

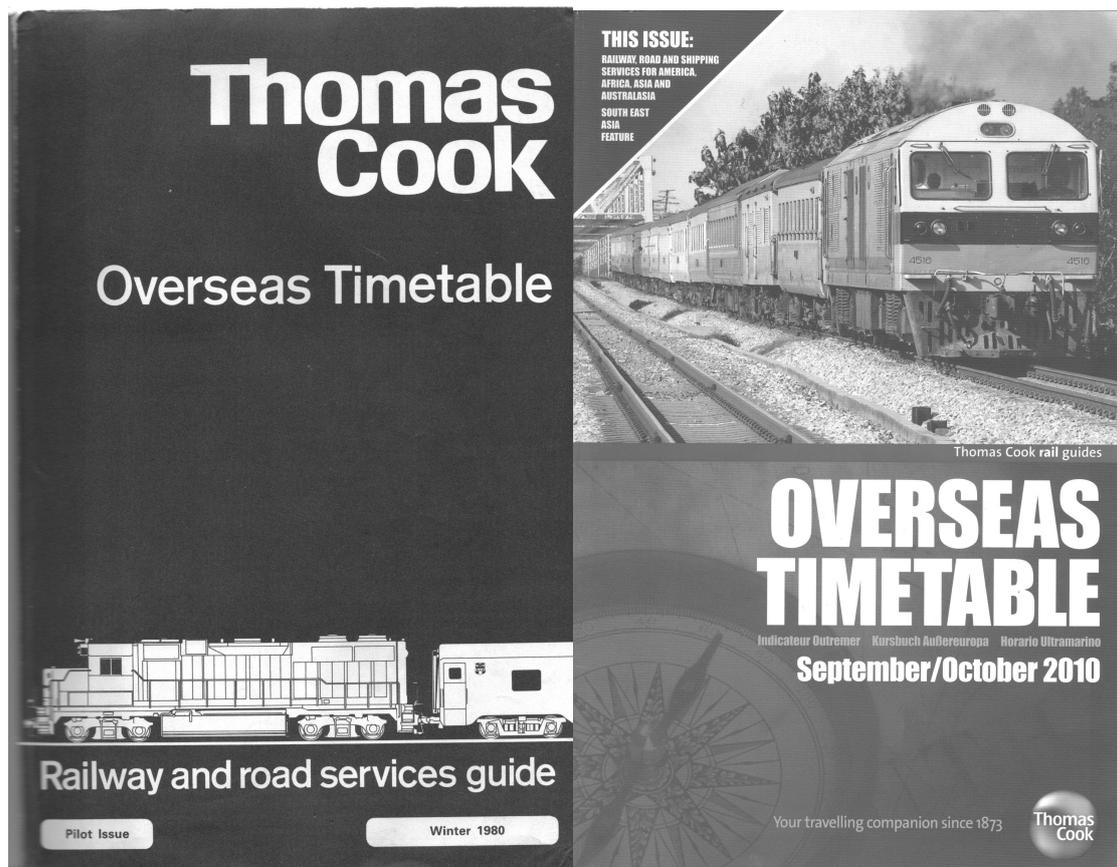
TABLE TALK

AUSTRALIAN TIMETABLE NEWS

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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@inet.net.au Please note the altered email address.

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Membership of the AATTC includes monthly copies of the *Times*, *Table Talk*, the Distribution List of timetables, and the twice-yearly Auction catalogue. The membership fee is \$55 (Adult) and \$33 (Junior) pa. Membership enquiries should be directed to the Membership Officer, P O Box 1253, North Lakes Qld 4509, (07) 3260 5329.

EDITORIAL

The end of the *Thomas Cook Overseas Timetable*

The cessation of the *Thomas Cook Overseas Timetable* (see the following news item) leaves an enormous gap in the provision of timetable information – both for travellers and for enthusiasts. For thirty years (and six years before as a small part of its parent timetable), it has been highly valued. Huge numbers of travellers would not travel without it in their luggage. Perhaps even more have made wonderful imaginary trips from their armchairs as they perused its pages.

The Timetable was not perfect. Its attempt to provide surface transport information for the whole world, outside of Europe, meant this was impossible. Indeed, the task of collecting information from a myriad of operators was enormous. This was made much harder by the non-coöperation of many operators (including in Australia) who could not see the value of publicising their services. Hence, the Timetable has always relied on contributions from travellers and enthusiasts. Many AATTC members have been among these. In turn, the Thomas Cook Timetable Publishing Office has always been a good friend and supporter of the AATTC.

Can the loss of the *Thomas Cook Overseas Timetable* be filled? No! True, the internet now provides us with much information. But, especially in those parts of the world that the *Overseas Timetable* covered, internet information is very variable in quality and often non-existent. There was also the great advantage of having the information collected together and presented in a manageable and uniform manner.

The Australian Association of Timetable Collectors sincerely regrets the passing of this wonderful publication. The AATTC thanks the staff of the Thomas Cook Overseas Timetable for their great work over many years. It is highly appreciated! The AATTC offers its best wishes for whatever the future holds for the staff.

TOP TABLE TALK

Thomas Cook Overseas Timetable ceases publication

The famed and valued *Thomas Cook Overseas Timetable* ceased publication with the edition of November/December 2010. *Cook's Continental Timetable* has been published since March 1873. (It is now called the *Thomas Cook European Rail Timetable*.) In 1973, Amtrak, the new long-distance American train operator, recognising the significant circulation of the Timetable among travellers, placed its services in it, by a multi-page advertisement. In 1976 Canadian National Railways did likewise. This was so successful that from 1977 the Timetable was expanded to cover railway services worldwide. This necessitated 80 extra pages and a change of name to *Thomas Cook international Timetable*. However, there was a desire to enlarge it further, especially by the inclusion of other surface transport where rail services did not exist. Hence, the publication was split into two volumes. From January 1981, the *Thomas Cook Overseas Timetable* appeared. It was 416 pages, the same size as the final issue. It is believed that the Timetable was never profitable. An earlier attempt at a world railway timetable by the French Chaix company only lasted a short time in the late 1940s.

