



TABLE TALK

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RAIL AND TRAM NEWS

Queensland: Surat Basin railway

The Queensland Parliament has approved legislation for the development of a billion-dollar Surat Basin rail line. A private consortium is planning to build a line between Wandoan, north-west of Toowoomba and Banana, south-west of Gladstone. State Development Minister Jeff Seeney says the Bill will help advance the Southern Missing Link project. "The Government is committed to facilitating the Surat Basin Rail Project and ensuring the railway can be operated in a safe, efficient and effective way," he said.

Queensland: Kippa-ring railway

Preparatory works have started on the 12.6 km Moreton Bay railway from Petrie to Kippa-ring in the northern suburbs of Brisbane. Major construction will commence next year, with completion expected in 2016.

ARTC: Hunter Valley closedown

Australia's busiest rail network outside of Sydney and Melbourne was shut for four days from 20 to 24 November to commission new track, finalise major capacity upgrade works and carry out important maintenance. Approximately 130 individual jobs were completed. Some of these were:

- Final commissioning works for the Maitland to Minimbah third track project including commissioning of 13km of track from Farley to Greta,
- Final commissioning works for the Nundah Bank third track project (between Singleton and Camberwell), including commissioning of 4km of new track,
- Installation of a turnout at Drayton Junction.

There was also general track maintenance including:

- 100 km of track rail grinding
- 68 km of track resurfacing
- 2.8 km of track reconditioning
- 9.9 km of ballast cleaning
- 13.3 km of new rail installed.

ARTC now schedules four closures of this size each year.

NSW: Tamworth service

The Deputy Mayor of Liverpool Plains Shire Council is urging the NSW government to extend its CityRail evening passenger rail service from Scone to Tamworth. Cr Col Stewart says this comfortable transport option shouldn't be something only available to a select few.

NSW: Bathurst service

CityRail's new Bathurst-Sydney day return train, introduced on 21 October, is proving a great initial success. An average of 75 people are catching the train

each day. This exceeds the wildest expectations of its supporters. The figures were released by CityRail after the first month of operation. Most passengers come from Bathurst, with Lithgow and Katoomba the other major pick up stations.

NSW: Weekend closures to ease?

On 16 November the NSW Minister for Transport, Gladys Berejiklian, announced further reforms to the NSW rail bureaucracy, mainly the elimination of further jobs. She also foreshadowed the end of weekend closures for trackwork. "I don't like the fact that every single weekend, part of the network is shut down for trackwork", she said. In a couple of years trackwork might be able to take place at other times - in the middle of the night when there are no trains running, for example. (When all night suburban trains were withdrawn in Sydney about 25 years ago, the reason cited was to enable trackwork to take place.)

NSW: Should the trains run on time?

Following her comments in the preceding item, on 17 November the NSW Minister for Transport, Gladys Berejiklian, said that she wanted to end the obsession with trains' on-time running. Once the benchmark for how the government was performing in the delivery of rail services, Ms Berejiklian said she believes commuters want more than just a train turning up on time. She wants customer service, train cleanliness and quicker travel times to be made as much a priority as on-time running. "On-time running is one of many things," she said. "Customers want quicker travel times, a better experience and more timely information. We've dropped the ball on a lot of that. There's no point having on-time running if you are sitting on a train for two hours. People want their train to run on time, but not take twice as long to get where they are going."

NSW RailCorp: South line

CityRail trains beyond Moss Vale and Countrylink Sydney-Canberra trains were replaced by buses from Saturday 17 until Thursday 22 November while ARTC carried out trackwork between Moss Vale and Goulburn. Countrylink's Melbourne trains were subject to considerable disruption during this period – some foreshadowed on Countrylink's website, and some not, some pre-programmed and some apparently the result of failures.

NSW ARTC: North Star line

Effective 15 November ARTC placed the line from Camurra to North Star out of use "due to infrequent train services". ARTC SAFE notice 2-1787 refers.

NSW Country Regional Network: More Train Order working

On 20 November Train Order working replaced Train Staff working from Cobar to Elura and from Baal Bone Junction to Kandos. CRN SAFE Notice 0029-12 refers.

NSW/ACT: Canberra line future

An unconfirmed report is that there will be a very lengthy closedown of the line from Joppa Junction (near Goulburn) to Canberra next year. This will be to allow concrete re-sleepering of the line.

NSW Rail Corp: Working Timetables 26 December

New Freight Working Timetables, version 5.12, have been issued by NSW Rail Corp. Book 4, Weekdays comes into effect from 26 December and Book 5 Weekends, from 29 December.

Countrylink: Additional stops in Victoria

Commencing 25 November Countrylink's XPTs to/from Melbourne will make additional stops at Seymour and Broadmeadows. There are no changes to the overall running times. Public times in Victoria will be:

Melbourne	0830	1955
Broadmeadows	0853u	2018u
Seymour	0940u	2058u
Benalla	1036	2200
Wangaratta	1101	2226
Albury	1147	2315

Albury	0412	1519
Wangaratta	0500	1607
Benalla	0526	1633
Seymour	0612d	1722d
Broadmeadows	0700d	1805d
Melbourne	0735	1855

These Public times are slightly incompatible with the current Working times.

