 to connect into the 1713 train to Melbourne. Oddly, the printable bus timetable does not show Monash University in the outbound direction.

Maryborough: A trial town bus service is to be introduced in March. Operating hours will be 0900 to 1500 weekdays and 0900 to 1200 Saturdays. Adult fares are \$2 (concession \$1) for a two hour ticket. The Department of Transport has approved the trial until 30 June 2010.

West Australia – Perth

Transperth: From Sunday 15 March, Routes 206, 207, 850 and 851 will undergo changes at Murdoch University to improve access to the campus and prepare for the development of a transit link upon the completion of the Fiona Stanley Hospital.

West Australia – Regional

Geraldton buses will be the first in regional WA to introduce the SmartRider electronic ticketing system, after its launch on Perth public transport services in 2007. The new system will operate in parallel with the MultiRider coupon system until the end of March. SmartRider cards have a one-off purchase fee of \$10, or \$5 for concession holders.

Thanks to Australian Transport Discussion Board, Tony Bailey, Barry Blair, Ian Cooper, Norbert Genci, *Geraldton Guardian*, *Gippsland Times*, Craig Halsall, Victor Isaacs, *Latrobe Valley Express*, Matthew McCann, Michael Marshall, Bradley Matthews, Peter Parker, Ministry for Public Transport, Len Regan, Lourie Smit, *Sunshine Coast Daily*, *Wagga Daily Advertiser*, Roger Wheaton and Robert Wilson.

FERRY NEWS

Manly Fast Ferries

Operation of the Manly Fast Ferry by the new operator, Bass and Flinders Cruises, commenced on Monday 9 February. Initially it provides eight services in each of the AM and PM peaks, Monday to Friday. The morning runs depart Manly Wharf from 0615 until 0925. The afternoon runs depart from Circular Quay from 1615 until 1925, plus in each case, opposite runs. A timetable is at <http://manlyfastferry.com>. Hard copy timetables were handed out at Manly Wharf on the first day.

Thanks to Tony Bailey and Geoff Lambert for Ferry news.