



TABLE TALK

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RAIL AND TRAM NEWS

Queensland: Townsville port connection

Federal Minister for Infrastructure and Transport Darren Chester has confirmed a \$3 million commitment for the development of a development case for the Townsville Eastern Access Rail Corridor (TEARC) project. This will provide a new eight km freight line connecting the North Coast and Mount Isa lines with the Port of Townsville. Queensland's Department of Transport and Main Roads says the TEARC will allow 1400-metre trains to access the port. Train lengths are currently limited to 1000 metres on the Mount Isa line, and 650 metres on the North Coast line. Infrastructure Australia has the upgrade of the Mount Isa to Townsville rail corridor – which includes the TEARC – listed as a medium term priority initiative, in the business case development stage. The Minister said the Federal commitment was dependent on it being matched at the State level.

Queensland Rail: Central West line

The Queensland Government has launched the third stage of a program to replace, repair and upgrade ageing timber rail bridges on Central West line, with tenders worth \$8.8 million to replace up to 18 bridges, and 69 bridge piers with more durable structures. In stage one of the program 49 timber bridges were replaced or repaired. In Stage two, completed last year, a further 23 bridges were replaced or upgraded between Clermont, Emerald and Winton.

Queensland Rail CityTrain: Kippa-Ring line

Advice from Queensland Rail is that the requirements of the signalling system for the Kippa-Ring line to open are soon expected to be fit for purpose. To finalise track and signalling there was to be a long shutdown - in kilometerage - on the weekend of 27 and 28 August all the way from Northgate to Gympie North. This was also for other work, viz, Kippa Ring line works, signalling upgrade, points upgrade, overhead line maintenance, stabling yard projects at Elimbah and Woombye (for the new generation electric trains), track reconditioning, level crossing reconditioning, and track maintenance. The Spirit of Queensland (diesel tilt

train) will only run in both directions north of Gladstone, the Rockhampton tilt train is replaced by buses entirely, and the Saturday departure of the Spirit of the Outback from Brisbane on Saturday 27 August was rescheduled to depart the day before at 1810.

Then there will be another long shutdown - this one in time duration including four weekdays - from Zillmere to Caboolture from late on 16 September until early on 23 September. Over 200 buses will be used to transport passengers on the Sunshine Coast / Caboolture line during the closure. Express replacement services between Elimbah and Boondall will cater for Sunshine Coast commuters, while suburban passengers will be bussed between Caboolture and Zillmere. Additional Shorncliffe line trains will operate. An opening date for the Moreton Bay Rail Link has yet to be announced.

Queensland Rail Travel: Tilt Train replacement

The Electric Tilt Train refurbishment program is taking much longer than expected. Therefore the interim Brisbane-Rockhampton timetable, with a replacement locomotive and carriage set, will remain in effect until probably April 2017.

Queensland Rail Travel: Subsidies

A reply on 28 July to a Parliamentary Question to Queensland Minister for Transport, Stirling Hinchliffe, indicated the extent of subsidies to passengers on QR long distance services. Each trip on the Westlander (Brisbane-Charleville) is subsidised about \$4,000 while each trip on the Inlander (Townsville-Mount Isa) is subsidised about \$3,500, not including concessions. The total cost in subsidies to the State Government for these two services has increased to more than \$30 million for the last financial year. A one way trip from Brisbane to Charleville costs an adult passenger about \$148.50, leaving QR to pay thousands of dollars more for the actual price. The subsidy cost for the Westlander service has almost doubled from figures released in 2013, from \$2,236 to \$4,007. The cost for the Inlander is up 70%, from \$2,038 to \$3,436. The Westlander made 3,677 passenger journeys and the

Inlander made 4,526 in the 2015/16 financial year. A spokeswoman for Mr Hinchliffe said the services were an essential public service.

	Estimated total cost	Estimated passengers	Subsidy per passenger
Spirit of Qld	\$71m	112,460	\$632
Spirit of Outback	\$21m	12,189	\$1,724
Rockhampton tilt train	\$31.5m	133,099	\$237
Bundaberg tilt train	\$15.9m	47,237	\$338
Westlander	\$14.7m	3,677	\$4,007
Inlander	\$15.5m	4,526	\$3,436
Gulflander	\$1.2m	1,907	\$641

John Holland Rail NSW Country Regional Network WTTs 6 August and 15 October

JHR's new Working Timetable of **6 August 2016** – reported in July *Table Talk*, pages 2-3 - is now available on their website at <http://www.jhrcm.com.au/what-we-do/network-operations-access/standard-working-timetable-swtt/>. At first, the schedules for Fridays were missing from every line. After some time, Friday was reinstated to the week and a corrected version posted.

A further JHR NSW CRN WTT dated **15 October** has been issued and is also available at the same website. There are very few alterations in this WTT and they are all in the Western area, viz:

- AR72 Saturdays and Sundays will depart Airly Balloon Loop 1157, arrive Airly Balloon Loop Junction 1202, depart 1207, pass Ben Bullen 1228, Baal Bone Junction 1239, Wallerawang 1320, Coxs River 1325 thence as per previous WTT
- AR86 (PNC 850m) every day is renumbered ER86
- ER64 (PNC 850m) every day is renumbered LS64 and increased in length from 745m.
- The following Pacific National freight trains (all formerly every day, 850m) are deleted: AR95, AR96, AR77, AR78.

Presumably, we can also expect **ARTC** and **Sydney Trains** WTTs on or about 15 October.

Sydney Trains WTT 2017

A portion of Hornsby yard is to close temporarily in 2017 for reconstruction and expansion. During the possession period a number of sets will require relocation from Hornsby car sidings to stable elsewhere on the network. This will be reflected in the 2017 WTT.

Sydney Trains: Late 2018 timetable

Big changes are likely when the Chatswood to Epping line is closed in late 2018 for conversion and integration into the Sydney NW Metro. It is believed that:

- Richmond services will no longer run to and from the City and will instead run to and from Leppington.
- Inner West services will be extended from Homebush to operate to and from Parramatta.

This raises the following speculation:

- The existing North Sydney to Emu Plains service could be extended to run to and from Hornsby via the North Shore line. This could result in a more even spread of services between the City and Hornsby (via the North Shore Line), after taking into consideration services to and from Hornsby (via the Main). This could also result in a better use of the turnback facilities at Lindfield or Gordon, if desired, to terminate and start services more closely to Chatswood.
- This may be the reason why Richmond services will not run to and from the City. Current up and down Richmond services need to be timetabled for the crossing loops on the Richmond branch and may not fit well with the spread of service on the North Shore line. Four services an hour to/from the West, and four services an hour to/from the North (Main Line), could see a service running through Chatswood every 7 to 8 minutes in the off-peak.
- The existing City-Leppington Service could be altered to run to and from Campbelltown. This would mean the existing 4-car Y-Link Schofields-Campbelltown service would cease to operate.
- Richmond/Leppington services may run with a 4-car consist, although current afternoon peak services running Schofields to Campbelltown, with 4-car consist, depart Parramatta with a full train load. Services, therefore, may need to be built-up to 8-car consists for the peak period.