Future of V/Line

The Melbourne *Age* stated on 2 November that the Victorian government had approached Metro Trains Melbourne to gauge whether it is interested in running V/Line. The newspaper said that sources close to the government and to Metro said the proposition was put to Metro in a discussion earlier this year, but that no agreement was reached. Both the government and Metro deny that the discussion took place. The Minister for Public Transport, Terry Mulder, said, "There are no plans to privatise V/Line." Metro chief executive Andrew Lezala agreed, but said the company would consider an offer if one were made. "If we were approached we would consider it, but we'd have to look at the numbers," he said. Rail, Tram and Bus Union divisional organiser Grant Wainwright accused the government of being "ideologically driven" in its approach to V/Line and said the union would resist any move to dilute its influence among the regional rail operator's staff.

V/Line's franchise agreement with Public Transport Victoria was due to expire on New Year's Day but has recently been extended until June 30. PTV spokesman Matt Phelan said the extension would be used "to undertake a thorough efficiency review of the V/Line business with a view to extending V/Line's franchise by a further three years under the existing governance arrangement".

V/Line Public Timetables

Individual line Public timetables for the V/Line timetable change of 18 November became available at Southern Cross only from 21 November. As at late November, regional timetable booklets were still not available.

Victoria: Major closedown for Regional Rail Link construction

Buses will replace trains on the Sunbury/Bendigo and Ballarat lines between Albion and Footscray, from 2000 on Friday 28 December to last service Sunday 30 December 2012 and from 2000 on Friday 4 January to last service on Sunday 13 January 2013. On the weekends of 5-6 January and 12-13 January 2013, trains on the Sydenham/Sunbury, Werribee/Williamstown, Craigieburn and Upfield lines will run direct to Flinders St via Southern Cross.

This closedown is to facilitate major construction works for the Regional Rail Link including new tracks, new signals and tunnel strengthening. Works to be undertaken include:

- bridge modifications in Footscray and West Melbourne;
- track installation and realignment in Footscray and West Melbourne;
- station upgrade works at Sunshine, West Footscray and Footscray;
- work to remove two level crossings at Anderson Road, Sunshine;
- tunnel strengthening works to support the Dudley St bridge;
- earthworks in Tottenham, Footscray and North Melbourne;
- replacement of track and ballast in Sunshine;
- rail signal replacements at South Kensington;
- service relocation in Sunshine; and
- site investigations.

The Minister for Public Transport, Terry Mulder, said the temporary rail line closures were planned during the holiday period to reduce future disruption for rail passengers and the community.

Victoria: North East Standard Gauge problems

On 6, 7, 8 and 9 November, V/Line's morning Down and evening Up Albury passenger trains were cancelled. No public explanations were forthcoming. Countrylink's XPTs ran dead to time on these days. The V/Line trains in November (when they have run) have been just as late as ever. One reason seems to be that V/Line imposes more conservative speed restrictions on its own trains than those imposed by ARTC and observed by Countrylink. Another reason is that there was only one N class standard gauge locomotive, N470, in service. N453 was undergoing an exam and N469 was defective for a few days. Buses replaced all trains between Albury and Melbourne on Saturday 17 November.

ARTC has published an information sheet addressing problems with the line. According to this, the bulk of remedial works to date have been performed on the **NSW** side of the network "targeting areas where temporary speed restrictions could be resolved quickly and deliver the most benefit for train services." The works so far have allowed the return of sections of the track to normal speeds and passenger and freight transit times have benefited as a result.

In **Victoria**, ARTC completed a section of ballast rehabilitation between Seymour and Benalla, during a

five-day track shutdown in July. ARTC's plan is now focused on other key sections of the track in the Victorian portion, particularly on the single line section of track from Melbourne to Somerton. A significant amount of works are planned during a Christmas/New Year closedown when all train services will be suspended for a week to facilitate the Victorian Regional Rail Link project in Melbourne. ARTC expects a gradual improvement every few months as new sections of track are repaired and temporary speed restrictions removed. Rail weld straightening, ballast sledding and track undercutting will then continue until at least mid-2013.

Victoria closed down

On Saturday 24 November a major disruption shut down most of the Victorian railway network. After workers on the Regional Rail Link accidentally cut a signalling cable near Southern Cross station, all Metro City Loop, Western and Northern trains and all V/Line trains could not run for about six hours. Buses were brought in, but there was considerable disruption. At one point, buses ferried passengers between Newport and Flinders St on the Werribee line, Essendon and Flinders St on the Craigieburn line, Sunshine and Flinders St on the Sunbury line and Coburg and Flinders St on the Upfield line.

A couple of days earlier, on 22 November, there was a new reason for the cancellation of trains. All trains between Melbourne and Warrnambool and v.v. were cancelled because a fire in Telstra's Warrnambool exchange caused a loss of telecommunications.

Victoria ARTC: Gheringhap-Maroon improvements

CTC (Centralised Train Control) has been introduced from Gheringhap to Wingeel, including a new crossing loop at Barwon Park. Extension of CTC from Wingeel to Berrybank will be commissioned on 11 December and from Berrybank to Maroon in 2013.

Horsham Freight Terminal

An impasse has developed at Horsham in Western Victoria. The Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal near Doon opened on 9 August. It was designed to replace the terminal at nearby Horsham. SCT operated trains there. However, the freight contract has since reverted to Qube. Qube does not have access to the new terminal. It has therefore sought to obtain access to the former terminal site within Horsham. However, the Horsham City Council is adamantly opposed and is refusing to grant it access.