The *Thomas Cook Overseas Timetable* has filled an enormous gap in the provision of world travel information. Its coverage ranged from countries, such as Japan, China and India, where rail transport is large and important, to other places where rail transport is meagre or non-existent. Especially in the latter, the rail gaps were filled by bus and boat routes. The Timetable had deficiencies: some gaps and out-of date information. This has certainly not been due to lack of diligence by its compilers. They have always been plagued by a lack of co-operation from many transport operators who did not understand the importance of publishing information. Hence, the Timetable has always relied somewhat on contributions from travellers and enthusiasts, including many AATTC members.

To partially compensate for the closure, the *Thomas Cook European Rail Timetable* will be expanded from spring/summer 2011 by the inclusion of all of Turkey, Russia and Ukraine.

The way to Mildura

On 13 October the Victorian Department of Transport released its **Mildura Rail Feasibility Report** into possible reinstatement of passenger rail services to Mildura in NW Victoria. It investigated nine options. Surprisingly, these included examination of possible new railways.

1. An overnight passenger train similar to the former *Vineland*.
2. A daytime passenger train with a journey time of around 9.5 hours.
3. A fast passenger train with a journey time of around 4.5 hours following the Mildura rail corridor.
4. Additional train and connecting coach on the Swan Hill corridor.
5. A new passenger railway extension from Swan Hill, via Robinvale or Ouyen, to Mildura.
6. An extension of the planned Maryborough daily rail service to commence in St Arnaud in the morning and terminate in St Arnaud in the evening.
7. A combined train/coach service comprising train from Melbourne to St Arnaud and return, and a daily coach from Mildura to St Arnaud and return.
8. Additional long distance coach services in the Mildura rail corridor and other corridors, comprising two daily Ballarat – Mildura services, a Horsham – Mildura service to provide day-return travel to Mildura in the northern part of the rail corridor, and enhancements to the Sea Lake – Bendigo and Melbourne – Mildura overnight service.
9. Additional short distance bus services on various routes, particularly linking small towns to regional centres, including improved Donald – Bendigo, Donald – Horsham, Birchip, Swan Hill – Tooleybuc services and small scale initiatives.

Important factors that influenced the development of the rail service options were community feedback, strategic service planning, journey time, route choice, access to Melbourne, and major operational changes related to railway risk management. Road-based options were included in the study, notwithstanding the strong community perspectives on road-based public transport in the region, because of potential advantages they have in providing better social inclusion, frequency and travel time. The current road coach solution does not address the issues raised during community consultation and does not overcome the transport barriers faced in the Mallee region.

The introduction of higher quality coaches for the long-haul services in the corridor has been considered in the context of world class vehicles and improved boarding location infrastructure. It is assumed that coach stops will be upgraded in each coach option.

The feasibility study demonstrates that a rail-only solution to transport needs in the study area does not provide the best outcome. None of the rail options provides adequate access to regional centres important to the Mildura rail corridor communities, and none of the rail options meet the different needs of both the northern and southern parts of the corridor. Similarly, a response that does not address the community requirement to travel to Melbourne at a reasonable time will not adequately address the transport issues raised.

The following four packages were recommended for Government consideration:

A) Should Government decide to proceed with Mildura passenger rail on the Mildura Rail Corridor:

- Daytime passenger train, departing Melbourne at about 0930 and Mildura at approximately 0620 with a journey time of around 9.5 hours (Option 2).
- A coach service between Horsham and Mildura to provide local day-return access to Mildura for towns in the northern part of the rail corridor (part of Option 8).
- A range of short distance bus services, including improved Donald – Bendigo, Donald – Horsham, Birchip and Swan Hill –Tooleybuc services and small scale initiatives (Option 9).

- The total capital cost of this option is estimated to be approximately **\$505 million** and the recurrent cost is estimated at **\$25.3 million per year**.

B) Should Government decide to proceed with passenger rail to Mildura on an alternative corridor:

- Extension of passenger train from Swan Hill to Mildura via Ouyen (Option 5).
- A coach service between Horsham and Mildura to provide local day-return access to Mildura for towns in the northern part of the rail corridor (part of Option 8).
- A range of short distance bus services, including improved Donald – Bendigo, Donald – Horsham, Birchip and Swan Hill –Tooleybuc services and small scale initiatives (Option 9).

- The total capital cost of this option is estimated to be approximately **\$446 million** and the recurrent cost is estimated to be **\$20.46 million per year**.

C) Should Government decide not to proceed with Mildura passenger rail:

- A range of long-distance coach services, including two daily Mildura – Ballarat coaches to provide regular services through the corridor; a coach service between Horsham and Mildura to provide local day-return access to Mildura for towns in the northern part of the rail corridor; and additional services to fill schedule gaps in the overnight coach and Bendigo – Sea Lake services.
- A range of short distance bus services, including improved Donald – Bendigo, Donald – Horsham, Birchip and Swan Hill –Tooleybuc services and small scale initiatives (Option 9);

- The total capital cost of this option is estimated to be approximately **\$1.66 million** and the recurrent cost of this option is estimated to be **\$3.94 million per year**.

D) To provide an equitable service level as provided on other regional corridors the Government should consider:

- Providing an additional daily train and coach on the Swan Hill corridor, to provide an equitable service level on this route as provided on other regional corridors (Option 4);
- The recurrent cost of this option is estimated to be **\$5.4 million per year**.

The Report is subject to public comment until January 2011.

It is easy to predict that the State government will choose alternatives C and D.

The Report is available at www.transport.vic.gov.au Of particular interest to readers of *Table Talk* will be:

- Chapter 3, current passenger services in the region,
- Chapter 6 possible passenger service improvements, including indicative timetables,
- Chapter 7, Options Assessment,
- Appendix B, a collection of current rail and V/Line and non-V/Line bus services in NW Victoria drawn from both the V/Line Staff Reference Timetable and other timetables,
- Appendix C, a patronage analysis of present services in NW Victoria,
- Appendix F, illustrating high quality coaches, and
- Appendix I, showing the alignment of possible new passenger railways that were examined: Swan Hill-Miralie-Ouyen or Swan Hill-Miralie-Robinvale-Red Cliffs.

