



TABLE TALK

AUSTRALASIAN TIMETABLE NEWS

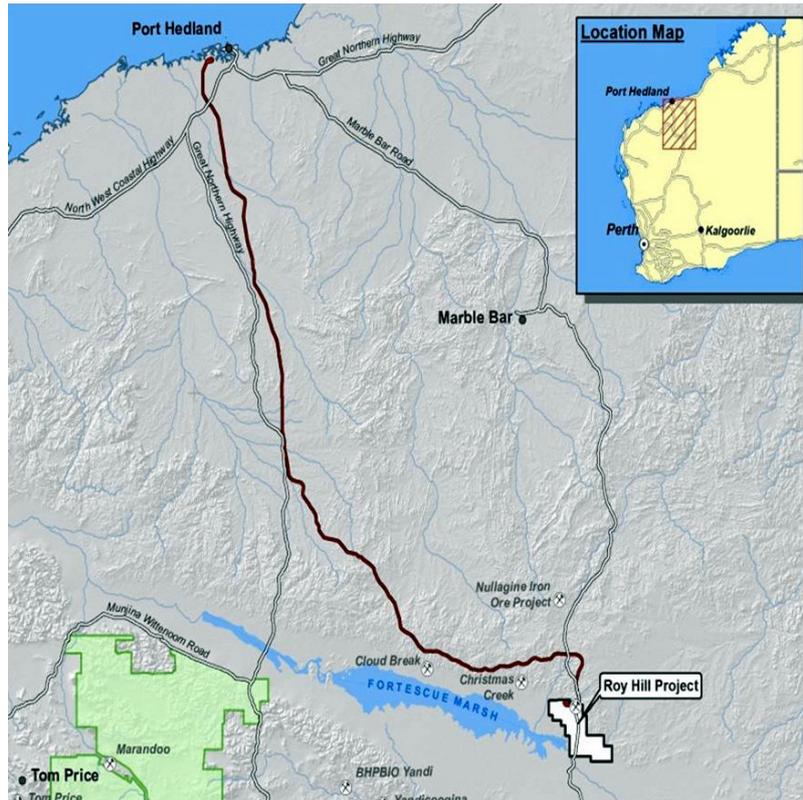
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TOP TABLE TALK – ROY HILL MINE AND RAILWAY



On 20 March a \$7.9 billion finance package was signed to finance the huge new Roy Hill iron ore mining project in NW WA.

A major part of the project is a 344 km single line, standard gauge, heavy haul railway to transport the processed iron ore from the Roy Hill mine to a dedicated port south of Port Hedland. The independently owned and operated Roy Hill railway will operate five ore trains per day, each consisting of three locomotives hauling 232 ore cars with a total payload of 31,450 tonnes of ore. Roy Hill will adopt current best practice in all aspects of heavy haul rail currently utilised in the Pilbara, including wheel/rail profiles, axle loads, locomotive power and ore car design. Due to the undulating nature of the terrain to the north of the mine, each train will be assisted by rear-located, manned banker locomotives for the first 30 km of the journey to Port Hedland. Four passing loops will be positioned to optimise cycle times of the trains. A marshalling yard will be located eight km from the port ore

car dumper. It has been specifically designed to facilitate the rapid refuelling of locomotives, inspection of empty trains prior to their return to the mine and heavy maintenance tasks. A state-of-the-art, high technology communications based, automatic train protection and in-cab, moving-block signalling system will be provided. The adoption of this full vehicle tracking communication-based technology will be the first of its kind in Australia.

Roy Hill is 70% owned by Mrs Gina Rinehart's Hancock Prospecting. A total of 2,500 people are currently employed on the construction of the mine. Production is expected to start in late 2015. Roy Hill aims to produce 55 million tonnes of iron ore per year, which will make it Australia's fourth-biggest iron ore producer. With reserves of more than 2.4 billion tonnes, it is set to become one of the largest mining projects in Australia. Mining operations will produce 55 million tonnes of iron ore per annum with an operating life of more than 20 years

RAIL AND TRAM NEWS

Sydney area Freight Working Timetable 5 April

A new Sydney area Freight Working Timetable (published by Transport for NSW and Sydney Trains) has been issued. Weekends (Book 5) is effective from 5 April, and Weekdays (Book 4) from 7 April.

NSW Country Regional Network West Working Timetable 15 March

A new Working Timetable for John Holland Rail NSW Country Regional Network Western lines has been issued, effective 15 March. It is, as usual, on their website, www.jhrcrn.com.au under "Network Operations and Access".

ARTC Working Timetable 6 April

A new ARTC Working Timetable has been issued effective from 6 April. It is, as usual, on their website www.artc.com.au under "Operations".

ARTC: Advanced Train Management System and Botany line upgrade

On 7 March the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development, Warren Truss, made available \$50 million to the Australian Rail Track Corporation for the next stage of the Advanced Train Management System. He said that national freight productivity will be boosted through the injection of \$125 million to start the rollout of the ATMS and the next stage of the Port Botany line upgrade.

Mr Truss said, "The Advanced Train Management System will lift innovation in the sector by replacing current high-cost, low-reliability track-side signalling with a state-of-the-art computer system that will underpin the national network's future operations. This will increase the capacity of existing networks by allowing trains to run closer together, as well as improving safety by allowing greater control over trains by network operators. This is smart funding for smart technology. We are supporting the development of information technology that unlocks more capacity within our existing infrastructure in the most cost effective way possible. Meanwhile, our \$75 million investment in getting Stage 3 of the Port Botany Upgrade will continue the upgrade of the Port Botany Rail Line on segments that have sub-standard track condition, such as poor ballast, replacing the last remaining timber sleepers with concrete, and replacing sections of worn or low weight rail with higher grade steel to increase load capacity."

ARTC may take over Queensland lines

On 25 February the Deputy Prime Minister Warren Truss and Queensland Transport Minister Scott Emerson agreed to investigate incorporating Queensland into the national rail network. The ARTC will commence an investigation in early March into expanding the ARTC's 8,500km national network. The review is split into two phases - an initial exploratory phase followed by a due diligence process. ARTC will report back to the Queensland and Federal governments by mid-year. A decision will be made by these governments following the completion of the due diligence process, should this go ahead.

QR TravelTrain: The breaking of the drought?

Due to extensive flooding and wash outs from Pentland to Torrens Creek on the Queensland Great Northern line, the westbound Inlander on Sunday 23 February 2014 was cancelled and replaced by a bus. Subsequent Inlanders were cancelled between Cloncurry and Mt Isa. Massive rain

and localised flooding around Alpha and Jericho cut the Central line on 20 February. Commencing westbound on 24 February and continuing until 6 March, Spirit of the Outback trains were replaced by buses between Rockhampton and Longreach. Freight services were also cancelled

QR CityTrain: Significant trackwork.

The lines from Roma St to Corinda, Murarie and Yeerongpilly were closed on the weekend of 15 and 16 March for various maintenance works and bridgework at Ipswich Road.