Glen Waverley line development proposal

An ambitious plan to place a portion of the Glen Waverley line underground is being considered again by the Victorian government. "Project Double Fault", a private sector consortium, proposes to sink sections of the line into a tunnel and develop the highly valuable land above it. The project would remove the requirement for problematic level crossings on major arterial roads. It was unsuccessfully pitched to the previous Labor government, which questioned the fundamentals of the project and struggled with how to handle the unsolicited bid.

The consortium is seeking to reactivate interest in the project and has briefed several senior ministers in the Coalition government. A government spokesman said it "regularly engages with the private sector on new ideas for delivering and funding infrastructure." The project has been reshaped since it was first proposed to include

the possibility of linking the Glen Waverley line to the busy Dandenong line and create a station underneath the Chadstone shopping centre.

Unlike NSW, Victoria has no formal process for dealing with large unsolicited private sector proposals. There is some scepticism in the property industry about whether the value of the developments could fund the costly rail tunnels. The consortium's modelling reportedly suggests about \$600 million of government funding would be needed although that number would go down if the government agreed to higher density housing along the route.

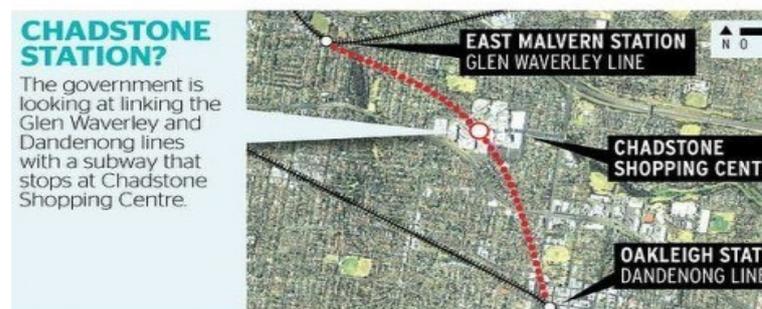


Diagram of possible connecting line. From the Age 10 Nov 2012.

Melbourne Airport access

Melbourne Airport CEO Chris Woodruff says better ground transport links are needed as it pushes ahead with its plans for a third runway. He says it is up to the Victorian government to pay for upgraded transport links to an expanded airport. Mr Woodruff says "Where is the commitment to the rail link? We've been doing a study, we've been doing another study, but where lies that commitment? Simple arithmetic suggests that the rail line has the capacity to transport about 15 per cent of our passengers."

The Premier Ted Baillieu says the Government is spending \$6 million on a feasibility study on a rail link and will await the airport's master plan due to be revealed in February next year. Mr Baillieu says it is not a simple exercise to drop a rail link into an airport. "It has to be part of a master plan," he said.

WA: Oakajee project deferred

The \$6 billion Oakajee port and rail development in WA's mid-north has been shelved, the latest big project to be put on hold as the resource cycle cools. Oakajee's Japanese owner Mitsubishi has cut the project's budget and staff. The decision is a blow to the state government, with Premier Colin Barnett touting it as the most important infrastructure project for the state. The decision to put Oakajee on hold was predicted as early as May, with the government reallocating \$339 million of its budget set aside for the project.

The project has been in doubt for some time and has faced lengthy delays largely due to trouble in the ranks of its joint-venture partners. But Oakajee Port and Rail chief executive John Langoulant insisted it would still go ahead despite the delay. "Mitsubishi's long-term confidence in both projects and the mid-west remains unchanged," Mr Langoulant said. "Almost \$700 million has been invested so far. The slowdown responds to current circumstances and the need for a prudent approach to expenditure. The economic environment will be monitored closely, with a view to ramping up once conditions improve and equity discussions progress to a satisfactory stage."

WA: Mid-West upgrade completed

Brookfield Rail has completed a \$550 million upgrade to improve links to the Port of Geraldton for iron ore miners operating in the region. Over 185kms of new track and deviations have been installed over the former narrow gauge (1067mm) grain branch line from Morawa to Mullewa and Geraldton. The project is said to be the largest on WA's rail network in the last 40 years.

Upgraded from 3 million tonnes per annum (mtpa), the railway now has the capacity to support 27.5 mtpa, and through staged incremental investment can grow to 75 mtpa. It is estimated that 13 million tonnes of iron ore will be moved over the MidWest network during 2013, much of it originating from Gindalbie Metals privately financed 85 km long branch line from its Karara mine that connects with the MidWest line at Tilley Siding.

Pilbara multi-use iron ore rails

A landmark bid to build the Pilbara's first genuine multi-user iron ore rail line involving QR National (now renamed Aurizon), Atlas Iron and Brockman Mining has slipped by up to six months. Aurizon CEO Lance Hockridge has confirmed the delay.

Fortescue has indicated it is unlikely to give up full control of the crucial infrastructure, but is open to equity investors to help reduce its debt pile if a deal does not affect its long-term operating costs.

Unveiled in April, the QRN study into a Pilbara rail network designed to break the iron grip of miners such as Fortescue, BHP Billiton and Rio Tinto, was expected to be completed by next month, with construction finished as early as 2015. However, rising costs, volatile iron ore prices, and uncertainty about the amount of ore the companies would be able to deliver on the line have hampered its progress.