NSW Train Link: Interesting trackwork

On the weekend of **10 and 11 September** the main NSW Southern line will be closed for scheduled trackwork from Campbelltown and Leppington to Fairfield, and Liverpool to Bankstown (probably really means Sefton Park Junctions). This will mainly affect services of **Sydney Trains**, which will be replaced by buses. It will also, of course, affect **NSW Train Link** passenger services. All Melbourne trains during the weekend will be replaced by buses between Goulburn and Sydney and v.v. In recent years, Southern line closedowns have resulted in all Canberra trains being replaced by buses for the entire journey. Not so on this occasion. Instead:

- The morning trains Canberra-Sydney trains, midday trains in both directions and evening Sydney-Canberra trains will be replaced by buses between Campbelltown and Sydney or v,v only;
- Even more interestingly, the evening trains (at 1720) from Canberra on both days, and the morning trains (at 0657) from Sydney on both days will run for the full journey between Canberra and Sydney and v.v.. Within the Sydney suburban area, rather than taking the usual route, they will travel via **ARTC's** South Sydney Freight Line. This will be a real boon for those who like travelling over rare trackage.

NSW freight enhancements

On 8 August NSW Minister for Freight, Duncan Gay, announced funding of \$15 million for pilot projects to improve the NSW rail freight network. This includes the reopening of the line from Maimuru to Demondrille on the former Cowra Line (56 km). The projects are:

- \$5 million towards the reinstatement of the Maimuru to Demondrille line \$3 million for rail siding extension at Hillston to service a major grain receival site
- \$2 million for the reinstatement of a 2.8 km section of the Moree to Inverell railway line at Moree
- \$1.5 million to extend a siding extension at Borellan to service a major grain receival site
- \$1.5 million to extend a siding extension at Burren Junction to service a major grain receival site
- \$1 million to upgrade a siding at the Canberra Railway Freight Terminal (at Fyshwick in the ACT)
- \$1 million for detailed planning and design of the reinstatement of the non-operational line from West Tamworth to Westdale (about 4 km), a new turnout at the centre of Dunmore Loop at Shellharbour, a new turnout at Unanderra, and a new crossing loop near Tarago.

Aurizon: NSW coal contract

Aurizon has obtained its first coal haulage contract in the Southern Coalfields of NSW. It will rail 800,000 tonnes per annum for Wollongong Coal's Wongawilli Colliery to Port Kembla Coal Terminal from August 2016 to August 2018. Aurizon will use existing locomotives and wagons to service the contract.

Newcastle tram

Downer EDI has been awarded the contract to build the Newcastle light rail. NSW Minister for Transport and Infrastructure Andrew Constance announced on 9 August that the 2.6 km line will now be built with embedded instead of ballasted track, and that small changes to the alignment around Worth Place and Stewart Avenue had been made.

Hunter Valley coal

Consideration by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission of the proposed takeover by Aurizon of Glencore Rail's coal haulage operations in the Hunter Valley revealed the following current

proportions of coal haulage on the Hunter Valley coal network:

Pacific National 59%, Aurizon 23%, Glencore Rail 17%, Southern Shorthaul Rail 1%.

Moorebank terminal

Logistics firm Qube has acquired full control of the in-development Moorebank Intermodal Hub after it agreed to buy out joint venture partner Aurizon. It acquired Aurizon's 33% interest in the Moorebank Industrial Property Trust for \$98.9 million. Aurizon said the decision to sell its stake in Moorebank came after it secured a 10-year lease at the nearby Enfield Intermodal Logistics Centre, which is owned by Port Botany owner NSW Ports. Aurizon started operations at Enfield on 9 May. "Enfield fulfils Aurizon's current customer, capacity and operational needs," the company said in a statement. "Due to the open access nature of the Moorebank Terminals, the divestment will not affect Aurizon's ability to access the Moorebank facilities in future."

ARTC industrial action

Industrial action by ARTC train control and administrative staff had a major affect on services on the ARTC network in NSW and NE Victoria. Staff struck from 0700 Wednesday 3 August to 0700 Sunday 7 August, and for two hours on Monday 8 August. TrainLink regional passenger trains were replaced by buses, as were local services in the Hunter Valley and Southern Highlands. In Victoria, Albury V/Line services were replaced by buses. Interstate freight trains and coal trains in the busy Hunter Valley lines were stopped for four days. It is believed, however, that a few interstate freight trains operated. The industrial action was a result of a struggle between the Rail Tram and Bus Union and ARTC over an enterprise agreement to cover roughly 580 staff in NSW. ARTC chief John Fullerton said the cost of the strike was estimated at \$10 million a day. Staff were seeking a 4% pay rise over three years and guarantees of employee entitlements. Further industrial action had been proposed for 24 hours from 0700 Thursday 18 August and again on 23 August, but this was overtaken by staff agreement to a new enterprise agreement.

V/Line Freight WTT 4 July

A new Working Timetable for freight trains operating over the V/Line network, dated 4 July 2016, is available on their website at <https://corporate.vline.com.au/Network-Access/Network-service-plan> In a reversion to pre-CTC days, freight trains no longer ascend the Ingliston Bank; but run via Leithbridge. They do, however, descend the Bank in the wee small hours.

V/Line: Ballarat line

Duplication of the railway between Deer Park West and Melton commenced in early August. About a kilometre is being duplicated, to be opened at the same time as Caroline Springs station in early 2017.

V/Line: Armstrong Creek line?

A feasibility study commissioned by the Victorian Government details several potential projects to cope with rapid suburban expansion at Armstrong Creek and along the Surf Coast, and the infrastructure needed to build a railway. Under the potential roll-out, tracks would be laid from a new rail junction veering off from the Warrnambool line between the Surf Coast Highway and Barwarre Road to a new station at Armstrong Creek.

Level crossing city (soon to be non level crossing city)

Trains will not stop at Carnegie and Murrumbeena throughout September, as work begins on the Melbourne sky rail project. Both stations are being elevated and rebuilt as part of the Victorian government's level crossing removal project along the Cranbourne-Pakenham line. In a bid to minimise long disruptions both stations will be closed after the last train on Sunday 28 August and reopen on 26 September when temporary stations are built. A second closure of Carnegie station is scheduled in November for further work.

Melbourne Metro Tunnel

Construction work will begin next year on three massive shafts in the CBD for the Melbourne Metro Tunnel project. These will be at the future CBD North station at Franklin and A'Beckett Streets and CBD South beneath the City Square. Construction company John Holland won the \$324 million excavation contract, which includes the 35-metre deep shafts and acoustic sheds to reduce noise. A car park under City Square will be partially demolished to allow construction of CBD South station. The government says creating the shafts will involve the removal of the equivalent of 34 Olympic-sized swimming pools of rock and soil. Premier Daniel Andrews said commuters would not need a timetable when using Melbourne Metro. "If you've not made the last train the next one will be there in just a few minutes' time," he said.

Metro Trains Melbourne: Delays 9 August

An overhead wire in Dandenong broke and came down on top of a Metro train early in the morning of Tuesday 9 August, taking out rail services for the outer south-east during rush hour. Metro Trains passengers were left frustrated, but were at least able to catch hastily arranged buses. However, 160 passengers aboard the 0436 V/Line train from Traralgon were trapped for three hours between Hallam and Dandenong.