Brisbane BaT tunnel

The proposed Brisbane cross-river public transport tunnel has been designated as the BaT project, standing for Bus and Train.

Broadbeach Monorail not operating

It is believed that the monorail at Broadbeach from Jupiters Casino and Hotel to the Oasis Shopping Centre (1 km) has not operated since about October 2013.

ARTC: North Star line reopened

From 21 February the branchline from Camurra (near Moree) to North Star in NW NSW wheat country was reopened.

NSW Train Link: Minor timetable change

From 6 April the 555 XPT from Brisbane to Sydney departs Dungog at 1638, eleven minutes earlier than formerly. Apparently, the cross that took place at Dungog North now takes place south of Dungog.

Aurizon industrial dispute

About 200 Aurizon train drivers on the Hunter Valley coal network went on strike for three days from 25 February as part of a dispute over an expired industrial agreement. Aurizon then refused to allow the drivers to return to work and locked them out for a further two days. Aurizon said, "We cannot tolerate a rolling campaign of indefinite, unpredictable stoppages that are designed by the union to cause ongoing disruption to our business and our customers' business. That is not in anyone's interests." Aurizon has contracts to transport about 25% of the Hunter Valley coal tonnage. During this period coal miners made spot agreements with Pacific National to convey their coal.

Sydney double-deckers "a mistake" says Premier

In a press conference on 24 March, the New South Welsh Premier, Barry O'Farrell, said that the double-decker suburban trains should not have been introduced into Sydney. He said, "One of the decisions I think state governments got wrong decades ago was to move to double-decks, instead of matching what's happening in Paris, in London, where single-deck were retained. Single-deck ... can carry more people, travel more quickly, and disembark those people more quickly without people having to come down those difficult steps that exist on our double-decks and that delay people at railway stations. There are more commuters going into London than come into Sydney and they're catered in good comfort by single-deck trains".

The Sydney North West Rail Link will be built with a six-metre internal diameter – too small to fit Sydney's existing double-deck fleet. In time this will mean much of the rest of Sydney's train system will also need to change to single-decker trains. The government plans to extend the North West Rail Link past Chatswood station through the city in another harbour crossing, linking it to the Bankstown line and the Illawarra line to Hurstville.

Graham Currie, lecturer in Public Transport at Monash University commented that double-decker trains could carry 20% to 30% more people than single-decker trains. He said there were advantages and disadvantages with both types. "Double-deck trains are bigger. They carry more people. But they cost more to build," he said. It was also easier to run more single-deck trains. I don't think it is a clear-cut decision either way: I would not myself be so definitive to say one is better than the other."

The reason double-decker trains do not carry double the number of people as single-deckers is that passengers tend to bunch near the doors of the larger trains. Double-decker trains were introduced to Sydney in the mid-1960s. The silver double-decker S-Sets, which still run on Sydney's train system, were introduced in 1972. The last single-decker trains in Sydney were withdrawn in 1992. The most recent double-decker trains ordered by the NSW government were the Waratah trains, ordered in 2006.

Newcastle Light Rail

NSW government authority UrbanGrowth (sic) is conducting consultations on three possible routes for the Light Rail line to replace the existing Railway from Wickham to Newcastle. One is along the existing Rail line, one along Hunter St, and the third is a combination of these. Running along Hunter St would cost twice as much as using the existing railway corridor. Details are at

<http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/en-us/deliveringhomes/urbanrenewal/revitalisingnewcastle.aspx>

Sydney Light Rail

The extension to the Sydney tram line from Lilyfield to Dulwich Hill opened on Thursday 27 March. The extension is 5.6 km making the full length of the tramway 12.8 km. Intermediate stations are Leichhardt North, Hawthorne, Marion, Taverners Hill, Lewisham West, Waratah Mills, Arlington and Dulwich Grove. Trams operate every 10 minutes in the peaks, 0700-1000 and 1500-1800, and every 15 minutes in the off peak period. The complete journey will take about 40 minutes.

A map of the Sydney tram extension is on our back cover.

Canberra Light Rail

A consortium of nine engineering, infrastructure and design firms will provide technical advice to the ACT government for the Capital Metro light rail project. ACT Sustainable Development Minister Simon Corbell on 24 February announced engagement of an engineering consultancy group led by Arup Hassell and including Parsons Brinckerhoff, Brown Consulting, LANDdata Surveys, Philip Chun Access, SLR Consulting, GML Heritage and dsb Landscape Architects. The first stage of the Capital Metro project is planned to run from Civic along Northbourne Avenue and Flemington Road to Gungahlin. Construction is expected to begin in 2016.

Badgerys Creek Airport: Rail connections

Development of a second airport for Sydney at Badgerys Creek in the western suburbs is currently being pushed strongly by some political representatives and the *Daily Telegraph* newspaper. Rail connections being proposed are an extension to Badgerys Creek of the Leppington (South West Sydney) line due to open this year, then an extension of this to the Western line in the vicinity of St Marys. Also mooted is an extension of the North West railway, now in its planning stages, from the presently proposed terminus at Cudgeong Road to meet these lines in the vicinity of St Marys.

Elsewhere in Western Sydney, it is speculated that the NSW government will announce construction of Light Rail lines

from Parramatta to Castle Hill and Macquarie Park as a 2015 election promise.

NSW Inquiry into Regional Transport

The NSW Legislative Assembly State and Regional Development Committee's inquiry into inter-regional public transport was tabled in state Parliament on 19 March 2014. The full report can be accessed on the Committee's web site at

https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/Prod/Parlment/committee.nsf/0/5D81A2253954EF35CA257CA000181020?open&refnavid=CO3_1 together with transcripts of evidence and other documents associated with the inquiry. The government is required to respond to the Committee's recommendations within six months of the report being tabled.

Recommendations varied from very general to very specific. They include:

- that Transport for NSW enhances the existing inter-regional public transport network wherever practicable, with priority being given to those regions that do not currently have access to the network.
- that Transport for NSW re-route the NSW TrainLink Southern Coach services to incorporate stops at Jindabyne and Berridale.
- that NSW TrainLink develops a marketing strategy specifically targeting potential regional customers, and actively promoting the benefits of its rail and coach services compared to other forms of transport.
- that Transport for NSW conducts a state-wide review of how connectivity between its regional rail and coach services can be improved, with a specific focus on remedying anomalies such as the Orange-Bathurst Bullet connection.
- that Transport for NSW undertakes an audit of inter-regional public transport services to identify where express services can be introduced to facilitate faster travel times.
- that NSW TrainLink implements improvements to on-board services and amenities on its trains and coaches that can be achieved in the short-term and without significant cost and gives consideration to the Committee's findings with respect to on-board services in the acquisition of any new rolling stock utilised for inter-regional public transport.
- that Transport for NSW considers measures to broaden NSW TrainLink's coach network coverage, better integrate coach services with connecting train services and remove unnecessary barriers to using coach services.
- that Transport for NSW examines and reviews the cost of fares on the NSW TrainLink and the Sydney Trains networks, with a particular focus on the fare structure concerning the nexus of the NSW TrainLink and Sydney Trains networks.
- that Transport for NSW investigates the feasibility of carrying light freight on NSW TrainLink's services.