RAIL AND TRAM NEWS

Australian rail freight

The share of freight by revenue of operators on Australian public railways (ie, including coal, but not iron ore or sugar systems) is:

- QR National 52%
- Pacific National 35%
- SCT Logistics 5%
- Freightlink 3%
- Genesee & Wyoming 2%
- South Spur 2%
- Other 2%

Source: QR National share float offer prospectus,

Queensland Rail: Another Tilt Train to replace the Sunlander

The Queensland government will buy another Tilt Train and upgrade the existing two tilt trains to provide sleeping accommodation at a cost of \$189 million. They will be delivered progressively from April 2013. They will replace the loco-hauled Sunlander, which has been in service for 45 years. The Tilt Trains are expected to be in service for 50 years. The service will be at least five hours faster than the Sunlander. There will continue to be six return services weekly between Brisbane and Cairns. The trains will feature:

- Deluxe sleeper cars with ensembles,
- First class cars with lay flat seats, similar to aircraft beds,
- A restaurant car;
- TVs at all seats featuring in-seat entertainment on demand,
- First class café-style lounge, and
- Premium economy sitting cars and club lounges.

Queensland Rail: Kuranda services

Due to the decrease in demand when the Skyrail cableway is closed for programmed maintenance, the Kuranda Scenic Railway will reduce scheduled services on 23 May, 30 May and 30 August 2011. Departures at 0930 ex Cairns and 1400 ex Kuranda will not operate. The 0830 ex Cairns and 1530 ex Kuranda will operate.

ARTC: No Liverpool Range tunnel

ARTC CEO David Marchant says that the long held dream of a tunnel under the Liverpool Range (between Murrurundi and Willow Tree in NW NSW) is unlikely to proceed, as there is unlikely to be enough coal coming from Gunnedah to justify it. The preferred option will be to duplicate the existing track over the Range in stages. The second most likely option was a new track on a new alignment but without any tunnels. Duplication of the existing line in stages is costed at \$420 million, a new line without tunnels \$400 million, and a new crossing with tunnels at \$700 million to \$1 billion.

ARTC: Cootamundra – Broken Hill

A new crossing loop at Milvale, NSW, south of Parkes (towards Cootamundra), was completed in mid September and a new loop at Kiacatoo, west of Parkes (towards Broken Hill) on 9 October. The loops are 1,850 metres long. Two more loops are under construction on the NSW/SA portion of the east-west line, as well as extensions to four existing loops.

On 5 September Train Control for Train Order Working Broken Hill to Parkes and Bogan Gate to Tottenham, was relocated from the Network Control Centre North (at Broadmeadow) to the Network Control Centre South (at Junee).

ARTC: Seymour - Junee

The opening of the Victorian North East Standard Gauge West line (the converted former Broad Gauge line) on 20 September was to down (northbound) trains only, and only one train may be between Seymour and Wodonga at one time until signalling is completed.

On 15 August the Culcairn North Passing Lane in southern NSW was commissioned. This completes the program between Junee and Albury. The new Passing Lanes are:

Name	Distance from Sydney at north end	Length
Bomen	507.6 km	6.9 km
Uranquinty	534.9 km	7.0 km
Yerong Creek	560.5 km	7.2 km
Culcairn North	588.9 km	7.8 km
Gerogery	616.3 km	7.0 km

See *Railway Digest*, October issue, pages 22-25, for an article by David Campbell entitled "Background Briefing. Passing Lanes". This explains the difference between NSW British-derived route signalling and the more stringent Victorian American-derived speed-signalling concepts and helps to explain how resolving this difference is contributing to delays in implementing the Victorian NE SG project.

The mainline between Junee and Albury was extensively damaged by floods on 15 and 16 October, especially near The Rock. XPTs were cancelled on at least 16 October. No substitute bus services could be provided as roads were equally affected.

At 0710 on Saturday 23 October a Pacific National freight train derailed on the new Wodonga bypass bridge. 15 wagons derailed apparently due to a bogie defect. There was significant track damage. Two wagons fell off the bridge and it required engineering assessment before reopening. The West line re-opened for freight trains (at 10 km/ph) on 25 October. Countrylink XPTs were replaced by buses south of Albury for several more days.

ARTC: Yenda – Griffith safeworking

From 19 October control of the Yenda – Griffith line was changed from Electric Staff to Train Staff and Ticket.

ARTC: Melbourne Port connection

On 26 October a project to improve the connection between the Port of Melbourne and the interstate freight network was completed, duplicating the dual gauge track between Sims Street Junction and Melbourne Port, building 18 new turnouts, installing new signalling and completely reconstructing the Melbourne Operations Terminal. ARTC has also built a new line between North Dynon and the Port. Funding came from the Commonwealth (\$20 million) and Victorian (\$13.3 million) governments and ARTC (\$6.5 million).

ARTC: Melbourne – Adelaide

On 22 October, an extension of 800 metres to the Tintinara crossing loop was brought into use.

NSW Country Rail Infrastructure Authority

From 1 July, the NSW Rail Infrastructure Corporation was replaced by the Country Rail Infrastructure Authority (CRIA). This is responsible for the NSW regional rail network, comprising the Country Regional Network owned by CRIA and currently managed by the ARTC; and the Leased Network (NSW Interstate and Hunter Valley Networks), owned by CRIA and leased to and managed by ARTC. CRIA's website, www.countryrail.nsw.gov.au contains useful information about the status and infrastructure of the network.

RailCorp NSW documentation

RailCorp NSW operational staff are no longer automatically issued with hard copies of timetable amendments or other operational notices. They receive each day a list of relevant items. They have access to printers and are able to print out new relevant notices.

CityRail: 10 October 2010

As well as the already publicised significant changes on the Eastern Suburbs/Illawarra/South Coast line (see July *Table Talk*, page 5), an interesting little change from 10 October was the withdrawal of the early morning through train from Central to Olympic Park on weekends and the late evening return. These were basically just placement runs, but their withdrawal means that there is now no regular through train from Sydney to Olympic Park on weekends. The shuttle service from Lidcombe remains unchanged at ten minute frequencies, and special through trains do operate for major events at Olympic Park.

An alteration not included in the printed Public timetable booklet is that the 0515 Weekdays Central to Newcastle now departs at 0511 and terminates at Wyong. A connection to Newcastle is available by changing at Gosford to the 0628 from there. The 0145 Central to Newcastle now operates on Friday and Saturday nights only. On other nights, it now terminates at Gosford, and a connection is available from there at 0318. These alterations are in preparation for the introduction of more Oscar trains in late 2010.