Victorian all-night transport

On 2 August the Victorian government announced that the trial of all night public transport on weekends has been extended six months until June 2017. This will allow services to be assessed over a full 12 month period and help organisers plan for the massive line up of events between January and June, including the Australian Open, Formula 1 Grand Prix and the Comedy Festival. It will also ensure all night public

transport is on offer for the start of next year's footy season. An average of 35,000 people use Night Network every weekend – and more than 20% are shift-workers. There are 300 overnight train services, 250 tram services or around 500 bus services each weekend.

Adelaide Metro: Industrial action

An industrial dispute caused Belair line trains to be cancelled in the middle of the day on Thursday 25 August. On Friday 26 August trains on the Belair and Grange lines were cancelled until 1900 and reduced on other lines.

Perth transport plan

The Perth Transport Plan "for 3.5 million people and beyond" was launched on 29 July by Transport Minister Dean Nalder. Key rail projects proposed would extend the suburban train network from 180 to 300km, including:

- a new railway to Morley and East Wanneroo
- extending existing suburban railways from Butler to Yanchep, Midland to Bellevue, Armadale to Byford and Thornlie to Cockburn Central.

The plan recommends Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) to areas where the level of demand does not warrant heavy rail. These would connect Ellenbrook to Bassendean Station and Midland to the new East Wanneroo rail link. BRT or light rail would connect Glendalough Station to Scarborough Beach. A light-rail service, "the Knowledge Arc", is proposed between the University of WA, the QEII medical centre, the CBD, Curtin University and Canning Bridge.

A railway to Ellenbrook is canvassed in the plan for "beyond 3.5 million people" but, unlike other previous proposals, involves a spur line to Marshall Road in Malaga. Marshall Road is believed to be part of a new rail line between the city and the northern suburbs. The first stage will involve a tunnel from the CBD, with the second stage linking it to the Joondalup line.

The plan also does not include the formerly-proposed MAX light-rail system between Mirrabooka and the CBD.

The plan does not include specific costings. However, some projects that have already been announced are funded, including the \$2 billion Forrestfield Airport Link, the \$1.9 billion Perth Freight Link, the \$1.1 billion Northlink project and the \$49 million Ellenbrook BRT.

However, Colin Barnett, WA Premier, said construction of a railway to Ellenbrook could happen much earlier than envisaged in the Plan. On 5 August he said "Ellenbrook will come. It will get a rail line. The comment I make is simply that I would expect, as successive governments determine their priorities and make decisions on individual projects, I would expect a rail line to Ellenbrook would be well before 2050".

On the other hand, on 17 August, the WA Treasurer, Mike Nahan, told State Parliament that research to assess the route and cost of a proposed underground

heavy rail link from Perth CBD to the eastern suburb of Morley will take "years" to complete. Although this was identified as a priority project in the Perth Transport Plan, there has been open disagreement between senior Cabinet members over which of the projects identified in the report should be commissioned first. Transport Minister Dean Nalder has said the Morley rail link should be the Government's top priority, and wants planning underway by the end of the year. Treasury Mike Nahan believes the Government would get more value for money building a link from Thornlie to Cockburn, connecting with the Mandurah Line.

Perth enhancements

Salini Impregilo and NRW joint venture has been selected as the "preferred respondent" to deliver the main works of the Forrestfields-Airport line.

Construction of Perth Stadium station on the Armadale line is now at an advanced stage. Construction of

Aubin Grove station of the Mandurah line started in March. East Perth is being upgraded to partially handle crowds from the new Perth Stadium. (Most of the crowds will use the new Perth Stadium station).

Rio Tinto: Driverless trains

Rio Tinto's planned iron ore mining expansion program could be delayed for two years due to ongoing issues with the implementation of driverless trains. This might force the company to develop more rail infrastructure instead, with implications for its financial position. Software problems are the main issue.

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RECOMMENDED READING

"Rail access in Western Australia" by Michael Gillooly in *The Westland*, magazine of Rail Heritage WA (ARHS WA), issue 282, 2016, pages 30-36. It summarises the legal basis of rail access in Australia, and in particular in WA.

ODD SPOT

In August 2011, David Harris wrote to the British *Daily Telegraph* newspaper:

It is a surprise to me that, while rail companies call their passengers 'customers' and trains 'services' they still use the outmoded 'stations' and 'platforms'.

Perhaps customers of this newspaper can suggest modern alternatives.

Cynthia Harrod-Eagles responded:

Can I suggest 'transit hubs' and 'access facilities'?

David Brown responded:

How about 'Customer Regional Assembly Point' and "Customer Rallying And Migration Pier"? In the interests of brevity, acronyms could be substituted.

Iain Harris responded:

A platform should be an 'elevated and ramped non-organic customer-rail modal interface facilitation device'.

From *Leaves on the Line: Letters on Trains to The Daily Telegraph*, edited by Gavin Fuller, published by Aurum, 2012.

BUS NEWS

Australian Capital Territory

Transport Canberra's new timetable commencing 27 August takes a new format. Instead of one large (216 pages) Weekday Timetable book, there are now separate books for Gungahlin (80 pages), Belconnen (108 pages), Central Canberra (88 pages), Woden and Weston Creek (96 pages) and Tuggeranong (88 pages). Inevitably there is some duplication between these books. The Weekend Timetables for all of Canberra remain consolidated in one book (140 pages, the same as formerly). All these books have the new Transport Canberra branding. There is also a stand-alone pamphlet timetable for the 81/981 tourist route.

Weekday changes effective Monday 29 August:

- Blue Rapid weekday off-peak services now provide a ten minute service between Tuggeranong-Woden-City-Belconnen-Kippax along routes 300, 313 and 343 with 300 extended to Kippax. Previously

these routes provided a 7/8 minute service Tuggeranong-Woden-City-Belconnen and a 15 minute service on to Kippax.

- New route 182 "The Weston Line" provides a 30 minute service from the City to Woden via Cotter Road, Molonglo Valley and Cooleman Court.
- Routes 83 Woden-Cooleman Court and 783 City-Cooleman Xpresso now serve Coombs as well as Wright.
- Morning peak-hour inward trips on 54 Belconnen-Crache-Gungahlin now extend to the City and Parliamentary Zone as route 254. Afternoon peak hour outward trips also operate.
- Morning peak-hour inward trips on 16 Kippax-Latham-Florey-Belconnen now extend to the City, Woden and Tuggeranong as route 316, afternoon peak hour outward trips also serve

Tuggeranong, Woden and the City as route 316.

- 81 Tourist Loop now serves the new Tourist Information Centre at Regatta Point and Westside Acton Village.
- Xpresso 743 Barton-City-Macgregor-Dunlop-Fraser and 744 Barton-City-Holt-Macgregor have additional services.
- Route 88 Woden-Alexander Maconochie Centre (prison) has been adjusted to align with the Centre's visiting hours and no longer serves Chisholm.
- Routes 4 and 5 now serve City West in the evenings.
- Morning 7A City-National Museum are replaced by normal route 7 services.
- "Green Line" branding has returned for Routes 4 and 5 through Manuka, Kingston, Barton and Russell. All trips after 1700 now originate at City West, including a later 2201 departure for Route 5
- Similarly, "Gold Line" branding has been resurrected for the combined 2 and 3 corridor from Civic to Deakin via Parkes, Barton and Forrest.
- Weekend changes effective 27 August:
- Adjustment of tourist route 981 to match changes to weekday route 81,
- Extension of route 983 into Coombs to match changes to weekday route 83,
- Timing adjustments to route 980 to provide better access to Fyshwick, and
- Additional services to AMC prison for changes in visiting hours.

