



TABLE TALK

AUSTRALASIAN TIMETABLE NEWS

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NEW RAIL TIMETABLES

ARTC WTT 26 October 2014

A graphical version of the ARTC Working Timetable of 26 October 2014 is now available on their website at www.artc.com.au/Content.aspx?p=187 This is in addition to the tabular version, mentioned in last month's *Table Talk* and available at www.artc.com.au/Content.aspx?p=303

As noted last month, a new John Holland Rail NSW Country Regional Network was also introduced from 26 October.

Transport for NSW Passenger WTT 25 October 2014

A new Transport for NSW Passenger Working Timetable has been issued valid from 25 October (Weekends, Book 2) and 27 October (Weekdays, Book 1). In general, there are no significant changes. The new Glenfield-Leppington line is

included, although passenger services on it will not commence until January. It is not clear if the trains are running for crew training, car storage or points cleaning.

Transport for NSW Passenger WTTs cover Sydney Trains services plus NSW Train Link services to Nowra, Goulburn, Newcastle, Dungog and Scone, ie, the former CityRail area.

Transport for NSW Freight WTT 25 October 2014

A new Transport for NSW Freight Working Timetable has been issued valid from 25 October (Weekends, Book 6) and 27 October (Weekdays, Book 5). Transport for NSW Freight WTTs cover services as far as Nowra, Macarthur, Lithgow and Islington Junction (near Newcastle).

RAIL AND TRAM NEWS

Queensland Rail CityTrain: G20 meeting

More information is now available concerning altered train arrangements during the G20 summit of world leaders in Brisbane from 14 to 16 November. Gold Coast and Cleveland trains will be diverted via the Yeerongpilly-Sherwood line. Beenleigh trains will terminate/start at Southbank. NSW Train Link XPTs will terminate/start at Casino, but will spend the intermediate time a few kilometres north at Nammoona loop "due to noise issues."

Aurizon: Open Access in Queensland

On 30 September the Queensland Competition Authority issued a draft decision concerning Aurizon Network's Maximum Allowable Revenue (MAR) for its 2014 Draft Access Undertaking (2014 DAU). The MAR will determine the revenue Aurizon Network is allowed to recover from its open access customers from 2013–14 to 2016–17. The QCA said it was releasing the draft decision to allow parties to test the QCA's analysis and provide additional information. Submissions on the draft decision were invited, with a closing date of 12 December 2014. A final decision is due to be released in May 2015.

The QCA indicated that it could not, at this stage, approve some elements of the draft access undertaking. "The QCA considered that the MAR proposed by Aurizon Network as too high. On the evidence before us, our draft decision is that a MAR of \$3.88 billion would be more appropriate. The draft decision is on QCA's website: qca.org.au/2014-DAU

Aurizon responded by stating it was disappointed by the draft decision. Aurizon Network is concerned that this sends a negative signal for future investment in the Central Queensland Coal Network, together with the impact it could have on the level of maintenance activities required to provide a safe, reliable and high-capacity network for customers.

ARTC: Network Control

The ARTC advertised on 25 October for expressions of interest for the provision of rail planning and operation systems. The project "seeks to upgrade the existing network control centre to provide optimization functions, such as dynamic planning tools, electronic train graphs, automatic route setting and live run optimisation."

ARTC: Hunter Valley closedown

The next of the regular scheduled closedowns of the Hunter Valley network will be from Monday 17 until Friday 21 November. NSW Train Link trains to NW NSW will be replaced by buses throughout.

Sydney Trains: Auburn and Leppington depots

Auburn Stabling Yard and Leppington (on the new south west line) will be established as suburban train depots from the introduction of the new timetable in January 2015 - which will also see introduction of train services on the south west line. At that time, Liverpool will cease to be a train depot and Flemington depot will be reduced in size.

STNs (Special Train Notices) 1424-2014 and 1952-2014 provide for crew training runs on the Glenfield-Leppington line from 25 October.

Sydney Trains: Rabbitohs Express, Sutto Express and more

Named special trains operated to the Sydney Rugby Grand Final at Olympic Park on 5 October 2014 – Rabbitoh Express, Sutto Express, Burgess Express, GI Express, Des's Direct, Reynolds Rattler and Bupa Bandwagon.

Sydney Trains: Christmas closedown

In recent years, there have always been major closedowns of part of the Sydney rail network over the Christmas/New Year period for major civil engineering works. This year from 26 to 28 December lines between Hornsby-Eastwood, Flemington-Blacktown & Merrylands, and Clyde-Carlingford will be closed. It appears that trains from the City will run into Olympic Park to make bus connections.

Then in the following days, there will be closedowns from Wynyard to Hornsby and from Blacktown to Lithgow.