Countrylink: Elvis lives!

The annual train to the Parkes, NSW Elvis Festival (which is sponsored by Countrylink) will depart Sydney at 0923 on Friday 7 January 2011, arriving Parkes at 1614. The return departs Parkes at 0830 on Monday 10 January arriving Sydney at 1552. Bookings opened at 1000 on 28 October and the train was sold out by noon that day.

V/Line: 10 October 2010

Significant changes in the V/Line timetables which came into effect from 10 October are:

- More Geelong line trains stop at North Shore,
- Some down Warrnambool trains are altered: The former 0747 weekday Southern Cross-Warrnambool leaves earlier at 0735 and arrives at 1054 (was 1105); the former 1320 now leaves at 1300 and arrives at 1609 (was 1633), the former 1836 now leaves at 1828 and arrives at 2203 (was 2156); the former 1840 Saturday now leaves at 1900 and arrives at 2219 (was 2156), ie, it is now the same as the Sunday evening down train.
- Some up Warrnambool line trains are also altered. The former weekday 1140 now leaves at 1122 and arrives SX at 1443 (was 1503); the 1708 now leaves at 1714 and arrives at 2039 (was 2028); the Saturday/Sunday 1705 now leaves at 1725 and arrives at 2048 (was 2028 Sat/2030 Sun.)
- The former 0751 weekday Southern Cross-Bairnsdale now leaves earlier at 0715 and arrives at 1106 (was 1130).
- Connecting buses at Warrnambool and Bairnsdale are adjusted accordingly.

V/Line Working Timetables of 10 October 2010 are now available on their website. Look under "Network Access", then "Information Pack." Also available there are V/Line Freight WTTs of 6 June, some in beautiful colour.

Regional Rail Link project

The Regional Rail Link project, for independent V/Line access through western Melbourne, will include elimination of both busy level crossings in Anderson Road, Sunshine (one for the Bendigo line and one for the Ballarat line), and partial rebuilding of Sunshine and Footscray stations.

V/Line: Caroline Springs station

Construction of Caroline Springs station, between Deer Park and Rockbank, commenced in late October.

Passenger train services to return to Stawell

Passenger train services will return to Stawell in western Victoria in 2011 and an entire carriage of the Overland will be available at V/Line fares on its three services a week. Hitherto 12 seats were provided on each Overland service at V/Line fares and this will increase to 64 under the new arrangement. The Victorian government will spend \$710,000 upgrading Stawell station. Work will begin this year with the platform repaved, new lighting and passenger seating.

Newport stabling sidings

Nine new train stabling roads will be built at the Newport rail yards delivering, the government says, greater capacity and reliability of services on the Werribee and Williamstown lines. This will allow for a total of 15 trains to be stored at Newport with six stabling tracks already constructed. The second stage of the project includes a direct link to the Werribee line.

Metro Trains Melbourne plans

From the Herald Sun 6 October 2010:

Metro plans to run a two-tiered train system in Melbourne to cope with booming patronage expected this decade. Busy inner city services could lose seats to make way for more passengers. But Metro chief executive Andrew Lezala said commuters travelling longer distances deserved more seats....He said the network would eventually run two types of service. "Over the next 10 years, we will certainly be running two types of service," he said. "(There will be) a suburban service running relatively long distances over 25 minutes, where we need a lot of seats. "Increasingly, in the centre, we're going to be running high-density services, and there may be a case for less seats in the future." Mr Lezala said Hong Kong-style longitudinal seating, where there is one row of seats along either side of the carriage, could be introduced if growth in passenger numbers warranted it. Under this model, express services that bypassed many inner city stations would run to the outer suburbs. Metro would also run short services that stopped at all stations in areas closer to the city. Mr Lezala said service frequency would increase. "I would be aiming for five-minute frequency in peaks on all major corridors, and 10 minutes in off-peak," he said.

Tourism and Transport Forum spokesman Euan Robertson said the public transport patronage growth in Melbourne was faster than in any other Australian city. "Commuters need to be open-minded about innovative solutions such as restricting seating on congested services to manage this demand explosion," he said.

Metro met its punctuality target for September, after gradual improvement in on-time performance since May.

Mr Lezala said he was now in discussions with the State Government to recover \$4 million in payments it is owed. The Government froze the money after Metro's persistent failure to reach targets.

From an address by Mr Lezala to the Melbourne Press Club:

The timetable is the basis of our operation and performance. Over the last ten years, more than 2,000 extra services per week have been squeezed into the timetable with no supporting changes to the structure of the timetable. At the same time, on-time performance has been in decline. Timetable changes must aim to simplify the running of the railway and introduce an almost metronomic regularity and rhythm to the service. This is achieved through:

- Reduced stopping patterns, e.g. some lines have seven patterns
- By establishing a clock-face timetable

- Working with other modes of transport to achieve similar frequencies.

The new timetable [of 10 October] incorporates a genuine clock face timetable on the Frankston Line during the day and of an evening, increasing certainty for customers.

Adopting an every minute counts approach. This is like being a Formula 1 pit crew – everyone has their role and need to do your role well, quickly and safely. We've implemented a number of initiatives to make every minute count; Dwell time improvement with dispatch paddles; St John ambulance personnel at stations in the morning; Provision of "Hot" standby trains; Extreme conditions preparations for major events and weather alerts; Signalling technicians; Buses.

The purpose of getting the basics right. We are aiming to improve the customer experience. As we were developing our bid, we asked customers what they wanted from their train operator and the result was very simple: Get me where I need to go on time, safely and comfortably.

Information and communication with customers is paramount. We're making more announcements at train stations. We have a range of web and mobile phone information services available through our Platform 1 service on the Metro website. And the media are a critical part of the communication process, particularly during times of disruption.

A look into the future. As we look towards the future, we expect many more people to use the railway. This growth will be closely linked to the continued economic development and growth of Melbourne. We see our role as facilitating this growth and it's a responsibility we accept and take very seriously. We will facilitate this growth: 38 new six carriage trains entering the network – a 20% increase; Continued transformation of the timetable with two changes per year. Establishment of 'turnbacks' at mid points on the line, eg Laverton, to create a two-tier network, duplication of single line sections of track and upgrade of signalling systems to allow more trains to run.