Qcity Transit shuttles to Brumbies Final

Friday 22 July saw the Brumbies play a Super Rugby final against the Highlanders at GIO Stadium. With the early 1800 kick-off time, Transport Canberra arranged Qcity Transit to provide the shuttles departing Woden, Tuggeranong, Belconnen, City and Gungahlin, allowing ACTION to operate their usual afternoon peak services. Game ticket holders had free travel across the ACTION network after 1500.

New VIP passes

Transport Canberra have begun rolling out new electronic travel passes for visually impaired passengers that can be read by the myWay ticketing equipment. This will enable collection of travel pattern information, which can be used to target locations for infrastructure upgrades, such as tactile. The existing passes can still be used.

Election promises

Following the launch of Transport Canberra's City Loop bus in early July (see above), the Liberals proposed an alternative City Hopper service. It would operate clockwise along a larger route incorporating the War Memorial, Russell, the Parliamentary Triangle

and the National Museum, but it has been slammed by critics as being too indirect and more akin to a tourist service, thus endangering the private Canberra Explorer route. The service, expected to cost \$900,000 per year, would require passengers to pay standard fares, unlike the free Route 101 service.

At the ACT ALP Labor conference on 23 July, Chief Minister Andrew Barr foreshadowed a 12-month trial of free bus travel between 1000 and 1600 for seniors and other concession card holders should the Party be re-elected. This comes after the recent Territory budget announced moves to raise the eligibility age for senior cards from 60 to 65 over the next decade.

New South Wales

Apps: A potential benefit of smart ticketing systems is being explored on Sydney's public transport network, with at least one app set to use Opal live data to help passengers avoid crowded buses. Travel app 'NextThere' became the first to use the data on 24 August, launching a new feature which uses icons on services to indicate the volume of people travelling on the service. TfNSW expects more transport apps, including TripView, Metrarove, Arrivo and TripGo, to access the live data and provide additional information for their users.

Data from NSW's Opal electronic ticketing system shows that Sydney's busiest bus route is the 400 from Burwood in the west via Sydney Airport to Bondi Junction – the only bus that drops passengers at the airport. About 16,000 journeys are taken on a typical week day.

The Opal data is providing transport planners with a more accurate picture of demand for services across Sydney's trains, buses and ferries than the traditional method of counting passengers at stops and stations. In the evening peak, M20 buses between Sydney's CBD and the fast-growing Green Square precinct in the inner south are also consistently among the most crammed. Since 2011, an extra 490 services have been put on routes to and from Green Square. A boom in apartment construction at Green Square and neighbouring suburbs such as Waterloo has led to a surge in population and demand for public transport.

In the mornings, the 900 bus that provides a shuttle around central Paramatta, the 55C "Gong Shuttle" in Wollongong, and the 617X from Rouse Hill to Sydney's CBD feature among the most crowded.

On Wednesday morning, real-time data from Opal showed 71% of the 900 services had standing room only, while three out of every five 55C and 617X buses had no seats available for passengers.

While the 400 service remains the only bus to stop at Sydney Airport, the government has committed to providing an extra two bus services – one from the city's south and another from the inner west – when a new interchange is completed at the domestic terminal in 2018.

Use of Shuttle Buses

The State Government is considering a plan to boost the number of buses available in peak hours by utilising private shuttle buses owned by schools, clubs, nursing homes etc which would transport commuters to local rail stations and bus hubs. The proposal is the antithesis of one proposed some years ago in Victoria where it was suggested that it would be more efficient that local bus operators undertake community bus work rather than having many organisations each using their own bus on a limited basis.

Red Bus Route 44 timetable adjustment

Effective 27 June the weekday 0818 Erina Fair – Gosford trip on Route 44 no longer services Erina High School.

Transit Systems Route 804 and 805 timetable updates

A new timetable was introduced on 805 (Cabramatta – Liverpool) from 4 July to improve reliability. Buses now travel directly along Edensor Road and Humphries Road due the long-term closure affecting Bunker Parade in Bonnyrigg. An earlier change on 26 April saw weeknight departures on 804 towards Bonnyrigg and Liverpool adjusted to improve train connections at Fairfield.

Sydney Buses Service Changes Effective 5 September:

- Route 202 services now run between Northbridge and North Sydney during peak hours, but continue to the City at other times. All trips from Castlecrag on Route 203 now end at North Sydney and trips to Castlecrag now commence from Milsons Point, the City no longer being served.
- Routes 252 services now run between Lane Cove West and North Sydney during peak hours, but continue to the City at other times. All route 254 services now run between Riverview and McMahons Point, the City no longer being served.
- Route 290 now operates between Epping and City-Erskine St only in the early morning and late evening. Most 290 trips are replaced by new route 291 which operate between Epping and McMahons Point.
- With additional trips to McMahons Point being operated by routes 254 and 291 morning and afternoon 265 short trips between North Sydney and McMahons Point now no longer operate.
- Timetable adjustments are made to routes 261 285 286 287 288 289 292 293 294 and 297.
- These service changes coincide with the introduction of a \$2 (\$1 concession) discount on Opal fares where a change of mode takes place, as travellers need to transfer to trains to complete journeys to and from the City.

New Timetables Effective 5 September 2016 on www.sydneybuses.info

202 203 204 205 206 207 208 209 East Lindfield and Northbridge to City and Milsons Point
251 252 253 254 Lane Cove West and Riverview to McMahons Point and City
258 285 289 533 534 Sydney Olympic Park, Ryde and Lane Cove Industrial to Chatswood and City
261 Longueville and Northwood to City
265 269 McMahons Pt to Lane Cove and Kirribilli
286 287 288 290 291 294 297 Epping and North Ryde to McMahons Point and City
292 293 Marsfield to City

State Transit Route 132 timetable adjustment

The weekday 0650, 0718 and 0737 North Balgowlah Shops – Manly trips on Route 132 shifted six minutes earlier on 25 July.

State Transit Route 341 bites the dust

One of Sydney's shortest bus routes ran for the last time on 29 July. State Transit's 341 ran a 1.5km path between Randwick Boys High School at Avoca St and the Nine Ways roundabout travelling along Rainbow St, Kennedy St and Meeks St. Two interpeak services ran in each direction, timed at 6 to 7 minutes. Rainbow St continues to be served by the full-time 418 (Burwood – Bondi Junction). The sister 342 shopper service, running a 4 minute 800m route serving the Our Lady of the Scared Heart Convent in nearby Darceyville, continues to operate.

Queanbeyan Interchange display

Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council have installed a display at Queanbeyan Bus Interchange detailing the history of bus services in the area from 1900 to the present day. It pays tribute to local cross-border operators over the years including Tetley Motor Service, Mrs Barton's Safety Coach Service, Quodling Bros, Lever Buses, Deanes Bus Lines and QCity Transit.