Gina Rinehart's Hancock Prospecting made it clear that it is committed to going it alone in developing a railway from its Roy Hill mine.

Belgian Railways cuts services

Belgian National Railways (NMBS/SNCB) is to cut 193 services when the 2013 timetable year starts on 9 December as part of its financial recovery plan. SNCB claims all of the services under threat are used by fewer than 40 passengers and do not cover their energy costs. The measure is expected to save up to €15m by 2015. The cuts include the withdrawal of 23 cross-border

services, mainly between southwest Belgium and Lille, France, although services to Luxembourg are also affected. Most of these services run only at weekends.

However the bulk of the cuts affect domestic routes, with reductions in frequencies on some lines. In some cases trains will be replaced by buses. Nonetheless there is some positive news. SNCB will increase the number of direct train services between Antwerp and Brussels Airport, making use of the new high-speed line from Mechelen. Some stations will be reopened.

UK timetable control

The UK government is giving train operators more control over their schedules by allowing them to fit timetables around major events without getting permission. In the past Train Operating Companies needed the Transport Secretary's approval before adjusting times. But now, after a successful trial during the London Olympics, TOCs will be able to rearrange up to 30% of their timetabled services for special occasions.

Transport Minister Norman Baker said: "The Olympic Games were a massive success and proved our transport system was able to successfully carry record numbers of passengers. We helped train operators cope with the changing demand by giving them more flexibility to give passengers the services they needed. This has proved such an unqualified success that we have decided to permanently cut the red tape involved in adjusting small portions of the timetable. The changes give train companies the opportunity to ensure passengers are able to plan ahead to ensure they make it to their football matches and concerts and back home again on time."

The Transport Secretary will retain discretion over all timetable changes and the new measures will be reviewed within the next 12 months.

Thanks to Tony Bailey, Scott Ferris, Victor Isaacs, Geoff Lambert, Geoff Mann, Roger Wheaton, *Age* (Melbourne), *Daily Telegraph* (Sydney), *Financial Review*, *Herald Sun* (Melbourne) *International Railway Journal*, *Rail Express*, *Somersault* (Signalling Record Society of Victoria), *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Western Advocate* (Bathurst), ABC News Radio, www.vicsig.net.au and www.railpage.com.au for Railway news.

BUS NEWS

New South Wales - Sydney

Hillsbus – Routes 602, 607X, 610/X, 611, 612, 613X, 614X, 615X, 616X, 617X, 618, 628, 630, 700, 705, 711 & 715

From 22 October 2012 there were new timetables on these routes operated by Hillsbus:

- 611 Macquarie Park-Blacktown via M2 motorway
- 630 Macquarie Park-Blacktown via Baulkham Hills

From 12 November 2012 there were new timetables on these routes:

- 700 Parramatta-Blacktown via Great Western Highway
- 705 Parramatta-Toongabbie-Blacktown
- 711 Parramatta-Seven Hills-Blacktown
- 715 Seven Hills-Bella Vista

Many trips run earlier than in the previous timetable, in response to community feedback.

From 12 November 2012 new timetables were also introduced on these routes, which all run along the M2 Hills Motorway:

- 602 North Sydney-Rouse Hill via M2 motorway & T-way
- 607X Queen Victoria Building-Rouse Hill via M2 motorway & T-way
- 610/X QVB-Rouse Hill via Castle Hill
- 612 Milsons Point-Riley T-way
- 613X Railway Sq-Bella Vista via Lane Cove tunnel & M2 motorway
- 614X Railway Square-Crestwood via Lane Cove tunnel & M2 motorway
- 615X Railway Square-Kellyville via Lane Cove tunnel & M2 motorway
- 616X Railway Square-Kellyville Ridge via Lane Cove tunnel & M2 motorway
- 617X Railway Square- Rouse Hill via Lane Cove tunnel & M2 motorway
- 618 QVB-Norwest business park via M2 motorway
- 619 Macquarie Park-Castle Hill via M2 motorway
- 628 Macquarie Park-Norwest business park via M2 motorway

Following a community consultation process, all Route 613, 614, 615 & 616 trips which previously ran via Epping Road and Lane Cove Interchange, now operate as express services travelling via Lane Cove Tunnel. These services are now known as 613X-616X services (some trips already ran via Routes 613X-616X). Frequent transfer options are available to customers travelling via Lane Cove. At the same time the outer end of Route 616X has been curtailed from Rouse Hill to Kellyville Ridge.

Additional City bound services now operate at peak times on routes 610X & 617X, along with additional route 618 services to and from Norwest Business Park. More route 610X services have been extended to Samantha Riley Drive at North Kellyville.

Hillsbus has introduced new route 628 operating between Macquarie Park and Norwest Business Park during weekday peak periods.

As a result of all the above changes, an updated Hills District region guide is now available on the Hillsbus website, effective 12 November 2012.

Westbus - Route 673 Penrith-Llandilo-Windsor

A new timetable was issued for Route 673 from 8 October 2012, due to a route change in the Cranebrook area, resulting from the permanent closure of Nepean St to through traffic. This timetable includes Route 674.

Busabout – Route S9, Glenfield to Glenquarie

A new timetable started on 3 September 2012, with small timing changes.