Metro Trains Melbourne: 10 October 2010

Not previously reported in our coverage of the timetable alterations of 10 October 2010, is that now alternate trains in the augmented Frankston line weekday service (the trains that proceed directly to Flinders St) continue as through services to Werribee (the alternate trains that come directly from Flinders St).

Yarra Trams: 24 October 2010

A new Yarra Trams timetable from 24 October 2010 will provide:

- 481 additional services per week
- 265 additional inner city services.
- More services through routed across the CBD at peak times.
- 20 additional weekend services on Route 19 providing an eight minute daytime frequency;
- An additional weekday service in each direction on Route 19 (North Coburg – Elizabeth Street) during the AM-peak;
- More frequent services on routes serving Docklands, Coburg, Maribyrnong and Brunswick, designed to ease crowding on Elizabeth St services and increase frequencies to/from West Maribyrnong, Airport West, North Coburg and West Coburg
- Re-instatement of route 31, a Collins Street shuttle service, to provide 44 textra services on weekdays in the lunchtime peak, every five minutes between 1100 and 1430. This is designed to assist with increased demand at the Collins St West end of the CBD into Victoria Harbour and along the length of Collins St.
- 215 additional weekly services would be added on Route 82 between Footscray and Moonee Ponds. These will increase the frequency during school peak periods and late at night with trams running until midnight during the week and until 0100 on Friday and Saturday nights.
- Two extra weekday services in each direction on Route 55 (West Coburg – Domain Interchange) during the AM-peak,
- Two additional weekday services on Route 55 during the PM-peak,
- Five additional weekday services on Route 57 (West Maribyrnong – City Elizabeth Street) in the morning and evening peaks, and
- An additional weekday service on Route 59 (Airport West – City Elizabeth St) during the AM-peak.

New timetable brochures for routes 19, 55, 57, 59 and 82 were issued from 24 October.

Melbourne Tramways Band

Established in 1888 for employees of Melbourne's cable tram network, the Melbourne Tramways Band this year celebrates its 71st annual season at Wattle Park (on Route 70), supported by Yarra Trams. Wattle Park was established and managed by the Hawthorn Tramways Trust and further developed by the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board as a 'tramway park' to encourage tram patronage. Management was transferred to Parks Victoria in 1991. The Tramways Band has performed at the park since the 1930s. In the 2010/11 summer season, the Band will perform at 1430 on Sundays 10 October, 7 November, 12 December, 13 February, 20 March and 17 April.

Ambitious plans for Auckland

The Mayor-elect of the newly created Greater Auckland Council, Len Brown, has very ambitious plans for the development of the Auckland suburban rail network. This is in addition to work recently completed or now underway:

- Duplication of the Western line (completed),
- Resignalling (completed),
- Re-opening of the Penrose-Onehunga branch (completed),
- Rebuilding of key stations (completed), and
- Electrification (underway).

Mr Brown's program now advocates:

- A Central City tunnel, 3.5 km, from Britomart (the existing terminus) via new stations at Albert St, Karangahape Road and Newton to Mt Eden (estimated cost \$NZ1–1.5 billion),
- Rail lines to the Airport from both Onehunga (an extension of the recently reopened branch), approx. 7 km, and from Puhinui on the South Main Trunk line, 6.5 km, to create a loop (estimated cost \$NZ471 million to 1.45 billion), and
- A railway to the rapidly expanding North Shore. This would comprise a tunnel under Auckland Harbour to Esmonde Road, 4.2 km, then a 9.5 km surface line to Albany (estimated cost \$NZ1.6 to 1.8 billion).

However the Prime Minister, John Key, says there will be no funding for these new items from the central government, and ratepayers would have to pay. Finance Minister, Bill English, called the plans "airy fairy".

Christchurch tram extension

Perversely, the earthquake has benefited the Christchurch tram line. Advantage was taken of work done in the wake of the quake to start planned tram extension work early. Tram tracks were laid across the Manchester St/Lichfield St intersection from late October.

Toll Royal Railways of Cambodia

The Australian company, Toll, has received a concession to rehabilitate and operate Cambodian Railways. Their website is www.tollroyalrailway.com/?page=front&lg=en Its first freight train ran in mid October on the 118-km line between Phnom Penh and Touk Meas in Kampot province. This is regarded as a step towards re-opening to the port at Sihanoukville next May and with Thailand by 2014. The final aim is a railway between Phnom Penh and Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam something both governments say they will do, providing a continuous railway from Singapore to Scotland.

Thanks to Agnes Boskovitz, Scott Ferris, Victor Isaacs, Geoff Mann, James Ng, Len Regan, Roger Wheaton, Brendan Whyte, *Herald Sun*, *Newcastle Herald*, *New Zealand Herald*, *Railway Digest*, www.aucklandtrains.co.nz and www.vicsig.net for Railway news.

BUS NEWS

ACT - Canberra

The new Belconnen Town Centre Bus Stations will open on 13 November. Associated changes to bus routes and timetable will commence on Monday 15 November. There are two new bus stations. The first is Westfield Station, on the corner of Lathlain St and Cohen St Extension - a most significant development in urban transit infrastructure in Canberra, as it is the first time such a facility has been incorporated into a large shopping centre. The Centre owners, Westfield, have provided a heated bus lounge as part of their extended shopping centre, a bus information booth and security services to the bus station for the full period of bus operation. The second station, Belconnen Community Station, comprises six bus stops located on a new bus-only roadway on the site of the old Belconnen Interchange. These stops will service, in the main, the Belconnen Library, Health Centre, Community Centre, Senior Citizens Club, Labor Club and offices nearby, plus an increasing number of home unit tower blocks.

The only remnant of the old Belconnen Bus Interchange to be incorporated into the new "super" stop are steps providing access to Chandler Street which now connect with footpaths on either side of the new bus-only road.

In another first for Canberra, signals have been installed at a pedestrian crossing in the centre of the bus station adjacent to a new footpath linking the bus station and all the community facilities to the north of the bus station. The Westfield Bus Station will operate on a different basis to the other "super" stops in Belconnen and the Interchanges at City, Woden and Tuggeranong. Westfield has only two bays – northbound and southbound. With 23 southbound routes on weekdays and nine southbound routes on weekends, there may be some confusion for elderly passengers as to the precise boarding location at Bay 1. Thirteen northbound bus routes are scheduled to use Bay 2 on weekdays and six routes at weekends. Real time information is planned to be available at the Westfield Bus Station lounge by 2013 as part of the introduction of the new ticketing system which incorporates GPS.