Cowra lines re-opening?

The NSW government is advertising for tenders to run and maintain 200 km of railways from Blayney to Cowra and Demondrille and from Koorawatha to Grenfell. It has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Shires of Blayney, Cowra, Harden and Weddin in the Central West of NSW to test commercial interest in these lines which connect the Western and Southern mainlines. However, the NSW government has emphasized that no public money will be available for this project. A study estimated that traffic on the lines may generate revenue of up to \$115 million per annum. It is believed that John Holland Rail and ATEC Rail Group may be interested.

NSW TrainLink: Travel via freight lines

On Sunday 6 April NSW TrainLink's Griffith to Sydney service will be routed via what is usually a freight only railway. It will depart Griffith at 0700 instead of the usual 0720 and then travel via Temora and Stockingbingal to Cootamundra, instead of the usual route via Narranderra and Junee. This is due to the replacement of an overbridge at Adams St Narranderra.

Victorian timetable data

Public Transport Victoria has released timetable and myki outlet data to DataVic in the form of an API - Application Programming Interface. This will enable developers to create apps and other digital products that can interface directly with, and draw from, PTV's timetable and myki outlet data. Releasing an API means that all developers can now use timetable data to create new apps or enhance existing ones. The timetable and myki outlet API can be accessed at data.vic.gov.au

An API is a standard file format that is recognised globally as being the best format for releasing timetable data as it changes frequently. It is designed so that the raw timetable data is accessed in a dynamic way, ensuring that the data accessed is always the most up to date PTV has. The API allows queries for locations for scheduled timetable, line and stop data for all metropolitan and regional train, tram and bus services in Victoria (including NightRider). It also includes access to myki ticket outlet data. The data will be updated weekly to take into account any planned timetable changes, for example, due to holidays or planned disruptions. The PTV timetable API is the same API currently used by PTV for its website and smart phone apps.

To Melbourne CBD; To Melbourne Airport

On 26 February, Victorian Premier, Denis Naphthine, emphasised that the Metro rail tunnel plan will begin this decade. He said, "Let me absolutely assure you, our government is committed to a rail capacity project, to enhance rail capacity through the centre of Melbourne, to boost rail capacity on the Dandenong line and the Gippsland line. We need it, it is essential. We are committed by the end of this decade to be building a rail capacity project and include in that a link to the airport. We will deliver that because it is absolutely essential, so don't let anybody have a misunderstanding about our commitment to that as a key project."

Moreover, it is believed the much-discussed Airport link plan will be included as part of the realigned Metro rail project. Transport Minister Terry Mulder confirmed the preferred route will run from the airport boundary via new tracks through a reserved land and freight corridor, before using the existing rail tracks via Albion to connect with the Metro tunnel. Mr Mulder has said it would allow people to use the planned Dandenong-Sunshine rail corridor to travel to the airport. His spokeswoman confirmed that the airport route, known as the Albion East option, remains the preferred alignment for the rail link, although the final alignment of the Metro project could result in its connection into the city changing.

Melbourne Airport spokeswoman Anna Gillett said the priority was for a rail link that "best serves the needs of Victorians and visitors", saying it was needed "sooner rather than later. By 2033 we expect more than 60 million passengers a year and we need all forms of ground transport - taxis, private vehicles, buses, Skybus, and a train - to work well for people to get to and from their flights."

Dandenong line upgrade

On 6 March the Victorian government announced a \$2-2.5 billion program to upgrade the Dandenong-Pakenham-Cranbourne group of lines. These have been suffering from severe peak hour overcrowding in recent years. The

government states that the improvement will increase capacity by 30%, and will enable two additional services to be scheduled in the peak hours. The program includes:

- Upgraded signaling;
- Rebuilt stations at Carnegie, Murrumbeena and Clayton;
- 25 new "next generation" trains;
- A new train maintenance depot at Pakenham East;
- Removal of level crossings at Murrumbeena Road, Koornang Road, Centre Road and Clayton Road;
- Planning for removal of level crossings at Corrigan, Heatherton and Chandler Roads in Noble Park and at Grange Road, Carnegie and Poath Road, Murrumbeena.

Melbourne Tram timetables

New timetables for routes 11, 24, 30 and 112 commenced on Monday 24 March. Route 24 trams now terminate in La Trobe St at Stop D1 Etihad Stadium. For safety reasons the following stops along La Trobe St were closed permanently from 24 March:

- Stop 2 King St towards Etihad Stadium.
- Stop 7 Russell St towards Etihad Stadium.

Melbourne fare zones revamp

Travel within Melbourne's CBD and Docklands will be free and commuters travelling from the outer suburbs will be charged the same amount as zone 1 passengers under changes announced by the Victorian government. The government says it will cap maximum daily fares at the zone 1 rate across Melbourne if it wins November's state election with all trams in the CBD becoming free from 1 January 2015. The Premier, Dr Naphthine, said the big winners would be bus and train passengers who commute from outer suburbs. The government estimates the scheme will cost \$100 million each year.

The last major change to Melbourne's public transport ticketing schedule came in 2007, when zone 3 was abolished.

A map of Melbourne's fare zones is on our back cover.

V/Line: Significant trackwork

On the Victorian Labour Day long weekend, from the evening of 7 March until the end of 10 March, buses replaced trains on the Ballarat line, to enable signaling works to be carried out as part of the major Regional Rail Link project. On the following weekend, 15-16 March, and again on 29-30 March, buses replaced trains on the Geelong / Warrnambool line. For Geelong-Warrnambool this will extend until 7 April. Seymour / Shepparton trains were replaced from Saturday 15 March until Wednesday 26 March.

We can expect significant substitutions in the period from 18 to 27 April when Easter and Anzac Day occur in close proximity, providing a window for civil engineering works.

V/Line: Respite from Morwell fire

From 1 March for the next couple of weeks, residents of Morwell were able to obtain free return travel on V/Line, to obtain respite from the noxious fumes of the ongoing adjacent Hazelwood open cut coal mine fire.

V/Line: Staff Reference Timetable 27 January

In addition to the complete re-issue of Public timetables dated 27 January 2014 (see February *Table Talk*, page 2), there was also a complete re-issue of the V/Line Staff Reference Timetable. This is, in effect, the complete system-wide Public timetable book that isn't. That is, it is a very useful compilation of all the Public timetables, plus additional information of use to the public and presented as if it was for

the public – but it is not issued to the public. (It used to be many years ago.) As well as having the complete set of V/Line train and bus timetables, it includes details of booking conditions, facilities available to the public, the most important train services in other states (albeit with the Sydney—Canberra service still not quite correct) and a useful list of non-V/Line rural bus services with timetables for most of them. A new private bus service appearing in this section which has not appeared before is Camperdown to Timboon.