NSW Train Link: The Curse of the ATA AGM strikes again

On Saturday 18 October, the day of the Australian Timetable Association's Annual General Meeting in Canberra, and on Sunday 19 October, all passenger trains between Sydney and Canberra were replaced by buses for scheduled maintenance, thus preventing members from travelling to the meeting in comfort. Sydney-Melbourne trains were also replaced by buses between Sydney and Goulburn, as were suburban trains between Liverpool and Macarthur.

There is a significant history of travel to ATA AGMs being disrupted. In 2000 our Association held an AGM in Moss Vale on a day when all trains were substituted, and another year's AGM was at Lindfield (North Shore, Sydney) on a day when trains on that line were substituted. On another occasion, some Canberra members were returning home on the evening train after an AGM in Sydney. The train had been re-scheduled via Granville because of trackwork. However, at Granville, it was incorrectly signalled on to the western instead of the southern line, and the driver accepted the misdirection. There was considerable delay to reverse the train and gain the correct route.

NSW Train Link & Sydney Trains: Snow, rain and floods 14-15 October

A severe storm on the night of 14 October caused late season, heavy snowfall which brought down overhead wiring between Katoomba and Lithgow in the Blue Mountains. Train services were suspended all day on Wednesday 15 October and Thursday 16 October. On the first of these days, there were no substitute road services as roads were also closed by the snowstorm. A limited service ran between Katoomba and Central. The Sydney Dubbo and return XPT services were cancelled. (One year ago, on almost the same day, the Blue Mountains were ravaged by bushfires.)

As part of the same weather event, ferocious storms lashed across Sydney. At Bardwell Park station, floodwaters rose to platform level. An Explorer train from Sydney to Canberra, only 10 km into its journey, was stranded there by the flood waters. After some hours, passengers were able to be evacuated by emergency services. Four stations on the Bankstown line - Marrickville, Dulwich Hill, Hurlstone Park and Canterbury - lost power as a result of the storm, but remained open.

NSW Train Link: 25 minutes from Newcastle to Hamilton

Following closure of the railway from Newcastle to Hamilton on 26 December, buses will depart Newcastle 25 minutes prior to every scheduled train departure from Hamilton. Between 26 December and 5 January buses will run to Broadmeadow, then they will run to Hamilton. Buses will run every 10 minutes in the peak. When the Wickham interchange is complete in late 2016 buses will connect with trains at Wickham.

NSW Train Link: Shellharbour Junction station

Shellharbour Junction, a new station on the Kiama/Nowra line at 109 km from Sydney, will open on Sunday 15 November. On that date, the existing station at Dunmore (Shellharbour) at 111km will close. Buildings at this station are heritage listed, so it may not be demolished. The "Junction" in the title of the new station is not used in a railway sense, but refers to the locality. At times during construction the new station was going to be named "Flinders" or "Shell Cove".

NSW: Maldon-Dombarton line

The long-planned Maldon to Dombarton freight rail line is a step closer with a callout for private investors by the NSW government. The registration of interest process to construct the remaining sections of the 35km line will open on 13 October and close on 24 February. Construction on the line first started in 1983 but was halted amid an economic downturn and doubts over the amount of coal that would require transport to Port Kembla. The State government is now confident demand for freight services will increase significantly over the coming years. The Federal government has committed \$25.5 million to the project, should it generate market interest and official planning approvals. Roads Minister Duncan Gay says the registration of interest is the vital next step that will provide a clear understanding of the commercial viability of completing and opening up the freight rail line.

ARTC: Melbourne-Sydney line repair

The Federal Assistant Minister for Infrastructure, Jamie Briggs, said on 2 October that "Significant progress has been made on the condition of the track between Melbourne and Sydney" and "This is supported by the excellent performance of the corridor." He added that "Much work is to be done" in the next 18 months.

Victoria: Regional Rail Link progress

On 29 September and 6 October locomotives ran on the Regional Rail Link line from Deer Park West to Werribee West, 25 km, to check signal sightings, followed by test runs with VLocity DMUs on 6, 7, 8 and 9 October. Then special trains for driver training commenced from 10 October.

V/Line: Albury line slowdowns

From Sunday 27 July the 1205 Melbourne-Albury passenger train was slowed down by ten minutes by the insertion of ten minutes recovery time between Wodonga and Albury, and the 1245 Albury-Melbourne train slowed by fifteen minutes by the insertion of five minutes recovery time between Avenel and Seymour and ten minutes between Sims St Junction and Melbourne Southern Cross. Then instead from 12 October a uniform 15 minute slowdown was applied to all Albury line V/Line trains. This was done by insertion of additional recovery time immediately before the destination stations of either Albury or Southern Cross. Intermediate times were not affected. The later arrival times are not shown in V/Line's public timetables. In other words, this just seems to be a device to reduce the incidence of reporting of "late" trains within the system.