Contract changes for four regions

During November, Minister for Transport, Gladys Berejiklian, announced the results of the first contracts to be negotiated under the competitive tendering regime for Sydney metropolitan bus regions. The new contracts become effective as from April 2013. Ms Berejiklian said that Transport for NSW will now focus on ensuring customers experience a smooth transition to the new operators, that will progressively take over operating in their respective regions from April next year.

The contracts are for five years, with a three year right of renewal subject to meeting performance standards. The new contract holders in each region and the contracted service improvements are:

Region 1 - Penrith, Mt Druitt, St Marys, Richmond and Windsor (approximate number of journeys: 8 million per year) awarded entirely to Busways. Currently the contract for the region is held jointly by Busways, Westbus and Hawkesbury Valley Bus Service. It has been reported that Busways intends to sub-contract Hawkesbury Valley's operations to that operator.

Service improvements in the region will include fine tuning of timetables to improve service times and ensure efficient connections, improved running times and reduced congestion at bus interchanges, introduction of new 24/7 control centres to monitor service delivery.

Region 3 - Liverpool, Fairfield and Holroyd (approximate number of journeys: 5.5 million per year), awarded to Transit Systems Australia. This company currently operates buses in Adelaide under the name of Torrens Transit and in Perth under the same of Swan Transit. Its principals include Neil Smith, who some years ago was proprietor of Peninsula Buslines on the NSW Central Coast.

Service improvements in the region will include fine tuning of timetables to improve service times and ensure efficient connections, improved running times and a program to improve average age of bus fleet.

Region 12 - Berowra, Hornsby, Gordon and Chatswood region (approximate number of journeys: 1.5 million per year), re-awarded to Veolia Transdev.

Service improvements in the region will include placement of contingency buses around the region during the AM peak to replace any late-running service, extension of some off-peak and weekend 565 services to improve access to Macquarie Park, introduction of additional late night 577 (Turramurra-North Turramurra) services for Turramurra Hospital (presumably meaning Lady Davidson Hospital, near the northern terminus of the route) and introduction of new 24/7 control centres to monitor service delivery.

Region 14 - Chatswood, Belrose, Terrey Hills and St Ives region (approximate number of journeys: 2.5 million per year) re-awarded to Forest Coach Lines.

Service improvements in the region will include a new service to North Sydney, increased services on Route 280 (Chatswood-Warringah Mall) and increased services on Route 197 (Mona Vale-Macquarie University).

Other regions: Four more metropolitan bus regions encompassing areas around Liverpool, Glenfield, Ingleburn, Bringelly, Hoxton Park, Blacktown, Rouse Hill, Castle Hill, Dural, Parramatta, Lakemba, Mortdale, Punchbowl, Roselands, Campbelltown, Narellan and Camden will have bus contracts opened for competitive tender next year.

Transport Minister Ms Berejiklian said that, given the positive outcomes for customers which have come out of the first wave of competitive bus contract tenders, she is confident customers of these other regions will enjoy similar service improvements.

New South Wales - Rural and Regional

Red Bus Service – Central Coast

From 12 December 2012 there are to be minor timetable changes on some routes, with buses departing either earlier or later, providing customers with improved connections to train services. Two additional peak trips on route 29 have been provided between Bay Village and Wyong Hospital. The additional trips offer a faster service to schools in the Lake Haven and Toukley area and improved links to The Entrance High School.

Additional trips on route 40 will extend to Wyoming Medical Centre and Wyoming Shops for improved access to services with an additional evening trip departing Gosford at 7.55 pm.

Forster Coaches – Wingham Coaches

New timetables were introduced for Wingham Town Bus services from 12 November 2012. Features include:

- The previous circuitous Town route has been replaced by two separate and more direct routes, Route 301 for Wingham North side and Route 302 for Wingham South side.
- There was an increase in the number of bus services from 2 per day to 6 per day on school days to Wingham North side and 5 per day on school days to Wingham South side, with 3 services per day to both areas on school holidays.
- Some services are now operated by a low-floor wheelchair accessible bus.
- Some trips are timed to connect with Eggins Coaches to and from Taree.
- A limited number of Route 301 trips extend to Wingham Public School, The Cedars Dr and Marchfield Rd.
- The timetable also includes times on Route 318 to and from Elands, Bobin and Marlee.

Busways North Coast – Grafton region

The Busways website advises that, following a review of school services over the past four months, new school service timetables were to be introduced as from late November. Also noted is that new timetables are due for all routes as from 26 November. Presumably that date also applies to the new school timetables.

ComfortDelgro Cabcharge – Queanbeyan/Canberra/Yass area

A new combined timetable, under the name Capital Region Bus Guide, for all routes recently taken over by CDC from Deanes Buslines, has been issued dated October 2012. This includes those routes previously run by Transborder between Yass and Canberra. Routes affected are:

- 830 Queanbeyan- Canberra
- 831 Queanbeyan-Woden
- 832 East Canberra Services
- 833 Queanbeyan-Canberra (Express)
- 834 Queanbeyan-Airport (Loop)
- 835 Queanbeyan-Jerrabomberra (Loop)
- 836 Queanbeyan-Jerrabomberra Heights (loop)
- 838 North West Queanbeyan Loop Service
- 839 Queanbeyan-Barracks Flat-Karabar
- 840 Queanbeyan area demand response services

- 850 Queanbeyan-Bungendore
- 981-2 Yass-Canberra

The Airporter has been deleted.