Copies of this V/Line Staff Reference Timetable for 27 January 2014 are available from the Australian Timetable Association's April Distribution List.

V/Line: Bairnsdale line slowdown

From Sunday 6 April until further notice all Bairnsdale trains are slowed down beyond Rosedale due to long-term speed restrictions. Down trains arrive Bairnsdale five minutes later than scheduled, and up trains depart five minutes earlier.

Victorian freight services March-April alterations

From Monday 17 March the operation of **Qube Logistics'** container train to/from Deniliquin was altered. On Sundays it departs Dynon, Melbourne at 1800 and operates via Bendigo (2120-2125) to arrive Deniliquin at 0110. On Tuesdays and Thursdays it departs Westgate Port Siding, Melbourne at 1830 and also operates via Bendigo (2200-2205) to arrive Deniliquin at 0150. However on Mondays and Wednesdays it departs Westgate Port Siding at 1850 and operates via the recently re-opened line via Toolamba (2235-2240) and Echuca (0010-0015) to arrive Deniliquin at 0220. The return train operates on all days Mondays to Fridays via the re-opened line. It is scheduled to depart Deniliquin at 0605, Echuca 0800-0805, Toolamba 0935-0940, Seymour 1040-1055 and arrive Westgate Port Siding at 1325.

A new **Pacific National** grain train will operate on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from Tottenham Yard (0605) to Sunshine GrainCorp (0640) returning from Sunshine (1225) to Tottenham (1300).

When Warrcourt Loop on the Warrnambool line at 137.5 km between Birregurra and Colac is commissioned, possibly on 10 April, Pacific National's daily Monday to Friday freight train from Westvic Siding (just beyond Warrnambool) will depart 65 minutes earlier at 1835. Instead of crossing V/Line's evening down passenger train at Camperdown (2050-2130), it will do so at Warrcourt Loop (2038-2101) and arrive Appleton Dock, Melbourne 75 minutes earlier at 2335 instead of 0050. The down freight service will depart Appleton dock five minutes later at 2340 but arrive Westvic Siding at the same time as formerly. Consequential alterations will also be made to the Cement trains to/from Warrnambool. Warrcourt Loop will be controlled from Melbourne Control.

Adelaide Metro: Tonsley line to re-open

The Tonsley line will re-open in April, following major civil engineering work, mainly electrification and partial duplication. Upon its re-opening a new timetable will be introduced for the Seaford and Tonsley lines.

Adelaide Cup tram service

A ten minute tram service operated all day to Morphettville Racecourse for the Adelaide Cup on public holiday Monday 10 March. Travel was free.

WA Freight network inquiry

Western Australia's freight rail network will be the subject of an inquiry by the State Parliamentary Economics and Industry Standing Committee. The Committee will consider whether the current lease arrangements and management of

the network comprising of tier one, two and three lines, facilitate or hamper state development. Brookfield Rail currently holds a 50-year lease with the State government to operate the network. Lines are organised into tiers according to the volume of traffic they receive and the current state of repair, with tier three lines the least used and in the poorest condition.

Committee Chair Ian Blayney says the Committee received a number of private briefings and is hoping to hold public hearings through the course of the inquiry. He says the committee decided to look at the issue following problems with tier two lines during last year's wheat harvest. "It is something we have been keeping an eye on and certainly when people started asking questions about a tier two line, then sort of red lights went off," he said.

The state's main grain handler, the CBH Group, is heartened by the committee's decision to launch an inquiry. CBH is particularly interested in the future of the tier three rail lines which transport grain from country receival sites to port. CBH and Brookfield have been negotiating for months to find a workable solution for the future of tier three lines and the handler recently requested the Economic Regulation Authority (ERA) to assist with those negotiations. While general manager of operations at the CBH Group, David Capper, has welcomed the move he doesn't anticipate the inquiry will be an opportunity to scrutinise the contract between Brookfield and the State government. "I think if we are pinning on that being an outcome of the inquiry we might be setting ourselves up for disappointment," he said.

Wellington plans

The Greater Wellington Regional Council is considering a plan to revamp timetables to provide more peak hour trains. This would replace "timetabled" peak services with a "clock-face" system, with more frequent trains from hubs at Porirua and Johnsonville. The aim is to ease bottlenecks just before and after 0800, when about a third of all peak passengers travel. This would increase peak capacity by about 50% by 2016, reducing seat shortages. Thirty-five Matangi trains will be in service by 2016 and make increased services possible. The 1% of peak passengers who travel from the outer area beyond Porirua and Taita would, however, be disadvantaged. A public consultation will allow their problems to be examined. The plan projects a 2% growth in passenger numbers per annum.

New Zealand: Napier-Gisborne re-opening mooted

The Hawke's Bay Regional Council is considering investing more than \$NZ5 million to help reopen the Napier-Gisborne railway. The proposal comes from the Napier Gisborne Rail Establishment Group, which estimates \$NZ10.7 million will be needed to finance capital and operating budgets.

A 51% shareholding from the regional council is proposed with investors from Hawke's Bay and the Gisborne region holding the remaining 49%. However, any investment by the council would require the Government and/or KiwiRail to fully fund the restoration of the line, leases on the line, locomotives, and agreements on freighting of logs and fruit and vegetable produce beyond 2020, to ensure the long-term viability of the service. A loss is projected in the first three years, but the return over the longer-term would cover the investment.

Group chairman Alan Dick said Hawke's Bay roads face huge congestion issues if the line is not reopened, and as logging volume to Napier Port increases an estimated 10-fold on the 90,000 currently being transported on the area's roads. It is two years since the line was blocked by a washout northeast of Wairoa, leading to KiwiRail and government decisions against repairs and to mothball the line.

The Transport Minister Gerry Brownlee made it clear the government would not support the initiative.

Train Times: Passenger Trains of Australia and New Zealand

Train Times: Passenger Trains of Australia and New Zealand, a timetable privately produced by Australian Timetable Association member Victor Isaacs, now has its own web site. The current edition is March 2014. It is at www.traintimes.net.au

Timetable links

For convenient links to internet timetables worldwide, see:

- www.fahrplan-online.de
- www.railfaneurope.net/frameset.html, and
- www.fahrplancenter.com

European Rail Timetable

The first edition (March 2014) of the *European Rail Timetable* – successor to the *Thomas Cook Timetable* – has been received. Users of the former Thomas Cook timetable will feel at home. The substantive content is almost exactly the same. It also looks almost exactly the same. It is the same size as the last Thomas Cook issue – 576 pages. The changes are the extremely boring cover (reproduced in March *Table Talk*, page 4), deletion of references to Thomas Cook (except at least one, which has remained in by accident), and the replacement of advertisements for Thomas Cook publications by advertisements for Middleton Press, *Inside Europe* magazine (a very interesting publication) and small advertisements for those Thomas Cook products taken over by the new owners (that is, facsimiles of historic timetables and rail maps, but not guide books). The price increased from £14.99 to £15.99. There is a useful new table of daily sleeper trains in Europe. Two pages of the inaugural issue are given over to temporary timetables of trains in south west England, caused by the very extensive damage to railway lines there in recent extreme winter weather. The railways of China are covered in the Beyond Europe section in the March edition. Australia and NZ will appear in the February and August editions each year, as well as in the Summer and Winter six-monthly editions, which include compilations of all the Beyond Europe sections. The last Thomas Cook timetable was number 1,526 (after 140 years of publication: 1873 to 1939 and 1946 to 2013). The replacement timetable starts again at number 1.