V/Line: Gippsland line disruption

V/Line engineers have discovered corrosion in the Morwell River bridge and recommended major repair work beginning on 25 October and lasting for up to two months. Trains between Moe and Traralgon will be replaced by buses. For the duration of this work, travel on the Gippsland line will be free. Nevertheless, the work will disrupt travel during the State election campaign in a very marginal seat. V/Line has published a temporary timetable which is on their website at www.vline.com.au/pdf/timetables/traralgon.pdf Once works are completed, the current 30km/hour speed restriction will be lifted and the line speed of 160km/h resumed.

V/Line: Significant closedowns

Don't try to travel to/from rural Victoria on the weekend of 29 and 30 November. V/Line trains on every line, except Gippsland, will be replaced by buses due to scheduled trackwork.

Metro Trains Melbourne: Significant closedowns

On Saturday 4 October Cranbourne line trains were replaced by buses beyond Dandenong all day. After 1900 this was extended to buses replacing trains between Oakleigh & Pakenham and Oakleigh & Cranbourne.

Alamein, Belgrave and Lilydale passengers were required to travel on South Morang or Hurstbridge trains to Parliament and there connect to stopping all stations & express buses to Camberwell on 4 and 5 October. Glen Waverley passengers were required to travel via Caulfield group trains to Richmond for all stations buses to Darling, or alternatively to Caulfield for express buses to Darling. This is similar to the arrangements for Sandringham line works and disruptions in recent years. Trains operated between Darling and Glen Waverley.

Buses will also replace trains between Burnley and Glen Waverley each Sunday to Thursday night from 6 until 30 October. An inbound evening rail replacement taxi operated for passengers from East Richmond.

Metro Trains Melbourne: Additional services from 13 October

A new timetable from Monday 13 October on the Caulfield group includes additional and altered trains. Changes are:

- The first three up trains from Pakenham depart one minute earlier at 0413, 0433 and 0453 and now stop at Malvern, Armadale, Toorak and Hawksburn arriving at Flinders St at 0533, 0554 and 0605,
- The 0458 to Pakenham now departs Flinders St at 0454 and the 0518 to Pakenham now departs Flinders St at 0514 and both now stop all stations,
- An additional train departs Cheltenham at 0633, stops all stations to Flinders St, arriving at 0707,
- An additional train departs Flinders St at 0548, stops all stations to Cheltenham, arriving at 0620,
- An additional train departs Flinders St at 1926, stops all stations to Cheltenham, arriving at 2000,
- The 0558 from Frankston now departs at 0557,
- The 0708 to Laverton now departs Flinders St at 0710.

Metro Trains Melbourne: Dandenong line project doubts

The \$2-2.5 billion-dollar upgrade of the Dandenong line has been delayed after the Victorian coalition government said on 17 October that it would not sign contracts with the consortium delivering the project until next year. The government's admission that it could not commit to the project before the 29 November State election puts in doubt

a string of promised improvements to Melbourne's busiest railway corridor, including 25 new "high-capacity" trains, four level crossing removals, three rebuilt stations and new signalling technology. It would deliver capacity for 2 million extra passenger journeys a year on a line that suffers chronic overcrowding.

Labor has refused to commit to the project, arguing there is too much secrecy and uncertainty about how it would be delivered.

The government and the consortium had originally sought to sign contracts project by 30 September, but Public Transport Minister Terry Mulder said he was not yet confident enough that every part of the project would deliver value for money for taxpayers. Instead, the government has made an agreement with the consortium on the requirements it must meet before contracts are signed.

The Cranbourne-Pakenham rail upgrade is an unsolicited proposal that was pitched by Metro, Melbourne's railway operator, in what would be the biggest public-private partnership for a public transport project in Australia's history. The consortium, which includes Metro's Hong Kong parent company MTR, construction giant John Holland and UGL Rail Services, hopes to receive up to \$5.2 billion in availability payments between 2019 and 2034. The rush to sign off on the project by the end of September, just seven months after the government's surprise announcement in March, had been placed in doubt by queries about whether it featured enough local manufacturing and whether the proposed signalling upgrade was technically feasible.

Metro Trains Melbourne: Langwarrin station

Public Transport Victoria is seeking community views on the preferred location for a railway station at Langwarrin on the Frankston-Stony Point line. PTV is seeking community feedback on the preferred location – either on the site of the station that existed between 1888 and 1981, or north or south of that location.

Metro Trains Melbourne: Caulfield Cup day

On Saturday 18 October, Caulfield Cup day, the horses were running and the trains were stalled. Extensive system-wide delays occurred after a person was hit by a train near Tottenham and after an emergency evacuation of the Train Control Centre (Metrol) in Collins St.