In contrast to the Westfield situation, the bus bay allocation at the six-bay Belconnen Community Bus Station is the same as the allocation at the old six-bay Lathlain Street "super" stop.

Local buses terminating in Belconnen will, after leaving the Cohen St busway, travel along Emu Bank to their last Town Centre stop outside the Lake Ginninderra College. Intertown buses and those vehicles travelling to South Belconnen, Gungahlin and North Canberra, will turn off Emu Bank and service a new stop on Eastern Valley Way between Emu Bank and Cameron Avenue. Belconnen bound buses will service a new stop on the western side of Eastern Valley Way near Emu Bank.

A new Belconnen timetable has been introduced featuring an extension of Route 44 to service the new suburb of West Macgregor. Alterations have also been made to routes in Gungahlin with the addition of a new Route 57 to Harrison. Timetables for Routes 16 and 17 ex Kippax have been amended to provide a better spread of times on the journey to Belconnen Town Centre.

The Department of Territory and Municipal Services will install bike parking facilities for up to 24 bikes at the car park adjacent to the new Belconnen Community Bus Station and on Flemington Road adjacent to the Redex bus stop in the new suburb of Harrison.

New South Wales – Sydney

Changes to **Sydney Buses** timetables from 10 October are:

- Route 225 has increased services on Sundays, every 30 mins all day, operation extended to 2100.
- Routes 466 and 526: Additional trips added to cater for ferry connections on Saturday afternoons (and Sunday afternoons for the 526) matching the higher afternoon frequency on the Parramatta River timetable.

Minor alterations to some trips on:

- 418 - Tempe to Burwood
- 458, 459 - Macquarie University to Burwood
- 536 - Gladesville to Chatswood
- 533, 534 - Sydney Olympic Park and Ryde to Chatswood
- It is not known if new timetables will be issued for routes 418, 458/459, 536 and 533/534.
- And also on 10 October new Metrobus M54 – Parramatta to Macquarie Park via Epping introduced
- Metrobus M54 will connect Parramatta, Carlingford, Epping, Macquarie University and Macquarie Park.
- The M54 is a significant upgrade on the current Route 548, more than doubling the number of bus services each week from 385 to 840.
- Route 548 replaced by the new Metrobus M54.

New Sydney Buses timetables from 10 October in paper form:

- 227-230, 243-249 Mosman to City & Milsons Point, v. 2
- 236, 238 Balmoral Local Spit Jn & Taronga Zoo, v. 2
- 462-464, 466 Ashfield to Cabarita & Mortlake, v. 3
- 476, 477 Miranda & Dolls Point to Rockdale, v. 3
- 478, 479 - Ramsgate and Kyeemagh to Rockdale
- 441, 442 - Birchgrove and Balmain to City/Art Gallery
- 444, 445 - Campsie to Balmain East
- 225 - Neutral Bay Wharf to Cremorne Wharf
- 265, 269 - McMahons Point to Lane Cove and Kirribilli
- 462, 463, 464, 466 - Ashfield to Cabarita and Mortlake
- 513 - Carlingford to Meadowbank Wharf
- 525, 526 - Sydney Olympic Park & Parramatta to Burwood
- 236, 238 - Balmoral Local
- 227-230, 243-249 - Mosman to City and Milsons Point
- 505, 538 - Woolwich to Gladesville and City.

Sydney - Private

Veolia services adjusted to take account of CityRail's new timetable from 11 October:

- Routes 967, 968, 969, 973-974, 975-976, 987, 992, 993 and 996
- Minor amendments to routes 947, 948, 958, 961, 962, 963, 965, 971 although these routes are not being reprinted.

The new timetables for routes 975/976 and 969 only contain weekend changes and hence are dated 16/10/2010, the first Saturday on which the new Saturday services will operate.

Caringbah Bus Service routes 977 and 978 are adjusted from 11 October to take account of CityRail's new timetable, including:

- Some AM peak services slightly earlier
- Some PM peak services slightly earlier
- Off-peak 978 services 4 minutes earlier
- All Saturday services 10 - 15 minutes earlier
- All Sunday services 15 - 20 minutes later.

Busabout: New timetables for all region 2 routes from 10 October in conjunction with the new train timetables.

Shorelink. New timetables from 11 October to cater for the new train timetables: Route 594 timetable is now standalone and no longer contains Forest route 194 and now also includes route 594H on the cover. There is a new Shorelink route 592 timetable dated 11 October.

Busways Campbelltown has issued a brochure setting out changes to services from 10 October. It is believed no timetables have been reprinted.

Hawkesbury Valley revised timetables from 18 October 2010. There will be no changes to bus routes, only minor changes to some running and departure times.

New South Wales - Regional

Newcastle Bus: A brochure setting out changes to Nightowl Services called Hassle Free Nights in Newcastle from 3 September has been sighted on the Newcastle Buses website but has so far not been seen in paper form.

Reissued from 17 October in conjunction with the opening of the new Charlestown Square:

- Route 100, 106, 107 & 111 - Mount Hutton, Charlestown & Jesmond to Newcastle
- Route 104 - Jesmond to Newcastle East
- Route 118 & Ferry - Stockton to Newcastle
- Route 222, 224 & 225 - Wallsend & Jesmond to Newcastle East
- Route 226, 230, 231 & 235 - Glendale & Wallsend to Newcastle
- Route 310, 313, 318 & 320 - Belmont & Warners Bay to Charlestown & Newcastle

- Route 317 & 322 - Belmont & Newcastle
- Route 334 & 339 - Glendale to Charlestown & Newcastle
- Route 349, 350 & 352 - Swansea to Newcastle
- Route 363 - Warners Bay to Newcastle

The Central Coast region review will be implemented on 8 November 2010 for both Busways and Red Bus Service.

For **Red Bus Service** there are three new timetable booklets on the website in PDF format:-

- Route 29 Bay Village – Wyong Hospital.
- Wyong – The Entrance.
- Gosford – The Entrance including a service between Gosford and Wyong.