The inaugural March edition sold out within four days of its publication. The Australian Timetable Association's Distribution Service has secured a bulk order for the April 2014 edition which is available for members in the April 2014 Distribution List. It has also ordered copies of the reprint of the last edition of the Thomas Cook European Rail Timetable in August 2013.

Annual subscriptions and individual copies can also be ordered direct from our member Samuel Rachdi at www.fahrplancenter.com. The publishers are now also taking orders for the April and following editions – see www.europeanrailtimetable.eu. Because British postal rates have increased, the cost is slightly more than mentioned in the March *Table Talk* article. The new publishers are now also in a position to accept annual subscriptions.

For a BBC TV news report, including an interview with the editor, see <http://www.bbc.com/news/business-26489897>

and for a *Guardian* newspaper article see <http://www.theguardian.com/travel/2014/mar/10/inter-rail-bible-returns-european-rail-timetable>

British public timetable books

One of the two British hard copy timetable books has ceased publication following the Winter edition of 8 December 2013. This is *GB Rail Timetable* published by TSO. The other hard copy timetable is *Rail Times* published by Middleton Press. The two publications were very similar and cost almost the same. TSO's timetable book cost £18 and Middleton Press costs £17.95. Both used pages made from the PDFs on National Rail's timetable website at

<http://www.networkrail.co.uk/asp/3828.aspx>. TSO reproduced these at full size resulting in a very large book of 3,700 pages and weighing 1.75 kg. Middleton Press reduces the PDFs to half size. The result is timetable pages that are sometimes a bit hard to read, but the resulting book is of a manageable size and weight. The Middleton product also includes a number of maps and includes amendments and updates, whereas TSO's timetable did not. Moreover, Middleton Press's timetable is widely advertised. TSO's was not. Middleton Press is a publisher of a very wide range of books about British Railways, present and past, and other subjects. These include a number of reproductions of Bradshaw's timetables and maps of the late nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. So dedicated is the proprietor that a few years ago, he changed his name from Vic Mitchell to Vic Bradshaw-Mitchell. The website is www.middletonpress.co.uk

British timetable production schedule

For an insight into how British timetables are produced by National Rail, see the production schedule for 2013-2015 at <http://www.networkrail.co.uk/asp/3828.aspx> (click near the top on the right hand side). It is apparent that this is a huge and lengthy process.

London Underground Working Timetables

Transport for London has now placed Working Timetables of the London Underground on the internet. The website is <http://beta.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/publications-and-reports/working-timetables> This contains the current Working Timetables, However (and unsurprisingly), these are huge documents, except for the tiny Waterloo and City line. The move by Transport for London might be in response to freedom of Information requests and follows the placing of British mainline Working Timetables on the web by National Rail at-

<http://www.networkrail.co.uk/browseDirectory.aspx?dir=\\Timetables\\Working%20timetable%20%28WTT%29&root=>

UKIP information source

UKIP is a UK-based professional publication company which publishes specialized periodicals and book-a-zines which are free to download or subscribe to. Interesting topics are covered, eg, railway interior designs, railway station designs, airline catering equipment and electric cars. See <http://www.ukipme.com/>

Thanks to Ian Brady, David Cranney, Scott Ferris, Victor Isaacs, Geoff Lambert, James Ng, Lourie Smit, Samuel Rachdi, Len Regan, Roger Wheaton, www.railpage.com.au, *Age*, *Canberra Times*, *Courier-Mail*, *Daily Telegraph*, *Financial Review*, *Newcastle Herald*, *Railway Magazine* (Britain), *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Today's Railways Europe* and *Transit Australia* for Rail news.

BUS NEWS

General

Operators charging for timetables

Further to observations last month that Premier Illawarra charge their passengers 80c for individual printed timetables (for a total cost of \$6.40 for the entire 8 booklets), the only other nomination received from *Table Talk* readers was for Dysons Wodonga. Dysons Wodonga continues to charge \$1 for a timetable booklet covering all services in the border cities of Albury and Wodonga. Until recent years, this was common practice for timetables covering most larger Victorian centres, although timetables are now fully subsidised by the state government's transport body, PTV. This timetable does not include services provided by Martins, who run town services in the adjoining border centre of Albury. They however issue a free timetable booklet to passengers.

Australia Capital Territory

Route 6 update

ACTION introduced a revised timetable on Route 6 on 24 March. Buses continue to depart both Dickson and Woden at the same time, but intermediate times are up to 8 minutes earlier.

March events

Another busy month of events in Canberra saw the following extra bus services provided:

- Black Opal Stakes at Thoroughbred Park – 9 March: Weekend routes 951, 952 & 956 diverted via the racecourse while free buses ran into the City every 20 mins from 1700 until 1930.
- Canberra Day in the Park at Stage 88, Commonwealth Park – 10 March: Free return buses to Gungahlin, Belconnen, City, Woden and Tuggeranong regularly between 1900 and 2100 (after the last Public Holiday (Sunday) timetable services). Weekend routes 900, 932, 934 & 935 dropped families at the event.
- Skyfire 2014 at Lake Burley Griffin – 15 March: Special 'fare paying' services left Gungahlin, Belconnen every half hour and Woden & City every 10 – 15 mins from 1600 to 1930/1950. 'Free' return buses left from 2045 onwards, including services to Tuggeranong. 900 provided a link to the event for Tuggeranong residents. Lake Burley Griffin is also served by weekend routes 932, 934 & 935.
- Free travel on all ACTION buses for ACT and interstate seniors attending the range of Seniors Week events held from 16 to 23 March.
- Connect and Participate Expo at the Old Bus Depot Markets in Kingston – 29 March: free continuous loop from City Bus Station every 20 to 30 minutes 1100 to 1600 along with regular weekend routes 938 & 980.

NRL Shuttles

In addition to regular weekend routes 900, 934 & 980, fans attending the NRL game between the Canberra Raiders and Titans at GIO Stadium on 23 March could catch a free return bus from Gungahlin, Tuggeranong, Woden, City or Belconnen. Return charter buses also departed from the Canberra Labour Clubs in Belconnen and Ginninderra along with The Tradies in Dickson.

Further home games this season will be held on 12 & 20 April, 18 & 25 May, 9 & 20 June, 28 July, 1, 14 & 28 of August and 4 September. In addition to the free shuttle services, weekday games can be accessed using routes 3, 7 or one of the many Blue Rapid corridor services.