Yarra Trams: Fewer stops

Yarra Trams — in conjunction with Melbourne City Council — plans to speed up the tram network by removing what it describes as "unnecessary and unsafe stops along all tracks". Spokesman Simon Murphy says that, "In Melbourne, the average distance between tram stops is about 260 metres, while the international standard — based primarily on European tram networks — is between 400 and 500 metres." He cited the Gold Coast light rail as a national example of a spaced-out tram network, where the distance between stops was 800 metres. He said that while some stops would be removed, bigger and better stops would include shelters and raised platforms. "There are some places we have already spaced out better, such as St Kilda Road, on the south side of the main interchange. And we did some survey before and after we removed a couple of stops, and survey results show that people are happier with the spacing."

Bendigo ambitions

Connecting Bendigo, a planning document issued by local governments in Bendigo, Victoria's fourth-biggest city, advocates a local commuter rail service to deal with what it says are "unprecedented levels" of population growth. It says the city already has "the foundations required for a local rail system" because it is at the junction of two rail lines and now has four operational train stations. The fourth, at Epsom, opened last month. It suggests new stations at Maiden Gully, Golden Square, Huntly and Marong, and has long-term aspirations for others.

The city recognises that the establishment of its own urban rail service would be expensive, even though railway lines and stations already exist. But the report says: "The reintroduction [sic] of trains to the core public transport system in Bendigo is critical to the sustainable growth of the city. The next step for Bendigo's rail system will be to establish it as an urban system with its own operator, rolling stock and maintenance and stabling facilities. If this initiative is determined to be feasible, new infrastructure including additional tracks, signalling, infill train stations and other associated infrastructure will be required."

The draft document, released for public consultation, was prepared by consultants on behalf of Bendigo council. In the short-term (2015 to 2020) the city wants more Bendigo-Melbourne services to run to and from stations near Bendigo's outer northern edge – a move that would allow residents from the north to travel by train to central Bendigo and Kangaroo Flat in the south. And in the medium-term (2021 to 2028) it wants "regular services" operating solely within Bendigo. Associate Professor Trevor Budge from the City of Greater Bendigo said that the re-opening of Kangaroo Flat station a few years ago, and more trains servicing Eaglehawk in recent years, had changed travel behaviour. There are people actually using the trains now as though it was a suburban rail system. And they're realising it's the quickest way to get around Bendigo. Because you can get from the outer suburbs of Bendigo [to the centre] in four minutes on the train," he said. Asked if Bendigo could support its own commuter rail service in future, he said: "We think we can. The rails are there, we've got the trains running on there now, people are actually using the trains now like a commuter rail system. It doesn't need a huge suburban train with seven carriages. It could be one Sprinter carriage running."

Adelaide Metro: Millswood re-opened from 12 October

Millswood station on the Belair line re-opened from Sunday 12 October. A new Belair line timetable has been issued. Generally trains depart one/two minutes earlier and arrive accordingly later because of the additional stop. Four up trains in the morning peak and five down trains in the evening peak miss the Millswood stop. There are no longer a few peak hour trains terminating at Blackwood, all operate to/from Belair.

WA grain lines

The WA Parliamentary Economics and Industry Standing Committee has recommended the WA government attempt to reclaim closed parts of the state's grain freight network, if it cannot otherwise ensure they can be accessed. The Committee's Report into the management of WA's freight rail network was released on 14 October. It criticises the state's management of the lines and the lack of transparency around their management.

The report came in the wake of disputes between network lease-holder Brookfield Rail and bulk grain handler CBH Group about access to the lines and the closure of Tier 3 lines because they were considered unsafe. The committee said the Public Transport Authority's (PTA) inadequate

approach to managing the network was hampering the state's economic development.

Among the committee's key recommendations are:

- calling for the Government to attempt to reclaim the Tier 3 lines, if it could not ensure access to them
- changes to the network lease to ensure lines could not be suspended without consequences
- urging the PTA to take a more active approach in its responsibilities in managing the freight rail network lease, and
- for the lessons from the sale and lease of the network to be taken into account in any future privatisation of state-owned monopolies

Brookfield Rail Chief Executive Paul Larsen said the company was keen to find a way to reopen the Tier 3 rail lines, but was disappointed in the committee's conduct. He said, "As we have stated previously, Brookfield Rail is open and willing to invest its own capital together with any other interested party to find a way to re-open the Tier 3 lines," and added that the network "is currently in the best condition it ever has been."

The comprehensive report can be accessed at [www.parliament.wa.gov.au/parliament/commit.nsf/%28\\$all%29/197314BAD95DD73348257D730007F270?opendocument](http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/parliament/commit.nsf/%28$all%29/197314BAD95DD73348257D730007F270?opendocument)

Meanwhile CBH and Brookfield Rail have signed an interim deal to keep this season's grain harvest on track as they continue tense negotiations over a long-term access agreement. The interim deal is to run for six months from the start of November. The deal applies to Tier 1 and Tier 2 lines. Tier 3 lines, which carried their last grain on 30 June, will remain closed. They make up 509km of the 2400km network dedicated to grain freight in WA.