Busabout: From Monday 27 June 2016, all route 893 and S17 services were re-directed to operate to their original route along Springs Road, Spring Farm. As a result, these services no longer operate along the Camden Bypass and Liz Kernohan Drive between Richardson Road and Macarthur Road. New web timetables for 890 891 892 893 898 Campbelltown to Mt Annan, Narellan and Harrington Park and 899 S17 Camden to Narellan and Catherine Field effective 27 June 2016 are available. The printed timetables are still effective 1 June 2014.

Transdev North: From Monday 4 July, minor timetable changes have been made on Route 565 to reflect the closure of the UTS Kuring-gai campus. Transdev are issuing a computer print-out timetable for 565 effective 4 July 2016.

Hillsbus: Commencing 1 August:

- 611: Blacktown to Macquarie Park has extra trips departing Blacktown at 0715, 0730, 0745, 0755 and 0805, providing a bus every five minutes in the morning peak.

- 619: Castle Hill to Macquarie Park has extra trips departing Castle Hill at 0733, 0757 and 0813, providing a bus every 8 minutes in the morning peak.
- 638: 0649 bus from Berrilee will now operate to Pennant Hills. Passengers for Castle Hill will transfer at Round Corner Dural to route 637 service departing at 0723.
- 702: 1445 Blacktown to Seven Hills service leaves at 1500.

Hillsbus are issuing computer print-out timetables effective 1 August for 611/630, 619, 637/638/639/640/641/644 and 702, 700, 705, 706, 711, T61 have new web timetables effective 25 July 2016.

Northern Territory

Saturday evening buses for Malak Markets

Additional route 12 services have been introduced to Malak Markets on Saturday evenings. They will operate during market season from the last Saturday in April until the last Saturday in October, departing Casuarina at 1920, 2025 and 2115. The last Saturday bus for the remainder of the year departs at 1845.

Darwin Events

A twilight NRL game between Parramatta and Gold Coast was played at TIO Stadium in Marrara on Saturday 11 June. Free buses operated to and from Darwin, Casuarina, Palmerston interchanges, along with a return service from Humpty Doo and Coolalinga Park+Ride.

V8 Supercars returned to Hidden Valley Raceway from June 17 to 19, with a 'Pitlane Express' network in operation, free on presentation of gate passes. Five frequent routes operated to the track from several Darwin suburbs, with a further seven routes operating limited services from rural localities.

Those traveling to Territory Day celebrations at Mindil Beach on Friday 1 July had a free ride after 1500 if they advised their driver that was their destination. Extra buses ran on Route 4 to/from Casuarina, 8 to/from Palmerston and 15 to/from Darwin CBD.

TIO Stadium in Marrara hosted an evening AFL match between Melbourne and Fremantle on Saturday 9 July. Spectators could catch free buses serving at Darwin, Casuarina, Palmerston interchanges, along with a return service from Humpty Doo and Coolalinga Park+Ride.

Special event buses again operated for the Darwin Show on Friday 22 July and Saturday 23 July. Regular services departed from interchanges at Darwin, Casuarina, Palmerston plus a regular shuttle from Humpty Doo via Coolalinga Park+Ride. On Darwin Show Day on 22 July, a public holiday timetable operated across the city.

For the Palmerston Sprint Race Day on Saturday 30 July, Buslink ran a free shuttle every 10 minutes

departing Darwin Turf Club from 1600 until 1800. On Darwin Cup Day on Monday 1 August, shuttle buses ran from Darwin, Palmerston and Casuarina before and after the meet. Picnic Day on 1 August meant a public holiday timetable again operated on regular route services.

Route 14 afternoon adjustments

A timetable update commencing 25 July saw the 1630 14c deviation to Darwin Waterfront on weekdays cancelled while the 1645 14 trip to Cullen Bay now departs at 1640.

Queensland

Mackay: In late 2016 a new bus network will be introduced. The new network will have routes numbered in the 300 series and will be operated by Mackay Transit Coaches for Translink rather than under the qconnect umbrella as at present. The new network will comprise:

- 300 Hospital to Andergrove via West Mackay, City and Mt Pleasant (replaces 2 City-West Mackay and 5 City-Andergrove)
- 301 University to Beaconsfield via City and Mt Pleasant (replaces 6 City-Beaconsfield and 9A City-University)
- 302 City-East Mackay (previously 1)
- 303 City-Ooralea via South Mackay (replaces 3 City-East Mackay)
- 304 City to Mackay Harbour (previously 12)
- 305 City-Slade Point (previously 4 or 4A via M Pleasant)
- 306 City to Mt Pleasant via Glenella (replaces 8 City-Glenella)
- 307 City to Blacks Beach (previously 7)
- 308 City to Shoal Point (previously 7)
- 309 City to Sarina (previously 10)
- 310 City to Mirani (previously 9 City-Walkerston and 11 City-Mirani).

Sunshine Coast: With the opening of the Sunshine Coast University Hospital in early 2017 the following changes are proposed:

- 600 Caloundra-Maroochydore Monday to Friday frequency decrease from 12 to 15 minutes
- 607 Caloundra-University extended to Sunshine Coast University Hospital bus station and Monday to Friday increase from 60 to 30 minutes and 60 minute weekend service introduced)
- 611 Maroochydore-Sunshine Coast University Hospital via Mooloolaba and Kawana (new with 30 minute Monday to Friday and 60 minute weekend frequencies)
- 614 Maroochydore to Kawana Monday to Friday frequency decrease from 30 to 60 minutes

At the same time the 639 Nambour Local Service (comprising a Northern loop, Western loop, South

Western loop, Palmwoods loop and Eastern loop) will be replaced as follows:

610 Maroochydore to Nambour via Kunda Park will have six trips a day extended to Rotary Garden Village, previously served by 639

612 Maroochydore to Nambour via Bli Bli will incorporate part of the 639 Northern loop along Coronation Avenue

636 Nambour to University via Buderim will incorporate part of the 639 Eastern loop

637 Nambour to Burnside new service will replace the 639 Western and South-Western Loops

638 Nambour to Palmwoods previously 639 Palmwoods Loop

637 and 638 will be Hail n Ride services until sufficient bus stops are installed.

South Australia

Adelaide Metro: In conjunction with the Torrens (River) to Torrens (Road) project to lower South Road to provide a four km uninterrupted stretch of road, a trial T2T Express service was introduced between Arndale Centre Park 'n' Ride and the City. Buses leave Arndale at 0728, 0745, 0757 and 0807. Buses leave Victoria Square at 1627, 1641, 1657 and 1712. The aim is to get motorists off South Road and onto public transport. Passengers would then have to get another service onto other destinations normally reached from South Road.

Bus and Tram Priority

Buses and trams will be able to request priority at certain traffic lights following the adoption of some aspects of the "Operation Moving Traffic: report by the S.A. Government. Late running buses and trams will be able to get priority treatment at these traffic lights in order to recover time or prevent further lateness. Other actions proposed in the report included increasing the number of bus lanes, including an extended inbound lane on Anzac parade; trialling a super frequent service on one key route; reducing the number of bus stops on selected routes; extending and joining up bicycle lanes. It was also recommended to explore the use of indented bus stop bays, which are something of a rarity in Adelaide, particularly the inner suburbs (the old MTT operating area). The report also suggested there were too many car parking spaces available in the Adelaide CBD, however this was rejected by the Minister.