NightRider survey

An online survey was conducted on the ACTION website in early March, following the trial of free services over December. The feedback will be used to help tailor the 2014 offering to the needs of partygoers.

Google Transit technical glitch

Advice on the ACTION website stated that the Google Transit journey planner was incorrectly showing a normal weekday timetable operating on 10 March on the Canberra Day public holiday. Riders were advised to select 9 March as their travelling day to display Sunday timetable results. This does highlight the issue of operators trusting third party organisations to display their timetable information correctly – it should have been a straightforward database change to ensure the correct information was presented once the issue was identified. Although many transport operators are now willing to provide their timetable data to app developers (PTV in Victoria joined the trend this month), they will need to remain vigilant in ensuring that the timetable data provided to developers is accurate and monitor information is displayed correctly to intending passengers or risk travelling public becoming stranded and frustrated especially on days when reduced service levels are operating.

New South Wales

UniNSW extras

Travel demand to universities is traditionally the highest during the first few weeks of the academic year, when most students attend first classes to give themselves a solid grounding for the semester ahead, before some decide to skip certain classes, adjust their timetable to minimise the days they have to attend campus or possibly drop out altogether. To accommodate this annual spike in demand, UNSW boosted afternoon services on the popular 891 service for 3 weeks commencing 25 March, by funding 10 additional charter buses. These buses were timetabled to depart from Gate 9 and the NDA stop around 1700 and 1800. Route 891 is already timetabled to depart every few minutes at this time. The university plans to continue assessing demand in coming weeks.

An email to staff and students has also asked students to try to arrive at Central earlier in the mornings to better help queues. Requests by the university for an additional bus loading area have yet to be addressed. This could allow multiple buses to load at the same time, potentially allowing a higher frequency instead of buses queuing up behind each other.

Earlier in the month Sydney Buses issued an updated timetable for 890 (City Circular Quay – UNSW), 891 (Central – UNSW), 892 (UNSW – Circular Quay) dated 3 March. This timetable now only states frequency information at times of ultra high service level, instead of previous timetables that listed almost all departures. A supplementary information section indicates services changes during exam periods, instead of footnoting trips that divert via Randwick Racecourse during this time.

Future Music Festival extras

To cater for anticipated crowds to the Future Music Festival on 8 March, Hillsbus provided six additional inbound 607X services from Rouse Hill, and a further nine on 610X leaving Castle Hill, some also starting at Rouse Hill. Late evening services were also increased, with six additional buses on 607X between 2255 and 0240, and an impressive twelve extra trips on the 610X between 2235 and 0250.

Gledswood roadworks

Due to ongoing roadworks on Camden Valley Way, Catherine Field Busways buses on 898 & 899 are no longer turning into Gledswood as of 24 February until further notice. Instead, buses are commencing and terminating in the developing estate 1.8km south at Amberley St near Lilydale Avenue. It will be interesting to see if this becomes a permanent route change to serve the growing area.

Queensland

Mount Lindsay Hwy fixed stops

Following the upgrade of services on Route 540 (Beaudesert – Browns Plains) to hourly in January, it has been decided to install fixed stops to replace the previous 'hail and ride' arrangement along busy Mount Lindsay Highway between Beaudesert and Jimboomba. A map on the Translink website indicates recommended safe pick up locations in the interim including Woodhill State School, Glenagle State School, Beaudesert High School and Beaudesert Hospital.

South Australia

Double decker trial

Later in 2014 Adelaide Metro plans to trial an 88 seat Scania double decker bus on high patronage services such as routes serving the Adelaide Hills to analyse their effectiveness over articulated bus models. This of course follows the current trials underway on the Gold Coast and across metropolitan Sydney. It shouldn't be forgotten that some operators, such as Thompsons in northern Brisbane, have successfully used double decker buses for many years now to boost capacity on school services, rail replacement duties and special event shuttles.

Adelaide Oval Footy Express

AFL returned to the Adelaide Oval with the start of the 2014 home & away season, following a capacity upgrade over the last two years that added over 15,000 seats. The move has seen the end of AFL matches held at Football Park (AAMI Park) in West Lakes, in western Adelaide. A massive 32 metropolitan routes now run for each game as follows:

- AOX1 Greenwith via O-Bahn
- AOX2 St Agnes Depot via O-Bahn
- AOX3 Northgate Shopping Centre via Klemzig
- AOX4 Hope Valley via Paradise
- AOX5 Salisbury East via Paradise
- AOX6 Woodcroft Community Centre via Main South Road
- AOX7 South Adelaide Footy Club via Main South Road
- AO8 Old Reynella Interchange via Brighton, Marion & South Road
- AOX9 Mount Barker via South Eastern Freeway
- AO10 Aldgate via Glen Osmond Road
- AO11 Paradise via St Bernards Road & Magill Road
- AO12 Athelstone via Payneham Road
- AO13 Burnside via Greenhill Road
- AO14 Rosslyn Park via The Parade
- AO15 Mawson via Main North Road
- AOX15 Elizabeth via Main North Road
- AO16 Rosewater via Days Road & Torrens Road
- AO17 Port Adelaide & Outer Harbour via Port Road
- AO18 West Lakes via Grange Road
- AO19 Henley Beach via Henley Beach Road
- AO20 Blair Athol via Prospect Road
- AOX21 Ottoway via Arndale Centre & Hawker St
- AOX22 Aberfoyle Hub via Goodwood Road
- AOX23 Morphettville Depot via Marion Road
- AO24 Mitcham Square via Unley Road
- AO25 Mitcham Square via Fullarton Road
- AO26 Glenelg via Sir Donald Bradman Drive
- AO27 Elizabeth via Salisbury Highway

- AO28 Salisbury North via Paralowie
- AO29 Davoren Park to Elizabeth (connecting with trains)
- AO30 Aldinga to Noarlunga Centre (connecting with trains)
- AOX31 Oatlands via Glenelg & Anzac Highway

In addition to these routes, the oval is located on the perimeter of the city centre, and spectators could also catch one of the regular route services into the City and walk to the ground. As traditionally been the case, higher frequency express services operate for Adelaide Crows games than for Port Adelaide Power matches.

Regional Footy Express services in 2014 operate from Angaston, Balaklava, Murray Bridge, Goolwa, Wallaroo, Willaston and Keith.

Industrial action continues

Industrial action continues to affect Southlink and Transfield services, with drivers now not collecting fares for two months since 29 January. The wage dispute has reportedly led to over \$1 million in lost fare revenue so far, with ticket validation rates falling by around 15%. The government has suspended fines to fare evaders on buses due to the action, and Attorney General John Rau has said the question of who would bear the cost of the action will not be addressed once the dispute is resolved.

Victoria

Deakin Cube #2

Deakin Uni introduced a new free staff and student shuttle service to their Burwood campus in eastern Melbourne on 3 March running between 0730 and 2100 weekdays. Marketed as the Deakin Cube, the bus provides a direct link from Surrey Hills Station, allowing students to avoid the entering zone 2. The service is meant to reduce the demand of carparking and make public transport a cheaper and more attraction option.