Transperth: Timetable Guide for opening of Butler Station

by David Whiteford

I last reviewed a Transperth *Timetable Guide* (5.11.2000 issue) in *Table Talk* no. 104 (March 2001). Since then the Guide has been re-issued numerous times and, although it makes an interesting collectable, I wonder exactly what users it is aimed at and why Transperth continues to spend a lot of money printing it. Internet timetable access, and large index poster guides where a full range of timetables is available would seem to make it obsolete. The latest issue is effective 21 September 2014 although it appears to have been printed prior to that date being announced as the opening of the Butler rail extension, hence the "Effective from the opening..." statement on the booklet cover.

I think I need to send my review to Transperth. In previous reviews (there were others before the Nov. 2000 issue) I'd several moans. While some issues, such as some indexed suburb names being out of alphabetical order, were fixed (I'm sure due to better proofreading rather than my *Table Talk* piece!), others that would make the guide more accurate and useful have never been addressed.

The Guide maintains its long-standing format - a Transperth timetable size, stapled booklet with a "system map", index to timetables by route number and index by suburb. The very diagrammatic system map only shows the five railway lines, the five colour coded "service areas" (matching the timetable colours) and eight non rail -served bus stations. It is only of use as a guide to the railways (but still shows the closed Belmont Park special event station). While the size precludes it being a bus route map, it doesn't show any suburb names beyond railway stations and it is too diagrammatic and not to scale to accurately depict any. The route index is just that. Know a route number, look it up, and it'll tell you which timetable number you need. But there's no

correlation to the service areas. At the end, three CAT service areas, ferries, and the five train timetables are listed.

It is the suburb index that continues to vex me. The biggest blunder in this issue is that Butler is not shown as served by the Joondalup rail line! (although it is depicted on the map). Yet it is the opening of the railway and consequent big re-organisation of bus services that required a new guide.

I am almost paraphrasing my previous review now. I still bemoan the absence in the suburbs index of railway stations that don't correspond to suburb names, such as Challis, Sherwood and Loch Street. Yet the index includes many institutions such as hospitals and universities. But there is the almost pointless inclusion of rail timetables against some of these, and some suburbs (such as Jolimont) when neither the guide, or the rail timetables (which do not include the good maps found in bus timetables) tell you which railway station to use! Jolimont isn't even 'on' the Fremantle railway line and you need to walk through either Daglish or Subiaco to reach it.

And the Guide isn't keeping up with new suburbs. Camillo, Champion Lakes, Darling Downs, Mount Richon and Serpentine (all served from Armadale) are missing as are Wannanup, Barragup and Dudley Park (Mandurah area). TT139 actually has Route 592 Mandurah Stn – Wannanup on the cover! While others, such as Ascot, have limited timetable links. Ascot only has TT200 (Circle Route) shown against it, yet the Great Eastern Highway forms the long

southern boundary of the suburb and at least TT109 should also be listed. Sinagra (Wanneroo) is another example, whereby while no buses meander through any of the residential subdivisions, a number use main roads that form the suburb boundary.

There are also some errors. Cardup is shown as served by TT3 but this timetable covers routes 220 Armadale – Perth and 249 Armadale – Kelmscott. Cardup is served by TT21, services from Armadale to Byford and beyond.

I wonder how long it will be before a re-issue of the Guide appears with at least Butler properly recognised as served by rail, even if no other matters are resolved.

As an aside, while researching the Transperth website timetables for this piece, I was impressed that both the 'current' and the 'From 21 September 2014' issues of timetables were provided where appropriate. It makes a change from my inadvertently collecting obsolete timetables for the *Distribution List* because old timetables have been left in the display stands behind a few new ones. I suppose it illustrates how useful the internet can be.

Thanks to Tony Bailey, Scott Ferris, Damien Haas, Craig Halsall, Victor Isaacs, Geoff Lambert, Len Regan, Michael Smith, Lourie Smit, Tris Tottenham, Roger Wheaton, www.railpage.com.au, *Age*, *Border Mail* (Albury-Wodonga), *Countryman* (WA), *Daily Telegraph*, *Herald Sun*, *Railway Digest*, *Rail Express*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, and *Transit Australia* for Rail news.

BUS NEWS

Australia Capital Territory

Tuggeranong Flexibus

Following the launch of Flexibus in inner Canberra in September, a fifth zone was added on 3 October to serve southern suburbs around Tuggeranong, including Kambah, Wanniasa, Oxley, Fadden, Macarthur, Monash, Chisholm, Richardson, Isabella Plains, Bonython, Gordon, Calwell, Theodore, Conder and Banks.