Premier Stateliner downsizes

Kanga Coaches purchased the tours and charter division of Premier Stateliner effective 1 July, including six coaches. The Goolwa – Victor Harbour – Adelaide route transferred to LinkSA as of 27 June with media reports suggesting Premier Stateliner could no longer maintain the current contract, expiring in late 2017. The existing timetable continues to operate. Premier Stateliner continue to operate regional routes to Port Lincoln and Ceduna passing Port Augusta and Whyalla; coastal and inland services for Mt Gambier; and to the Riverland towns of Renmark and Loxton.

Victoria

Plenty Valley network begins

Sunday 24 July saw the introduction of the new Plenty Valley bus network operated by Dysons across the outer north suburbs of Mill Park, South Morang, Mernda, Doreen and Whittlesea. The network consists of:

- 381 (South Morang – Diamond Creek via Doreen)
- 382 (Northland – Whittlesea via Bundoora RMIT, South Morang and Mernda)
- 383 (University Hill / Bundoora RMIT - Pallisades Estate via South Morang)
- 384 (Whittlesea – Kinglake via Eastern Hill and Humevale)
- 385 (Greensborough – Mernda North – Whittlesea via Apollo Parkways and Doreen)
- 386/387 (University Hill / Bundoora RMIT – Mernda North via South Morang)

Of the discontinued services, 382 replaces the most of trunk 562 Northland – Whittlesea service, with the connecting 565 service renumbered as 384. 520 from Greensborough is largely replaced by the 385 with north-eastern parts of the Doreen now covered by 381. Route 385 also provides expanded coverage to central Doreen poorly serviced prior to May, with both 381 and 385 serving the catchment of the former 572 in Doreen.

386 and 387 effectively replace 572 through Mernda and Mill Park Lakes, incorporating new coverage. Both routes then operate directly along Plenty Road to Bundoora RMIT, replacing 572's former cooks tour of Mill Park, with those along Centenary Drive and Blossom Park Drive now served by 383. The 383 service follows the old 573 within Mill Park Lakes, with a minor change to serve Marymede Catholic College and the site of the proposed train station.

To encourage Mernda commuters to utilise public transport prior to the extension of rail services in 2019, buses on 382, 386 and 387 each operate every 20 minutes during peak periods between Bundoora RMIT and Mernda North. Doreen residents also have access to 20 minute peak frequencies along the 381 to South Morang or 385 to Greensborough. For many this is a boost on the former indirect 520 and 572 services in Doreen and Mernda that only operated every half hour, with Yarrambat and Apollo Parkways residents also enjoying a 33% increase in peak frequencies

Two "Turn up and go" corridors are a highlight of the upgraded network, with a combined 10 minute headway at peak times and 20 mins interpeak, early evenings and on weekends, linking to most train services. Unfortunately, services cease around 2130, so they cannot lay claim to being true Trainlink services.

Together 381 and 382 form one corridor operating

along Plenty Road and McDonalds Road from the Bridge Inn Road intersection to South Morang Station. 386 and 387 offer a combined corridor along The Lakes Boulevard and Plenty Road to South Morang station and the 86 tram terminus at Bundoora RMIT. Whittlesea Council and a local advocacy group are pushing for tram services to extend along the latter corridor, with the recent state budget providing funding for a million dollar feasibility study.

To encourage residents to walk further to access more direct trunk corridors, peak services on the 383 only operate half-hourly, however this is an improvement for Mill Park Lakes residents over the old 573 which only operated at 40 minute headways. Centenary Drive and Blossom Park Drive residents merely retain the status quo. 383 features school deviations to serve both campuses of Mill Park Secondary College.

Interpeak services of the each of the main routes (381, 382, 383, 385, 386 and 387) operate at 40 minute headways, connecting with every second train. This effectively is a downgrade for passengers along the former 520 and 572 services, who previously had two buses an hour, spaced at a 20-40 minute frequency. On weekends each of these routes operate every 40 minutes, a gain on the former hourly headways.

Feedback received during consultation resulted in PTV amending their plans to retain a direct link from Whittlesea to South Morang Station and Northland, with the old 562 largely retained with minor changes but renumbered 382. Buses now operate at 40 minute intervals across the week, a boost for weekend travellers. Peak shortworkings have been retained between Mernda North and Bundoora RMIT.

Unlike 562 however, 382 accesses Northland more directly along Albert St, bypassing the former East Preston tram terminus – earlier changes made in May saw 567 from Regent re-routed along Tyler St as compensation. Additionally, buses depart South Morang Station via McDonalds Road rather than via Bush Boulevard. Within Whittlesea, 382 services now continue along Oakbank Boulevard, Wallan Road and Black Flat Road before terminating back in the town centre, a newer part of town previously unserved. Those living in the older parts of town in Eastern Hill (near the showgrounds) must transfer to a connecting 384 bus that meets most services, with selected trips also continuing onto the semi-rural locality of Humevale (as did the former 562). As the 384 shuttle also incorporates former 565 Whittlesea - Kinglake trips, there are sometimes gaps of 80 to 90 minutes on weekdays to allow the bus to travel 30 km out to Kinglake and back.

Some trips on 384 are operated by the buses outstationed at the Whittlesea yard however on weekends the 384 timetable is largely integrated with the 382 timetable, with most arrivals from Northland doing a “Whittlesea Waltz” around the new north-west

loop before heading out to Eastern Hill and then returning back towards South Morang and Northland. While there is very minimal layover as a result, a closer look at the timetable reveals mid-trip dwells at South Morang to meet both train arrivals and departures. There are now five weekday return trips to Kinglake compared to the former two, however this includes an oddly timed outbound trip from Whittlesea at 0454 which is effectively a dead movement.

The election promise to reinstate a direct connection to Greensborough has been fulfilled by extending every second weekday 385 service from Mernda North providing a 40 minute headway during peaks and 80 minutes during the day and after 1900. On weekends passengers for Laurimar Town Centre and Greensborough must transfer at Mernda North, with connections of around 10 minutes. Rudimentary facilities currently exist at the interchange point, with a lack of footpaths or shelters.

The East-West branded 570 service between Thomastown and Bundoora RMIT also enjoyed upgrades from the same day, with the previous 30 minute headway to be boosted to every 20 minute, now harmonised with interpeak trains, while evening services have been extended from 1945 until 2100. Weekend services have been introduced for the first time (40 minute headway) while buses now operate through the University Hill complex. The 570 has returned to the Bundoora depot in conjunction the upgrade after briefly operating from the Reservoir depot.

Announcements in media releases have stated 20 new buses were required to deliver these substantial upgrades, along with the employment of 50 additional drivers. By early August, 18 new deliveries in PTV colours had been accounted for, plus the additional East-West arrival. In the interim, Dysons were noted to use older low floor buses on these routes and the Wollert network introduced in January, including those acquired from Northern Bus Lines and Reservoir Bus Company.