An initial timetable showed a 20 min frequency operating, presumably with a single bus attempting a 20 min round trip. This proved unfeasible, and a second bus was added to morning services by 10 March, boosting morning services to every 15 minutes, but running only half-hourly after lunch. Train connectivity with City trains is poor – mid morning buses depart just a minute before the next train arrives, creating an undesirable 14 minute connection.

Access to the university is also provided by Route 75 trams (made part of zone 1+2 overlap as part of myki fare changes) along with a number of bus services departing Box Hill. These were boosted significantly during 2010, with the extension of Route 281 and the introduction of a new 768 service during trimesters 1 and 2. Combined with existing services on 732 and 767, eight buses an hour operate to/from Box Hill, although depart from 4 separate stops. This means that a student could turn up to the stop inside the campus (281 & 768) and have to wait up to 30 minutes for the next bus, adding to the reasons the university has introduced their own private option.

It will be interesting to watch the ongoing success of the service, especially in light of this month's announcement that zone 1 will be extended to cover the entire metropolitan area in 2015, and therefore there will be no longer a penalty for travelling via Box Hill.

The university has also upgraded their existing Intercampus shuttle bus (as known as Deakin Cube) between the two Geelong campuses with a new 62-seater bus replacing one of the 24-seater mini-buses. Buses run approximately every

35 minutes between 0645 and 2100 during university trimesters and offers free wi-fi. The bus also calls at the Barwon Valley Activity Centre Park & Ride providing additional parking options.

New format printed timetables

Further to the report in last month's Table Talk of the new low-cost A3 timetable format, PTV have reprinted further timetables in this format including:

- 366 (Ringwood – Croydon)
- 404 (Footscray – Moonee Ponds)
- 467 (Moonee Ponds – Aberfeldie)
- 468 (Highpoint – Essendon)
- 518 (Greensborough – St Helena West)
- 565 (Whittlesea – Kinglake)
- 624 (Kew – Oakleigh)
- 625 (Elsternwick – Chadstone)
- 690 (Croydon – Boronia)
- 734 (Glen Iris – Glen Waverley)
- 735 (Box Hill – Nunawading)
- 737 (Monash Uni – Croydon)
- 754 (Glen Waverley – Rowville)
- 755 (Bayswater – Knox City)
- 857 (Dandenong – Chelsea)

In all cases, the timetables retain their previous effective date.

A combined timetable Craigieburn Routes 528, 529, 532, 533, 537 & 544 in the traditional DL booklet format continues to elude ATA members, suggesting the move to the new format may be more widespread, and will potentially be used for the majority of future bus timetables. It was initially assumed that these timetables would only be issued for those routes were demand for a printed timetable pamphlet is low.

Updated local area maps

PTV have finally updated the online versions of the local area maps for Cardinia & Maribyrnong to incorporate network changes to Routes 409, 924 & 928 in late January. Unfortunately, the effective dates have not been updated and maps for adjoining municipalities such as Brimbank & Casey have not been reissued.

The ongoing lack of a single Melbourne-wide public transport map, even if only available online, is something that fails to be addressed. Plans to refresh the former interactive map once hosted on the former Victrip website seem to have quietly been abandoned.

BusTracker MkIV

In late March PTV announced that Smartrak was the successful bidder for the latest attempt at a bus tracking system for Melbourne's bus network, after the previous system was scrapped late last year. An ambitious timeline suggests the technology will be rolled out as soon as the end of the 2014 financial year with the data used to help plan more reliable timetables and target areas for bus priority measures. The data will also be available by app developers to provide real time information to the travelling public. It can also be assumed that the technology will be used to enforce punctuality and reliability targets in future contracts with private operators.

Reports state the existing BusTracker technology fitted to Transdev buses will continue to be used for up to the next two years. The operator is due to be subject to performance monitoring once their greenfields timetable commences in 2015.

This is now the fourth attempt at real time tracking of Melbourne bus services, following the AVM technology launched in the mid 1980s and the two systems previously

used on the SmartBus network. Hopefully this is the final go at it for many years!

East West shares sold

In early February Dysons announced that they have acquired 100% of the shares of East West Bus Company from the directors of the former Reservoir Bus Company (notably the Cooper family), which had previously sold their main business to the Dyson family in November 2012, along with charter arm Midland Tours. East West was a partnership formed by the two neighbouring operators in 1980, when the new cross-suburban 560 service linking Broadmeadows and Greensborough was licensed. The operation subsequently grew in 1981 to operate the 561 (Reservoir – Macleod via La Trobe Uni), 570 (Thomastown – Bundoora RMIT) in 1984 and 571 (Somerton – South Morang) in 1997 (originally operating as a non-MET ticketed trial).

More recent developments for the company included the upgrade of part of the 571 to Trainlink standards in December 2003 as an ultimate prelude to the rail extension to South Morang a decade later, followed in 2006 by an extension of 571 services west to the more logical terminus of Roxburgh Park (initially as a separate 571A service). In 2010 the 560 and much of the 571 were replaced by the 901 and 902 SmartBus orbital services, which East West were subcontracted to operate on behalf of Grenda's (later Ventura) along with Tullamarine Bus Lines. This arrangement remained until both routes were awarded to Transdev in August 2013, although East-West technically remains involved in the operation by letting part of the Reservoir depot to Transdev. The 561 service was also extended from Reservoir to Coburg in May 2011 following several significant service upgrades in the past decade.

East West Bus Company did not operate from a separate depot, but rather shared depot facilities at the existing Reservoir and Dyson depots. Routes 560 & 561 were based at the Reservoir Bus Company premises, while Routes 570, 571 and later 901 and 902 ran out of the Dysons depot in Bundoora. Drivers and vehicles proudly wore separate branding although were largely integrated into the main operation from either site. It was not uncommon to see the parent company vehicles used during routine maintenance.

The other significant partnership between the Cooper and Dyson families ended in August when Melbourne Bus Link was dissolved after 15 years of operating the former government MetBus services run out of the Footscray and Sandringham depots, with the next franchise contract awarded to Transdev.

Ashburton Festival

On 23 February Route 734 buses operated to Holmesglen in lieu of Glen Iris due to the annual Ashburton Festival closing High St. Passengers alighting trains on the Glen Waverley line had to remain onboard for another three stations while those using the Alamein line could walk to Warrigal Rd and High Street Rd. This arrangement has been in place for at least three years now, after detours around the event in previous years lead to long delays to services.

Dysons Wodgona & Martins apps

Dysons have launched both iPhone/iPad and Android apps for their operation for their border city operation in Wodonga. Unlike the printed timetable (see article above), the app is free of charge. In addition to timetables and maps, the app also includes notifications of service disruptions and a list of upcoming events and public holidays that will impact services during 2014. The same developer would appear to have designed a similar app for Martins services in neighbouring Albury. Their app also includes information on

school services and the ability to locate your closest bus stop.