Return services are limited to Tuesdays and Fridays and serve Tuggeranong Hyperdome, Erindale Centre & Canberra Hospital.

New South Wales

Sydney Buses October Growth Buses

Sydney Buses introduced 360 weekly growth bus trips on 26 October, including:

- E50 (Milsons Point – Manly): 1725 & 1755 ex Milsons Point on weekdays
- E65 (Wynyard – South Curl Curl): 1655 & 1752 ex Wynyard on weekdays
- 235 (Cremorne Point Wharf – Neutral Bay Wharf): Alternating daytime Sunday short workings between Cremorne Point Wharf & Cremorne Junction now extend to Neutral Bay Wharf, boosting services in this section to half-hourly
- 236 (Spit Junction – South Mosman Wharf): Half-hourly Sunday services during the day, previously no service
- 301 (Eastgardens to Circular Quay): Five additional weeknight twilight services in each direction providing a 10 – 15 minute service until 2100 on the combined corridor with 303 (Sans Souci to Circular Quay), plus new Friday night trips ex Mascot at 0024 & ex Circular Quay at 0115 (extending the combined 301-303 span around an hour). On Saturdays 10 extra trips operate inbound and 11 outbound, boosting evening headways on the combined 301-303 corridor from half hourly to 15 mins and again extending span by around an hour, with last buses ex Mascot at 0035 & ex Circular Quay at 0130.
- 348 (Wolli Creek – Bondi Junction); Now operates on weekends during the day, half-hourly on Saturdays & hourly Sundays. Weekday span has also been extended with last bus ex Wolli Creek an hour later at 1921 & ex Bondi Junction 2 hours later at 2024. Two earlier trips leave Wolli Creek at 0601 & 0631.
- 418 (Bondi Junction - Burwood): Extra trips on weekdays include earlier trips at 0529 ex Dulwich Hill to Bondi Junction & 0531 ex Sydenham to Burwood, along with 1623 ex Dulwich Hill to Bondi Junction and 17:40 ex Bondi Junction to Burwood. Sunday services doubled to half-hourly and extended by around 2½ hours to 20:30.
- 425 (Dulwich Hill - Tempe); Hourly weekday inter-peak and Saturday services introduced, which will appease Tempe residents unhappy with last years rerouting of 418.

Route 362 Returns

25 October saw the resumption of weekend services on 362 between Bondi and Coogee for the summer. Services will conclude on the ANZAC Day weekend.

Newcastle Term 4 revisions

Newcastle Buses implemented minor timetable revisions on 6 October as students returned for term 4. The 106 ex Jesmond at 07:10 now departs for Newcastle Station at 07:05 while the 350 ex Gateshead to Swansea Heads now commences from St Mary's Gateshead at 15:20 and operates five days a week on school days, instead of just

Monday, Tuesday & Thursday. The timetable for Routes 349/350/352 timetable remains in the STA format, while the 100/106/107/111 timetable is issued in TfNSW format.

Northern Territory

Territory Transit transition complete

Transit Systems appears to have gained full control of bus services in Darwin by 6 October, after a three-month transition period, taking over from the former territory operated by Darwin Bus Service. Buses now wear the small logos for Territory Transit, the trading name for the Darwin operation. Existing private operator Buslink continues to jointly operate urban routes with Territory Transit.

Online survey

During October passengers were invited to participate in an online survey on bus services in Darwin.

Queensland

New Nightlinks

BT & Translink commenced operation of two new Nightlink services on 17 October. Outbound N154 links Fortitude Valley with Browns Plains, following the BUZ 150 alignment through Runcorn & Streeon. Bi-directional N345 mirrors daytime BUZ 345 services between City & Aspley. Both routes run hourly.

N345 replaces N339 services departing Normanby Busway for Fortitude Valley, however outbound services continue to depart for Bracken Ridge.

Network-wide Real-time Rollout

From December, passengers on the Sunshine Coast will be able to access real-time information on bus services as part of a rollout of real-time information across all Translink services in south-east Queensland by early 2015. The system, to be provided in partnership with Cubic & Queensland Connectors and Cables, will replace the more expensive equipment currently fitted to buses in Cairns & Logan City along with BT's City Glider fleet. Real-time information will be accessible online, through the Translink call centre & made available to third-party app developers. The system will also allow passenger Go-Card histories to be updated online at 30 min intervals, rather than only when a bus returns to the depot.