To make room for this fleet increase, 19 buses and 45 drivers based at Bundoora depot relocated to Reservoir depot on 27 June, with a large number of shifts on routes 508, 513 and 567 affected. It is expected that this arrangement will remain until a replacement depot opens in Epping North in 2018. As reported in the last issue of *ABP*, the lease agreement with Transdev to house approximately 15 buses for 901 and 902 orbital shifts was terminated effective 5 June, freeing up the required space at the Reservoir depot.

Transdev

From Sunday 13 March, all Transdev services in the western suburbs (routes 215, 216, 219, 220, 223 and 232 plus Port Melbourne area routes 235, 236 and 237 were re-timetabled to improve service reliability and in

some cases train connections. From the following day Crown Coaches ceased supplying buses for AM school runs.

In a second change, all Transdev routes in Melbourne (including those impacted in the March changes) received timetable alterations effective from 5 June. The changes should mean fewer late buses as running times have been altered to more realistically reflect actual running times. An average of 2-5 minutes has been added to weekday running times and between 3-7 minutes on weekends. Some running times have been reduced as well. Actual changes included Doncaster Dart routes 907 & 908 upgraded from every 30 to every 20 minutes most of the day on weekends; route 370 gained a Sunday service, with similar times to Saturday and route 279 lost last Sunday trip ex Box Hill. However the Sunday finish time remains much later than the Saturday finish. It also appears that the new timetable will now see regular running of Transdev's four articulated buses on regular weekend services.

The June timetable revamp also (finally) kicks in Transdev's compliance requirements with key performance indicators which had been deferred following the Government's rejection of the Greenfields network proposal in 2015 and due to delays with the implementation of a GPS tracking system. The original punctuality target of 90% has, however been revised downward to 85%.

This change also coincided with the opening of a new temporary depot in Laurens St, North Melbourne to house some buses from North Fitzroy and Doncaster whilst various works are undertaken at those locations.

A dedicated drive through passenger drop off zone has been added to the Thompsons Road/ Bulleen Road bus stop as part of an upgrade. Other works included installation of two additional bus bays with passenger shelters and improved accessibility; new information displays, pedestrian pathways and landscaping.

Also from 5 June, Transdev buses are no longer based at the Dyson's depot in Reservoir with the space there needed by Dysons due to their recent and on-going expansion of route services. Transdev buses were relocated to other depots the previous day, mainly to Tullamarine, pending the opening of a new depot at Thomastown expected in August.

Rail Replacement Frenzy

June and July saw one of the biggest periods of rail replacement in Melbourne's history as work was conducted on seven separate level crossings removals in eastern and south-eastern Melbourne, along with other shutdowns to allow for routine maintenance.

On the Queen's Birthday Long Weekend (11 – 13 June) buses replaced trains on the Glen Waverley line between Richmond – Darling and Caulfield – Darling. On Saturday and Sunday buses replaced Belgrave/Lilydale line services Parliament - Box Hill,

with express services via the Eastern Freeway. On Queen's Birthday trains operated east of Camberwell. The Alamein line was completely suspended across the weekend. Works at Camberwell Tram Depot and Camberwell Junction over the same long weekend also saw replacement buses operating east of Riversdale Junction (70) and Hawthorn Bridge (75), along with much of the 72 on the Queen's Birthday evening. Ventura operated the majority of the replacements, with Kastoria assisting on the tram replacement.

Buses from Ventura's Dandenong and Seaford depots assisted with weekend rail replacement between Caulfield and Westall on 19 and 20 June as early works for Skyrail project continued, such as tree removal and erection of lineside fencing.

Tram works along Whitehorse Road in Balwyn saw the 109 replaced by buses Kew Depot – Box Hill from Saturday 25 June until Wednesday 29 June, with around 15 buses provided by Ventura.

A 37-day shutdown saw services on the Frankston line suspended between Caulfield and Moorabbin from 2100 Friday until last service Sunday 31 July, allowing for the grade separation works and station rebuilds to take place at North Road Ormond, McKinnon Road McKinnon and Centre Road Bentleigh. All stations buses travelled via Grange and Jasper Roads while express buses utilised Bambra Road, Thomas St and Nepean Highway, with around 75 buses needed during weekday peaks. Operators involved in the shutdown included Ventura, Nuline, Kastoria, Sita and Dysons with Quinces also making a rare appearance on at least one afternoon. The Sandringham Line operated to a modified peak timetable for the duration of the works, with an additional service added each peak to cater for Frankston Line passengers using the line as an alternative.

McKinnon station reopened on Monday 1 August with new stations at Ormond and Bentleigh set to reopen by the end of August. Ventura and Nuline continue to provide a shuttle bus services for those requiring Ormond or Bentleigh. Further shutdowns took place on 13-15 and 27-28 August as works concluded. The weekday shutdown on Monday 13 August saw long morning peak queues at Moorabbin with some passengers taking more than 20 minutes to board a bus. Limited advice to passengers meant few sought alternative routes. Express Frankston Line services, suspended from 16 November 2015 to allow closure of the third track as part of the works, will finally resume on 5 September 2016.

Meanwhile, another 100 buses replaced the Belgrave/Lilydale lines east of Box Hill from Saturday 2 July until Sunday 10 July while level crossings were removed at Blackburn Road, Blackburn, Heatherdale Road, Heatherdale along with Mountain Highway and Scoresby Road in Bayswater, along with other

maintenance works. Further shutdowns are scheduled over coming months to complete the works.

Weekend buses came from various Ventura depots, running all stations services along with limited express services travelling via the Eastern Freeway and Eastlink Tunnels between Box Hill and Ringwood.

A complex of array of services ran on weekdays to provide efficient journeys to the outer ends of both lines for commuters, with operators generally delegated to select service patterns that included:

- Box Hill – Mooroolbark – Lilydale
- Box Hill – Ringwood East – Croydon
- All stations Box Hill – Lilydale
- Box Hill – Boronia then all stations to Belgrave
- Box Hill – Boronia then all stations to Upper Ferntree Gully
- Box Hill – Heathmont – Bayswater
- All stations Box Hill – Belgrave
- Blackburn – Heatherdale – Ringwood
- Blackburn – Mitcham
- Blackburn – Nunawading – Mitcham
- Blackburn – Nunawading

Among those assisting were CDCM Oakleigh, Crown, Dineen Group (Berwick Bus Lines, Martyrs, McKenzies, Panorama & Warragul Bus Lines (West Gippsland Transit)), Driver, Dysons, East-West, Fallons, Jay-Tee, Northern Transit Holdings (Broadmeadows, Kastoria & Seymour Coaches (Mitchell Transit)), Nuline, Quest, Quinces, Sita, Transdev and of course Ventura. The charter operators largely provided coaches, a rare occurrence for Metro rail replacement. Fallons provided low floor vehicles and drivers from both the Shepparton and Wangaratta depots, which parked overnight at the Kastoria depot in Tullamarine.

A third occupation during the same intense week (2 to 10 July) saw Dysons and East-West vehicles operate tram replacement for routes 55, 57 and 59 due to the reconstruction of Abbottsford St Junction. Passengers were encouraged to make use of various east-west routes to reach the 19 Sydney Road tram and/or connecting trains, with only limited buses connecting to trams between the northern side of the works and the CBD.