Western Australia

More March timetable changes

An additional weekday 34 service was added on March 17, departing Cannington at 0710, arriving Esplanade Busport at 0800.

From 23 March, Route 104 was extended to Clydesdale St after McDougall St, due to changes to stops along Canning Hwy. Some stops along Canning Hwy have also been relocated or closed as part of works to upgrade the stops to DDA compliant. This also affected Routes 32, 33, 70, 100, 101, 105, 106 & 148.

Due to the temporary closure of Kenwick station, as of 24 March the 229 bus departing Rehoboth Christian School at 1510 now extends to Maddington station. Additionally, the 1510 ex Centro Maddington now diverts via Yule Brook College.

Also commencing 24 March the 0705 and 0725 299 trips ex Esplanade Busport to Kalamunda Bus Station now operate

to Kalamunda Senior High School after departing the Kalamunda Bus Station instead of deviating enroute.

The 474 ex Kinross College to Clarkson at 1515 was adjusted two mins earlier on 24 March.

Beginning March 30, Routes 16, 41, 42, 43, 48, 55, 60, 66, 67, 68 and 950 call at three new stands on the northbound side of William St between Murray St and Hay St. This change was initially due to commence the previous Sunday.

Coolbellup consultation

Transperth held community consultation during March and early April regarding the planned introduction of a new 512 service linking Murdoch and Spearwood via North Lake and Coolbellup, along with the streamlining of Route 513. Route 512 services would run every 15 mins during peak periods and hourly at other times with no changes to service levels on Route 513. The Aloson St deviation on 513 is proposed to be scrapped as it averages almost zero passengers.

Thanks to: Geoff Foster, Andrew Fairhall, Geoff Lambert, Mike Marshall, Roger Wheaton & various contributors on *Australian Transport Discussion Board*.

AIR NEWS

International

Cuts to the **Qantas** international network were announced on 27 February as part of a \$2 billion cost reduction program. This followed a company loss of \$252 million in the preceding six months, mainly from the international sector. Flights from Sydney and Brisbane to Singapore will be downgraded from Boeing 747 jumbo jets to Airbus A330s by September 2014. These do not have premium economy seating or flat bed business class seats. The Perth-Singapore service was Qantas' last international route from Perth. Passengers will now be directed to partner Emirates or Qantas' low-cost offshoots Jetstar and Jetstar Asia. Competitors Singapore Airlines and Cathay Pacific may benefit with their direct full-service flights to Singapore and Hong Kong, while Etihad Airways will begin daily flights between Perth and its Abu Dhabi hub from July. Qantas services between Melbourne and London will be re-timed in November 2014 to reduce A380 ground time in Heathrow. This will free up an A380 for additional flying on other routes. Qantas will sell or defer orders for 50 aircraft and reduce its workforce by 5,000 positions, with a wage freeze for other employees.

The following routes have been discontinued by Qantas recently:

2008 Sydney-Seoul, Melbourne-Tokyo, Perth-Denpasar-Singapore, Perth-Jakarta, Cairns-Tokyo.

2009: Melbourne-Shanghai, Sydney-Beijing, Sydney-Mumbai, Brisbane-Wellington.

2011: Sydney-San Francisco, Perth-Tokyo.

2012: Sydney-Buenos Aires, Hong Kong-London, Bangkok-London, Melbourne-Auckland-Los Angeles, Singapore-Mumbai, Melbourne-Queenstown.

2013: Melbourne-Singapore-London, Perth-Hong Kong, Sydney-Singapore-London, Sydney-Singapore-Frankfurt, Adelaide-Singapore.

2014: Perth-Singapore.

The following routes have been introduced by Qantas in recent years, some as replacements for withdrawn services but on different routes:

2011: Sydney-Dallas.

2012: Sydney-Santiago de Chile.

2013: Sydney-Dubai-London and Melbourne-Dubai-London.

Hawaiian Air has increased frequency between Honolulu and Brisbane from one to four a week from 31 March.

Domestic

Jetstar will introduce:

- Four services weekly from Melbourne to Uluru from 29 June
- Increase in Sydney-Uluru flights from four times a week to daily from 28 June
- A daily direct flight from the Gold Coast to Mackay from 28 June, and
- A second daily Brisbane-Townsville service from 17 April.

Tigerair has introduced a direct Brisbane to Adelaide service.

Thanks to Victor Isaacs, Tris Tottenham, *Age* and *Australian* for Air news.

FERRY NEWS

Sydney Ferries

Takeaway timetables for Sydney Harbour services are no longer available at the entrance to the ferry wharves at Circular Quay. Individual printed timetables are available, upon request, at the enquiry office.

- Twice daily "Bondi Boat" departs Darling Harbour King St wharf 7 at 1000 and 1300, picking up at Circular Quay east wharf at 1030 and 1330.
- "Seven Wonders Coastal Expedition" departing King St wharf 9 at 1030, returning at 1630, goes down the coast to Port Hacking.

FantaSea Cruises

FantaSea Cruises have two daily cruises that venture outside Sydney Harbour:

Thanks to Tris Tottenham for Ferry news

ODD SPOT

Belgian timetabling solution Sydney style

The new CEO of NMBS/SNCB Belgian Railways has promised a complete revision of the national timetable for the first time since 1998. It is hoped this will improve the current situation where only 80% of trains arrive on time. He says the problem is that train services are "no longer geared to demand". From 1998 to 2012 passenger numbers increased by 70% but "supply" by only 13%. Construction projects are also delaying trains. The solution in the new timetable will improve punctuality but will do so by lengthening journey times by an average of 3.3%.

For your viewing pleasure

Films of railway lines taken from the fronts of trains have always been popular. A Norwegian television company has taken this idea to a new height. Their film of the entire mainline between the two main cities of Oslo and Bergen was broadcast on TV. The film was not edited or speeded up, even in the lengthy tunnel sections. The film ran for 7 hours and 16 minutes. The broadcast ran from 1955 until 0315 next morning. Then it was repeated just a few days later. It was claimed there was an audience of 1.2 million (out of the Norwegian population of 5 million). You can download this film – it takes 22 GB! But that has been surpassed. A Norwegian company has filmed the shipping service from Bergen to Kirkenes in far north Norway from the bow of a vessel. This unedited film is thought to be longest film ever made. It runs for 134 hours.

About *Table Talk*

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

Editor, Rail and Tram, Air, Ferry: Victor Isaacs, abvi@iinet.net.au, 11 Blacket St Downer ACT 2602.

Editor, Bus: Craig Halsall, craig.halsall@gmail.com, 27 Edithvale Road Edithvale VIC 3196.

Production and Mailout: Geoff and Judy Lambert.

Proofreaders: Agnes Boskovitz, Ian Cooper, David Cranney and Geoff Hassall.

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

Back issues of **Table Talk** are available on the Australian Timetable Association's website, austta.org.au, after three months.

Sydney Light Rail

(article on page 3)



Melbourne fare zones, showing proposed free city tram zone

(article on page 4)