South Australia

October updates

In conjunction with revised Belair line timetables on 12 October, timetables for the following routes were updated (routes in *italics* unchanged):

- 404/5 (Salisbury – Paralowie loop)
- 415 (Salisbury – Greenwith) & 430 (Elizabeth – Salisbury)
- 451/2 (Munno Para Centre – Elizabeth), 461 (Munno Para Centre – Munno Para West loop) & 462 (Munno Para Centre – Angle Vale)
- 600/1 (Aberfoyle Hub – Marion Centre), 605 (Darlington – Blackwood), *694 (Blackwood – Hawthorndene clockwise loop) & G30 (Blackwood – City)*

Jet Express to take flight

Adelaide Metro's long anticipated six-month trial of double-decker buses on revenue services is finally set to commence on 10 November, with the introduction of a new Jet Express service between the Airport & CBD, known as J1X which feature the jumbo sized bus in a special livery for the route.

The service will depart the City hourly on weekdays between 0500 & 0900 and 1600 & 2000, departing Adelaide Airport

35 mins later. The trip will take around 25 minutes, 10 mins faster than the existing J1 & J2 options. The service will operate a large circuit of the City core to serve a number of hotels (a hotel map is included in the timetable), however it will operate along different streets than the all-stops Go Zone services, does not aid legibility for visitors. As a stop outside Adelaide Station is desirable, perhaps re-routing of J1 & J2 from Currie St to North Terrace should be considered.

The CDi double-decker vehicle is on lease for \$20,000 and will operate for Surfside on the Gold Coast following the conclusion of the trial. The media release spruiks the vehicle can carry 92 seated passengers, but this appears to ignore the fact passengers with luggage will likely have to climb stairs to reach the upper deck and custom racks for bags & suitcases have not been installed.

Double-deckers have not operated in Adelaide since the removal of Trolleybuses in 1958.

October Adelaide Oval Express

To cater for A-league fans travelling to the Friday night football (soccer) on 17 October, Adelaide Metro operated ticketed services on all 26 express bus routes on the same network as for AFL games. Almost all routes offered multiple departures, an impressive feat given the services operated during the PM commuter peak.

Multiple services again ran on each route on Saturday 26 October catering for music lovers attending the postponed Rolling Stones concert, including a new AOX31 from Oatlands Junction.

O-Bahn trackwork

Owing to trackwork, the O-Bahn busway was closed on 26 October between Park Terrace and Paradise Interchange from 0545 until 1600.

City services detoured via Sudholz Road, North East Road, O.G. Road, Payneham Road, Botanic Road and North Terrace, while outbound buses ran via Hackney Road, Northcote Terrace, North East Road, O.G. Road, Payneham Road, Lower North East Road & Darley Road. Klemzig passengers were directed to stop 17 O.G. (on the bridge above the Interchange).

Victoria

Geelong changes

Further to last month's report of changes to Geelong Routes 14 & 19 on 12 October to serve the new station at Waurin Ponds, CDC Geelong also re-routed their 34 service along Grantham Dr to serve new estates in Highton.

Meanwhile, McHarrys issued revised timetables for all Geelong and Bellarine Peninsula routes to meet the revised Geelong line timetable.

The PTV website briefly showed CDC Geelong's Route 10 to Rosewall as operating to Corio Station, which was soon removed. Further investigation suggests Routes 10 & 11 are

required to operate along School Road to the Shell Parade roundabout to turn around for the return to Geelong, however this is not intended to carry passengers, although curiously a flag has been elected on School Road 300m from the station entrance for some time. With all off-peak trains now calling at Corio, advising the dead movement in timetables may attract some patronage, saving passengers from travelling via North Shore or North Geelong.

Route 461 update

Westrans Sunshine made minor changes to the timetable for 461 (Watergardens – Caroline Springs) on 12 October.

Suitjet hits turbulence on take-off

Suitjet, the business-class CBD commuter service instigated by a former Jetstar and HP executive, Darren Heiberg, has been suspended after just a week of operation.

After failing to meet ambitious launch dates in September and on 6 October, a free trial of services from five pick-up locations took place on 17 October, with fare paying services operating during the following week. Passengers were required to pre-book via their website.

Initial routes saw one return service departing from Mernda McDonalds, Bridge Inn Hotel Doreen, Templestowe Reserve & Sanctuary Lakes Hotel in Point Cook, while two return trips departed Eltham North. Services arrived the CBD & Docklands between 0745 and 0830, returning around 1740. It is assumed that the service could be operated with four buses, with Doreen and Templestowe Reserve second stops on the Mernda and Eltham North trips.

It would appear the high \$30 fare and limited return services model was unsuccessful, with the service suspended after the first week. Their website states an enhanced model will be designed for early 2015 taking into account passenger feedback. Given the expansion of Zone 1 to cover the entire metropolitan area next year, surely the first change will need to be a cheaper return fare, as a weekly myki pass for Zone 1 currently costs under \$36, and even less for longer-term passes.

Regional BusTracker announced

At the opening of Epsom Station in mid October, Transport Minister Terry Mulder announced plans to install the fourth generation BusTracker system onto regional buses in 2015, with Bendigo set to be the first network to receive the system. Real-time screens will be installed at the Mitchell St interchange at a proposed transit lounge to be constructed next year.