Queensland – Brisbane

South East Queensland Bus Network Review

In July this year, the Minister for Transport and Main Roads announced a review of TransLink's South East Queensland bus network to improve service frequency, reliability and affordability.

The key objectives of the Network Review are:

- Eliminating service duplication
- Managing the infrastructure capacity (e.g. Cultural Centre busway station congestion)
- Getting more people on public transport by simplifying the network
- Getting better connectivity between services and modes
- Redirecting resources to routes where there is overcrowding
- Offering Demand Responsive Transport options where appropriate (such as taxis, flexibus services, para transit options etc).

Following passenger surveys, there were 4016 responses received, relating to approximately 80% of all routes operating in South East Queensland. Following review of the feedback, suggested options will soon be available for passengers to review and provide further input.

- The majority of responses were for high frequency routes operating in Brisbane including routes 333, 222, 444, 385, 150, 330, 88, 100, 66 and 111.
- Brisbane Transport routes received the highest number of responses (2902) however local operators Mt Gravatt Bus Services, Thompson Bus Services, Veolia Transport, Logan City Bus Services and Bribie Island Coaches also received a very high response rate, indicating a good spread of comments across the network.
- 19% of respondents had comments relating to the reliability of services.
- More than 15% of respondents said frequency was important to them and 13% had comments relating to the 'span of hours' of services, for example off-peak or weekend services. Other

comments were relating to overcrowding issues, transfer connectivity, route design, timetable design and passenger environment.

Travel Passes

SEEQ Adult 3 Day Pass provides three consecutive calendar days travel on any TransLink bus, train, or ferry service for customers aged 15 years of age and over. It includes up to 2 Airtrain trips. Use must be completed within 12 months of purchase date. Cost is \$79.00. A five day pass is also available for \$129.00

Gold Coast Services

TransLink is running extra late night buses on the Gold Coast during Schoolies Week celebrations. Additional buses will run on route 700 about every 15 minutes on the Gold Coast Highway between Surfers Paradise and Burleigh Heads from 1am to 4am, before reverting back to their normal 30-minute frequency after 4am. Surfside Buslines will deliver these additional services from Friday 16 November to Friday 23 November.

The southbound services will run from Surfers Paradise to Burleigh Heads (via the Gold Coast Highway), stopping at the Gold Coast Convention Centre, Bel Air on Broadbeach, Nobby Beach Shopping Centre and Christine Avenue.

The northbound buses will run from Palm Beach to Surfers Paradise (via Cavill Avenue), stopping at Burleigh Heads, Christine Avenue, Nobby Beach Shopping Centre, Bel Air on Broadbeach and the Gold Coast Convention Centre.

South Australia - Adelaide

Introduction of Smart Card

Adelaide Metro is now progressively releasing the full range of Metrocards that can be recharged with credit at

selected retail outlets, at InfoCentres, vending machines, and on trains and trams. An online recharge facility will be released in the New Year. The new smart card was formally introduced on Monday 5th November after a period of trial running.

The new Seniors Cards can be used as a smart card during the free travel periods or have a value added to enable them to be also used when a fare is charged. Machines have now appeared at the Railway Station, Rundle Mall and Victoria Square tram stops to enable card holders to increase the credit value on their cards using their credit/debit cards provided a PIN number is used. A complete list of agents and whether they sell cards or can recharge the value on cards is on the Adelaide metro website.

Adelaidemetro website

The Adelaidemetro website has been revised into a different format. Details of stop ID numbers for each stop including tram stops and railway stations are also shown. These can be used to obtain stop specific times for services.

Victoria - Melbourne

A new PTV Hub at Southern Cross Station opened on Monday, 26 November 2012. It is open from 7am to 7pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 6pm Weekends. Ticketing is handled and printed timetables and public transport brochures will be available. This facility appears to replace existing enquiry locations including Swanston St (Town Hall).

Thanks to Tony Bailey, Robert Henderson, Geoff Lambert, *Manly Daily*, Lourie Smit, Roger Wheaton, Robert Wilson for Bus News

FERRY NEWS

Cruise Whitsundays

On 29 June 2012 Cruise Whitsundays purchased Fantasea Adventure Cruising in the Whitsundays. This includes the two Reefworld pontoons on the reef, cruises to Reefworld and Whitehaven Beach, "Fantasea Charmer" vessel, all ferry transfers between the mainland and Hamilton Island and land holdings/marina at Port of Airlie. Cruise Whitsundays took over the

operations on 15 July 2012 and is now the only ferry service operator in the Whitsundays, now servicing Daydream Island, Long Island, Hamilton Island and Great Barrier Reef Airport from both Shute Harbour and Airlie Beach. This change does not affect Fantasea operations at Palm Beach or Townsville.

Thanks to Simon Aalbers for Ferry news.

AIR NEWS

Domestic

On 30 October Singapore Airlines has bought 10% of **Virgin Australia**. Simultaneously, Virgin Australia bought 60% of Singapore Airline's low cost subsidiary **Tiger Airways** and all of **Skywest**. This is sure to lead to significant implications for services and fares across the industry. The transactions are subject to regulatory approval.

Qantas re-introduced flights to the Gold Coast from 28 October. It has thrice daily services from Sydney. Qantas gave up services to this port in 2008 in favour of its low-cost subsidiary Jetstar.