Greens Northern Coaches have revised their route 15 Helensburgh - Stanwell Tops timetable effective 10 October to maintain connections following the introduction of the new rail timetable.

South Australia – Adelaide

Diversion of W90, W91 services: Further to last month's report, the *Eastern Courier* states that the Leah St bridge, built in 1935, causing the diversion will not now be replaced until next winter to enable a complete overhaul to take place. No temporary timetables showing the revised route appear to have been issued nor is any information available at the Curie St information office timetable racks of the diversion or the peak hour service operated by the Unley City Council as advertised at various closed bus stops.

Victoria – Melbourne

Changes to Manningham bus routes from 4 October 2010:

- Route 280/282, the Manningham Mover, will now operate a Sunday service.
- Route 293 is rerouted to run via Elgar Road in both directions.
- Route 306 no longer operates. Instead, Route 303 now operates to North Ringwood instead of Mitcham.
- Route 313 will run a shortened route between the city and Doncaster Park and Ride.
- Routes 316 no longer operates
- Route 364 runs a shortened route between Ringwood Station and Warrandyte Bridge.

Inner Melbourne Bus boost:

There are five new routes and improvements to a further two routes in inner Melbourne following a review of routes as part of a \$2 million State government investment. Collingwood, North Richmond and Melbourne have been served by four new SmartBus services as part of the Doncaster Area Rapid Transit program since October. The new high-frequency routes will run seven days a week, every 7-10 minutes during peak times, every 15 minutes between 0630 and 2100 on weekdays and every 30 minutes at other times. At peak times there is a bus along Hoddle St roughly every minute. They provide connections to Melbourne Central shopping centre and trains, RMIT's city campus, St Vincent's Hospital, the Freemasons Medical Centre and Dallas Brooks Hall.

Existing bus routes 561 and 606 have been boosted in Reservoir, Coburg, St Kilda, Elsternwick and Elwood. Route 561, which ran from Macleod to Reservoir via La Trobe University was extended to the Coburg Activity Centre. Route 561 runs to the previous frequency and operates until 2200 on weekdays and 1715 on Saturdays. The extension of route 606 will link Port Melbourne to Elsternwick.

Routes 235, 237 and 238 altered to operate via Collins St, instead of Queensbridge St. This will provide convenient access from Southern Cross Station from stops near Spencer St.

Victoria – Geelong & Bellarine

1057 new weekly services were added to the Geelong and Bellarine local bus network as part of an \$80 million package to improve frequency of services and serve the growing Geelong region from Monday, 25 October. The improvements will provide better connections for residents in the Geelong suburbs of Highton, Buckley Falls, Herne Hill, North Shore, Norlane, and Grovedale. Services were improved in Torquay, Ocean Grove, Barwon Heads, Point Lonsdale, Queenscliff, Drysdale, Clifton Springs, Portarlington and St Leonards. The stage 2 improvements include:

- A new central bus interchange - in Moorabool St, Geelong;
- Two new routes - route 11 to better service Norlane, Corio and North Shore, and route 34 to connect Highton North to the city via Newtown;
- More frequent off-peak services on route 19 to Grovedale and Deakin University;
- Much improved services in Lara connecting two new housing estates and providing PM weekday services to Ocean Grove, Torquay and Barwon Heads filling the gap between 2pm and 4pm;
- Better connections to trains at Lara Station;
- Making Bellarine routes simple to understand by removing many variations presently in the system;
- New commuter morning express services from Torquay, Ocean Grove and Barwon Heads to Geelong;
- Introducing cross-Peninsula services between St Leonards, Portarlington, Drysdale, Ocean Grove and Queenscliff; and
- A new weekday park and ride service from Jan Juc and Torquay to Marshall station.

The new services are:

Geelong Eastern suburbs (Geelong Transit – Benders Busways/McHarrys Buslines)

45 St Albans Park to Corio via Geelong

55 Geelong to Newcomb

61 Geelong to Breakwater via St Albans Park

62 Geelong to St Albans Park via Whittington

77 Geelong to Leopold

Geelong North Western suburbs (Geelong Transit – Benders Busways/McHarrys Buslines)

10 Geelong to Rosewall via Melbourne Rd

11 Geelong to Corio via North Shore

12 Geelong to Lara via Corio

30 Geelong to Corio via Thompson Rd

45 St Albans Park to Corio via Geelong & Anakie Rd

50 Geelong to Herne Hill/Hamlyn Heights via McCurdy Rd

51 Geelong to Herne Hill/Hamlyn Heights via Minerva Rd

Geelong South Western suburbs and Torquay/Jan Juc (Geelong Transit/Bellarine Transit – Benders Busways/McHarrys Buslines)

14 Geelong to Deakin University via Waurin Ponds

15 Geelong to Waurin Ponds via Belmont

16 Geelong to Deakin University via Highton

17 Geelong to Waurin Ponds via Belmont East

18 Geelong to Deakin University

19 Geelong to Deakin University via Marshall Station & Heyers Rd

20 Geelong to Deakin University via Marshall Station & Pioneer Rd

34 Geelong to Buckley Falls via Newtown

35 Geelong to Newtown via Pakington St

36 Geelong to Newtown via Aberdeen St

72 Jan Juc to Marshall Station via Torquay

73 Torquay to Wombah Park

74 Geelong to Jan Juc via Torquay (includes V/Line coach services)

Bellarine Peninsula (Geelong Transit/Bellarine Transit – Benders Busways/McHarrys Buslines)

75 Geelong to Queenscliff via Bellarine Hwy

76 Geelong to Queenscliff via Ocean Grove

77 Geelong to Leopold via Bellarine Hwy

78 Drysdale to Clifton Springs

79 Geelong to St Leonards via Drysdale

80 Geelong to Ocean Grove via Marshall Station via Barwon Heads

81 Drysdale to Ocean Grove

82 Ocean Grove to Queenscliff

83 Geelong to Ocean Grove via Wallington

Victoria - Murrindindi

A trial bus service will operate from Hazeldene and Flowerdale to Kinglake West. The service will operate on Tuesdays and Wednesdays until Wednesday 29 June 2011. The service was initiated in response to the Flowerdale-Hazeldene community and supported by the Murrindindi Shire Transport Connection Project and Department of Transport. It is operated by Dysons.