It is understood the latest system is now live at several metropolitan bus depots, however real time information is yet to be made available to passengers online or via Smartphone apps.

Thanks to: Jason Blackman, Victor Isaacs, Lourie Smit, Roger Wheaton & various contributors on *Australian Transport Discussion Board*.

AIR NEWS

International

Jetstar will commence thrice weekly flights from Brisbane to Honolulu from 18 December. It already operates from Sydney to Honolulu six times a week and from Melbourne thrice weekly.

Tigerair will discontinue its loss-making Perth to Singapore service from 7 February 2015. Qantas discontinued services on this route in May 2014. Virgin Australia, Singapore Airlines and Jetstar remain on the route.

Qantas' direct Sydney-Dallas/Fort Worth service (one of the longest non-stop flights in the world) will operate daily from 9 December 2014 until 20 January 2015.

Domestic

On 17 October Virgin Australia acquired the 40% of **Tigerair** owned by Singapore Airlines for \$1. A year ago Virgin bought the other 60% of Tigerair for \$35 million. Tigerair lost

\$59 million in the first quarter of 2014. Significant changes in Tigerair's operations are anticipated.

From 17 November **Qantaslink** will provide 11 flights a week from Sydney to the new West Wellcamp Airport, near Toowoomba. There will be two return flights on weekdays, and one return on weekends. From 28 November Qantaslink will introduce direct flights between Brisbane and Hamilton Island four times a week.

Jetstar will provide services to Solomon and Cloudbreak mines in the Pilbara region of WA. This is the first use by Qantas of its low-coast subsidiary for mining Fly-in Fly-out services.

From Monday 1 September **Skippers Aviation** has flights leaving Mount Magnet at 0820 Monday and Friday returning from Perth at 1500 the same day. Mount Magnet has not had a day return air service to Perth for many years and it is now possible because of co-operation between Skippers Aviation and Ramelius Resources which has a mining project near the town.

New scheduled airline **Jetgo** will commence operations with flights from Sydney to Roma, Queensland from 10 November, departing Sydney at 1130 and Roma at 1300 Mondays to Fridays. From 1 December flights will commence to/from Gladstone, Queensland, again on Mondays to Fridays, departing Sydney at 0610 and 1620

and departing Gladstone at 0740 and 1750. Jetgo has operated as a charter airline since 2012.

The Queensland government has awarded contracts to service regional communities to **QantasLink** for routes:

- Brisbane-Roma-Charleville
- Brisbane-Longreach-Barcaldine-Blackall.

And to **Rex** for routes:

- Cairns-Nomanton-Mornington Island-Burketwon-Doomadgee-Mt Isa
- Townsville-Winton-Longreach
- Townsville-Hughenden-Richmond-Julia Ck-Mt Isa
- Brisbane-Toowoomba (the new airport)-St George-Cunnamulla-Thargomindah
- Charleville-Quilpie-Windorah-Birdsville-Bedourie-Boullia-Mt Isa.

The International Air Transport Association forecasts that that growth in air travel in Australia will be 4.3% over the next five years, and then drop to 3.1% per annum. Over the next two decades passengers flying each year will increase from 85 million to 138 million.

Thanks to Craig Halsall, Tris Tottenham, David Whiteford, the *Australian*, *Courier-Mail* and *Kalgoorlie Miner* for Air news.

FERRY NEWS

Central Coast Ferries has issued timetables dated 1 September 2014 for its loop service Empire Bay-Davistown-Saratoga-Woy Woy on the Central Coast of NSW. One pamphlet shows the complete service and one shows only weekday peak hour services. There are ten services on weekdays and six on weekends.

Thanks to David Cranney for Ferry news.

HIGH SPEED ODD SPOT

Fifty years ago in 1964, the first **Japanese high-speed railway** opened between Tokyo and Osaka. Today, the average deviation of time from schedule is one fifth of a second. High-speed trains run between Tokyo to Osaka run every four minutes.

China and Russia are said to be considering construction of a **high-speed railway from Moscow to Beijing** that would cut the journey time via the Trans Siberian railway from six days to two. The project would cost more than \$US 23 billion and be over 7,000km long - more than three times the world's current longest high-speed line, from Peking to the southern city of Guangzhou. The railway would be a powerful physical symbol of political common interests of Russia and China. They signed a memorandum of understanding in October during Premier Li Keqiang's visit to Moscow in October in which China expressed interest in building a fast rail link between the Russian capital and Kazan in the oil-rich Tatarstan region. This 803-km line would be the first stage of the route to Beijing.

About *Table Talk*

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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 (Rail section): Agnes Boskovitz, David Cranney and Geoff Hassall.

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