Transport for NSW has issued regional regional air services licences from 30 March 2013 for five years for:

- Broken Hill-Sydney Regional Express
- Lord Howe Island-Sydney QantasLink
- Narrabri-Sydney Brindabella Airlines
- Narrandera-Sydney Regional Express
- Mudgee-Sydney Brindabella Airlines
- Cooma-Sydney Brindabella Airlines

- Cobar-Sydney Brindabella Airlines
- Moree-Sydney Brindabella Airlines (a new operator for this route)
- Grafton-Sydney Regional Express
- Taree-Sydney Regional Express
- Moruya-Sydney Regional Express
- Merimbula-Sydney Regional Express
- Bathurst-Sydney Regional Express
- Parkes-Sydney Regional Express

International

Emirates Airways expects to commence flights to Perth in mid-2013.

Fiji Airways, the re-branded former Air Pacific, hopes to return to the Australian market in 2013. This is a return to a recently vacated market and a return to the airline's original name.

Korean Airlines will withdraw its weekly Seoul-Melbourne service in March 2013,

Garuda Indonesia will start services next August six times a week from Brisbane to Jakarta and Denpasar (Bali).

In 2012 major international market shares from Australia were Qantas 18.1%, Singapore Airlines 9.1%, Emirates 8.2%, Air New Zealand also 8.2%, Jetstar 8.1%.

Thanks to Tony Bailey for Air news.

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

Simon Aalbers writes about premium trains:

I have just read the news item regarding the potential upgrade to CountryLink trains in the September 2012 issue of *Table Talk*. This item identifies the option of introducing new "premium" trains similar to the Tilt Trains in Queensland and suggests "the train is more attractive to full fare-paying passengers, which could lead to a potentially higher cost recovery". I believe there is a significant flaw in the logic behind this option. On a family holiday in 2010 we flew into Sydney before travelling to Northern Victoria to visit family. While we chose to travel by train to Albury, this decision was based on the fares for our two children and not the full-fare paying adults. A quick check on the internet this afternoon returned the following full-fare economy prices for travel between Sydney and Albury for 16 December 2012: CountryLink \$102.60; Virgin Australia \$105.

If the introduction of "premium" trains in NSW follows a similar fare structure to the Tilt Train in Queensland then airline fares could be around half the equivalent rail fare.

No additional creature comforts and/or entertainment extras could compensate for the additional fares and additional travel time when compared with the airlines. Indeed, during our time living in Proserpine I am not aware of any locals who chose to use the Tilt Train in preference to flying to Brisbane. My experience is those using the train remained tourists where the train travel was part of their holiday adventure (regardless of the amenity provided by the Tilt Train). Even my parents were budget conscious enough to travel by the Sunlander or by coach from Cairns to Proserpine rather than pay the extra for the Tilt Train despite the longer travel time (Note there are no flights from Cairns to Proserpine).

While "premium" trains would provide an improved level of service to customers, it is hard to see how they will increase cost recovery given their higher costs and continued competition from cheap airfares. Further, I believe any increase in fares for the "premium" trains has the potential to disadvantage existing customers that have no alternative transport options.

About Table Talk

Craig Halsall has now taken over as Bus Editor of Table Talk. Please send your contributions to him: craig.halsall@gmail.com, 27 Edithvale Road Edithvale, VIC 3196.

Sincere thanks to Geoff Mann for his contributions as Bus Editor since 2007.

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. ABN 74248483468.

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

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

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 \$60 (Adult) and \$36 (Junior) pa. Membership enquiries should be directed to the Membership Officer at dbmclean@powerup.com.au.

Table Talk Newswire is an advance monthly email of Rail news. To obtain this, ask the Rail Editor at abvi@iinet.net.au



Members' News
- *December 2012*
**Australian Association of Timetable
Collectors**
aattc.org.au

TABLE TALK

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AATTC DISTRIBUTION SERVICE

New arrangements for the Distribution Service were approved at the November Committee meeting. A new position of Distribution Manager has been created. He is responsible for collating the various compilations of Distribution List items, receiving and recording the orders, and allocating them to the various Distribution Officer for despatch. There are several Distribution Officers around the country who collect material for the Distribution List, compile the Distribution List for these items, and despatch the orders for these items. Hence, members will receive their orders from several different sources.

The Distribution List will look much the same as it has in the past, and the ordering and payment systems remain the same. Payment for orders by direct bank deposit and retention of a credit account is encouraged. The Treasurer will handle records of payments and the management of individual credit accounts.

The position of Distribution Manager is currently vacant, and anyone who may be interested in this should contact the President, Victor Isaacs, ***abvi@iinet.net.au***. For the time being, Treasurer Len Regan will act as Distribution Manager.

AATTC AUCTIONS

Dear members and friends of AATTC,

You would have read in Members' News November 2012 that we propose to change the procedure for holding the Ted Downs Memorial Auction. When I took over as auctioneer in early 2012, I found that the procedures involved were complex, time-consuming and costly. Perhaps more importantly, they were not meeting the needs of most members, given the participation rate in the bidding process. We therefore decided at the 2012 AGM to trial the use of monthly 'mini-auctions', with simpler procedures and better compatibility with the Distribution List, with which they will be bundled. Each mini-auction will consist of 20-30 lots. Each monthly auction will have a 'theme', which will be announced the previous month, so that prospective bidders can look forward to when their particular interest comes up. The theme for January 2013, consequent on the popularity of such items in the previous auction, will be 'Working Timetables'. Since it will be uneconomical to print a full list of Auction Procedures each month, these will be made available to new bidders via the Distribution List or by email from the auctioneer.