A trial bus service is operating from Yea to Yarra Glen via Glenburn, Castella and Toolangi, and Yea to Healesville via Glenburn, Castella and Toolangi. It operates on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays until Friday 31 December 2010. The idea was initiated by community recovery committees in Glenburn, Castella and Toolangi and supported by Murrindindi Shire Transport Connection Project and Department of Transport. The Thursday return trip will commence in Yea then travel via townships of Glenburn, Castella, Toolangi and Yarra Glen before returning to Yea in the afternoon. The Friday and Saturday return trip will start in Yea then travel to Glenburn, Castella, Toolangi and Healesville before returning to Yea in the afternoon. It is operated by Seymour Coaches.

Victoria - Lancefield and Romsey

Weekly bus services in the Macedon Ranges have been almost doubled. Romsey and Lancefield have had 102 services (an additional 47 per week) since 11 October. The improvements are:

- Re-routing Monday services from the Lancefield/Gisborne route to Lancefield/Sunbury in response to travel patterns, showing Sunbury is the preferred destination that day;
- Introducing an 0815 and 1030 Lancefield to Sunbury six-day-a-week service, which extends and replaces the current Wednesday and Friday 0925 service;
- Connecting all peak bus services with trains at Sunbury or Clarkefield instead of Riddells Creek;
- Four additional later PM train-to-bus connections at Sunbury and Clarkefield for commuters travelling to Romsey and Lancefield;
- Introducing a Macedon Ranges East-West link, with two return trips from Monday to Saturday between Lancefield and Kyneton; and
- Introducing a 35-minute roaming bus service around Lancefield and Romsey on Thursdays and Fridays to connect to the 090 bus from Lancefield to Kyneton, and returning passengers home after its 1400 arrival at Lancefield.

Western Australia

TransPerth: Route 529 commenced on Monday 18 October, providing direct access between Armadale and Cockburn Central stations, and extending to Gateways Shopping City outside peak periods. As part of the introduction of Route 529, Route 254 was withdrawn and Route 244 operates additional services. Route 529 will operate on a three month trial. Its continuation will depend on consistent and well-supported patronage.

Greyhound is using a new route between Lancelin and Cervantes on the Perth and Geraldton route with the opening of Indian Ocean Drive which is an alternative to the heavily congested Brand Highway and would reduce travel time

by up to 30 minutes. This new road means, for the first time, an uninterrupted sealed coastal route exists from Perth to Dongara and the coastal communities further north up to Cliff Head. Greyhound operates between Perth and Broome three days a week. The altered route provides the option of stopping at Joondalup, Jurien Bay, Dongara, Lancelin, Leeman and Geraldton.

Thanks to Tony Bailey, Ian Cooper, Adrian Dessanti, Victor Isaacs, David Whiteford and Bob Wilson for Bus news.

AIR NEWS

International

Japan Airlines ceased operations to Brisbane from 30 September as part of a network contraction.

Just seven months after adding the new route to its network, **Philippine Airlines** has suspend flights to Brisbane and cut the number of flights to Melbourne from 31 October. Flights to Sydney remain at five per week, and PAL will also operate a number of Brisbane services over the December peak period.

Jetstar expects to begin services from Darwin to Manila in the first quarter of 2010, subject to regulatory approval, and increase flights from Darwin to Bali from daily to 11 per week from 16 December.

Skywest has confirmed plans to fly to Bali and Singapore from WA. More domestic routes are also being considered, including Pilbara to the East Coast of Australia.

Brisbane-based **Strategic Airlines** has been granted capacity to operate six flights per week to Thailand. The capacity must be used by 31 December 2011.

More seats between Australia and **China** will be made available for the expected spike in demand between November and February. Weekly flights will increase from 37 to 59. There will be a new non-stop service between Brisbane and Guangzhou. All three Chinese airlines which fly to Australia - Air China, China Southern and China Eastern - will increase the frequency of services, and subject to final regulatory approval, a fourth airline, Hainan Airlines, will introduce a non-stop service between Sydney and Shenzhen.

Indonesian carrier **Batavia Air** has pushed back the launch of Perth flights until at least 10 December, as it awaits regulatory approval from Indonesian authorities and the Civil Aviation Safety Authority in Australia.

Malaysia Airlines will have three weekly non-stop flights from Perth to Kota Kinabalu from 15 January 2011, in addition to their current 10 non-stop flights from Perth to Kuala Lumpur. Flights will depart Perth at 0040 on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday and arrive in Kota Kinabalu at 0615. From Kota Kinabalu, flights will depart at 1800 every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday arriving in Perth at 2335.

Domestic

QantasLink expanded its schedule to Queensland mining towns from 18 October:

- from 27 to 30 weekly return Brisbane-Emerald flight;
- from 15 to 18 weekly return Brisbane-Roma flight,
- from 11 to 12 weekly return Brisbane-Moranbah flights.

Qantas is to commence direct Melbourne-Darwin services from May 2011. The schedule will comprise three return Melbourne-Darwin services operating on Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday, with a fourth service on Mondays during the Territory's peak season, July-October.

Jetstar will add three weekly flights between Adelaide and Darwin from 10 December, taking services to daily, with Darwin-Melbourne and Darwin-Sydney frequencies rising from 10 to 11 per week from March. Jetstar will begin a three times weekly service from Melbourne to Ballina Byron from 21 December.

Thanks to Tony Bailey, Mike Kavanagh and the *Australian* for Air news.

FERRY NEWS

Sydney Ferries: 10 October 2010

There are four brochures setting out changes to the ferry timetables dated 10 October 2010. Each folds to 12 sheet - 24 page DL:

- Woolwich/Greenwich shows Parramatta River on the cover but only contains the full Woolwich/Balmain timetable.
- Balmain Peninsula also shows the Parramatta River on the cover but only contains the full timetables for Woolwich/Balmain and Darling Harbour/Balmain East.
- McMahons Point/Milsons Point contains the timetables for three routes mentioned in the previous two folders. This is on lesser quality paper.
- Lower North Shore contains the full timetables for Darling Harbour/Balmain East, Mosman, Neutral Bay and Taronga Zoo timetables.

Thanks to Lourie Smit for Ferry news.