The bidding procedure will be as follows:

- Each catalogue entry will have 3 columns after it: **Column 1** will give a Reserve Price. This will now include postage cost to bring it into line with the Distribution List. There may be some scope for reducing the costs for multiple items if they can be packaged together.

Column 2 will be space for Your Bid. This bid will be accepted if there are no higher bids.

Column 3 will be headed Maximum Bid. You may wish to include in here the maximum you are prepared to bid for this item. If your initial bid was beaten, this bid will be considered. The highest Maximum Bid will be accepted and the item will be sold at that price.

- Successful bidders will be informed as soon as possible after bidding closes, as at present. Bidding will close STRICTLY on the 20th of each month to enable consideration to be given to the next month's catalogue. Payment will be accepted preferably by direct debit, but also by cheque or PayPal, to be arranged with the society Treasurer, Len Regan, or by deduction from your Distribution List credit account, provided funds are available. The auctioneer will no longer handle any money transactions.

- If there are equal top bids received by the closing date, the relevant bidders will be offered the option of raising their bid. That new bid will be recorded as their final offer.

The procedure for providing material for auctioning will be as follows:

- Material will be gratefully accepted by the auctioneer as at present. Unless an item is particularly rare, nothing from 2000+ will be accepted, although it will be accepted for the Distribution List (on a non-profit basis). Overseas material, and ancillary material (such as tickets and tourist brochures) will be assessed on a one-to-one basis depending on their rarity. Such material will be accepted by the Distribution List.

- Providers of material are asked to provide 2 things: 1. An itemized list of material on offer; and 2. A clear statement as to whether the items form a donation to the association or for sale on consignment. Both are equally acceptable, but the uncertainty has caused problems (and embarrassment) in the past.

- AATTC Commission for items on consignment is 25% of the winning bid price.

- Unsold material will be offered a maximum of TWICE in auctions. Then it will be made available to the National Timetable Collection (if required), the Distribution List or for branch 'grab tables'. Again this will be non-profit. A vendor of course can request the material back rather than going through these procedures.

- Payment for sold items will be made when all money has been received by the Treasurer and reconciled with the lists of accepted bids and material supplied. As in some cases the amount of money may be small per month, the Treasurer reserves the right to withhold payment until it is economical to engage in the payment process. All payments will be made as direct credit to an account nominated by you to the Treasurer, or to your Distribution List 'credit account'.

* Vendors will as now be provided a statement of items sold and prices achieved, and this list will still be made available through the Distribution List, but not on a monthly basis. Depending on the amount of material involved, this will be published every 6 months.

We hope that the above procedures are as acceptable to members as they are to the committee, in that they should limit wastage of time and money, while providing the service that members need. We will still accept new material (and new ideas for improvements!), and would particularly welcome new entrants in the bidding process. We hope that making the bidding process more focused and less daunting, that more interested people will participate. Over to you!

Geoff Hassall Auctioneer

Items for the AATTC Auction, for sale by commission on your behalf, or donated to the AATTC, should be discussed with our Auctioneer, Geoff Hassall by email at geoffrey.hassall@gmail.com or at 19 Yara Crescent, Maryland NSW 2287. It is best to contact the Auctioneer first, rather than send unsolicited material.

DIVISION MEETINGS

Adelaide: Inquiries to Adelaide Convenor, Roger Wheaton, at rogertw@adam.com.au or 08-8331 9043.

Brisbane: Meetings are usually held at 8 Coachwood St, Keperra. For more information phone 07 3354 2140 or bwebber5@bigpond.com. Please bring an interesting timetable.

Canberra: The Canberra Division meets at 1830 on the second Thursday of **every** month at the Ainslie Club, Wakefield Avenue, Ainslie. Good conversation and a meal are features. Enquiries to David Cranney, cranney@iinet.net.au 0421 174 951 or to Victor Isaacs, abvi@iinet.net.au 02-6257 1742. David Cranney has been elected the new Canberra Convenor.

Melbourne: Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of odd months from March to November. All meetings commence at 2000 at the home of David Hennell, 3/29 Croydon Road, Surrey Hills, which is a short walk from Chatham Railway Station on the Lilydale/Belgrave line. Stephen Ward will be stepping down as Melbourne Convenor early next year, as he will spend some time travelling. The next meeting will select a new Convenor.

Sydney: Sydney meetings are held at 1400 on the first Saturday of February, May, August and November at the church hall, Roseville Uniting Church, 2 Lord St, Roseville. This is a very short walk from Roseville Railway Station on the North Shore line. All members and non-members are welcome. Large grab tables for the exchange of timetables, and cake, are always features. Inquiries to the Sydney Convenor, Geoffrey Clifton, Geoffrey.Clifton@sydney.edu.au or GPO Box 1963, Sydney NSW 2001.

AATTC CONTACT DIRECTORY

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* indicates Committee member.

AATTC Members' News is compiled by Victor Isaacs, President. Contributions to abvi@iinet.net.au please. The deadline is the last weekend of each month.