Routine maintenance and further early Skyrail works took place on the evenings of 17 – 20 and 24 – 28 July between Caulfield and Oakleigh. CDCM's Oakleigh depot provided the bulk of the buses, with artics from Ventura Dandenong assisting to cater for heavy loadings.

Further details regarding the Skyrail construction method suggest much of works will be completed while trains operate underneath, with a specialist gantry crane to be used. However, ten weekend shutdowns are planned for the remainder of 2016, with more to come as the project progresses. The first major works will see trains skip Carnegie and

Murrumbeena from 29 August until 25 September while existing station buildings are demolished. A bus shuttle will operate for affected passengers. The works also necessitate long-term carpark closures, with additional parking being made available at other stations, including stations on the Glen Waverley line. So far there has been no increase in feeder bus services to provide an alternative method to access stations.

Localised shuttles have been used during some of the above level crossing works, taking commuters and site workers to offsite carparks. They have operated at times at Blackburn and Bayswater as well as during the main Frankston Line shutdown.

Coronet Bay and St Leonards updates

After ongoing low patronage resulted in the downgrade of the Westernport Coaches "Waterline shuttle" in June last year, PTV announced a revised timetable, suggesting the service would be retained. The service links the South Gippsland coastal communities of Coronet Bay, Corinella and Tenby Bay to Grantville and connecting V/Line coaches to Dandenong, Cranbourne and Wonthaggi. Timing changes now allow daytrips from Melbourne on weekdays and Saturdays, while a new lunchtime round trip has been added on Saturdays. On Sundays, the morning round trip has been deleted, with the only trip timed for people who are returning home after a weekend away in either Coronet Bay or Melbourne.

Meanwhile, PTV and McHarrys have introduced a new 60A shuttle service between St Leonards and Drysdale on weekdays from 17 July, connecting with regular 60 trips. This provides a further six trips in each direction.

End of an era for Sandringham Depot, Thomastown Depot works begin

Sunday 14 August was the final day of operation for Trandev's Sandringham depot, which had operated various routes in the Bayside suburbs including selected shifts on their cross-town routes originating from nearby Brighton Beach and Gardenvale. The depot dates back to 1919 when tram services commenced to Black Rock (later extending briefly to Beaumaris), and was the base for the Victorian Railways buses to Beaumaris and Southland for many years, transferring to The Met/MTA train division in 1983, MetBus in 1993 and Melbourne Bus Link in 1998. A new depot in Heatherton near the corner of Warrigal Road and Kingston Road opened the day after the closure with 903 red orbital shifts also relocating from Keysborough depot.

Both Sandringham and Footscray depots were sold to Melbourne Bus Link in 1998 as part of the original contracts signed with the Liberal State Government at the time. (In contrast, Doncaster and North Fitzroy depots were leased to National). Melbourne Bus Link since sold both depots to developers in 2014, who

have continued to lease the depots back to Transdev, pending closure to make way for apartment construction. A closure date for Footscray Depot, to be replaced by a new depot in Sunshine West, has yet to be announced.

Transdev held a soil turning ceremony attended by local politicians and councillors in July to mark the start of works for a third new depot, to be located on High St, Thomastown in early 2017. It will house up to 50 buses and 100 staff. The depot will operate shifts on the orbital SmartBus network, replacing the interim leased space at Tullamarine Bus Lines' Airport West premises along with the former arrangement with Dysons to share their Reservoir depot that concluded in June.

With the recent depot and timetable changes, route allocations as at 14 August are as follows:

- 200, 207, 279, 281, 284, 285, 293, 295, 302, 303, 304, 305, 309, 905, 906, 907 and 908 shared between Doncaster, North Fitzroy and North Melbourne depots
- 215, 216 and 223 are exclusively Footscray depot runs
- 219, 220, 600, 922 and 923 shared between Footscray & Heatherton depots
- 232, 234, 235, 236 and 237 shared between Doncaster, Footscray, North Fitzroy & North Melbourne depots
- 246, 250, 251 and 350 shared between North Fitzroy & North Melbourne depots
- 270, 271, 273, 280, 282, 364, 370 and 380 are exclusively Doncaster depot runs 318 is shared between Doncaster and North Melbourne depots
- 901 and 902 operate from Airport West, Keysborough & Doncaster depots, with Heatherton Depot doing 901 TAFE shuttles in Dandenong
- 903 is operated by Doncaster, Footscray, Heatherton and North Fitzroy depots

SkyBus St Kilda service starts, Southern Cross stop shifts

SkyBus introduced their direct St Kilda – Melbourne Airport service from Sunday 14 August with a week of introductory free travel. Buses depart from four stops around St Kilda every 30 minutes between 0617 and 1847 on weekdays with hourly weekend departures from 0617 to 1917. The \$19 one-way fare matches the rate from the CBD (which includes free hotel transfers). Skybus advises passengers allow around 45 minutes for their trip, depending on which stop they use.

By 22 July SkyBus departures from Southern Cross Station to Melbourne Airport had relocated to bay 75 on the opposite side of the coach terminal, previously used for drop-offs for V/Line arrivals. A new walk-in ticket office and self-service kiosks near the coach terminal entry have replaced the ticket booth adjacent to bay 50. The new office is unmanned between 2300 and 0400 with passengers required to use the card-

only self-self kiosks or buy an online ticket on their smartphone. Arrivals and hotel transfers remain at bay 51.

709 extension to Noble Park

Ventura's 709 Mordialloc – Waterways service will be extended north to Noble Park effective Sunday 28 August, providing daytime bus services into Keysborough South for the first time following a six-year campaign by local residents and Greater Dandenong Council. Buses will also serve Parkmore Shopping Centre. Trips depart roughly every 30 minutes until 1900 seven days a week, requiring three vehicles, with a doubling service along the existing route. An hourly early evening service operates until 2100. Journey planner results suggest a 1h 15 min commute from Keysborough South to the city with similar journey times via either Mordialloc or Noble Park. Dandenong depot will continue operate the service. Interestingly, parts of Keysborough South have been served by the Night Bus 979 since January!

Monash University Transport Interchange upgrade

Works have begun to upgrade the transport interchange at Monash University's Clayton Campus, due for completion in February in time for the 2017 academic year. The project is being delivered in conjunction with a new Teaching and Learning Building. Temporary bay changes took affect effective 15 August, with the 737 Croydon service relocated to depart outside Robert Blackwood Hall on Scenic Boulevard while the Berwick and Peninsula intercampus buses now leave from the intersection at Scenic Boulevard and Sports Walk.

Special Sunday Open Day services for 401 shuttle

To assist prospective students from Melbourne's west and north-west travelling to the University of Melbourne Open Day on Sunday 21 August, PTV has arranged the 401 express shuttle from North Melbourne Station to operate, departing at 10 minute intervals from 1000 until 1600. Generally the route only operates on weekdays other than selected public holidays when university classes or exams are held.

Victorian commuters who evade fares will now be held accountable under a single system

The Victoria Government has announced wide-ranging reforms to make the fare enforcement system more simple, fair and effective. The changes abolish on-the-spot penalty fares and create a single infringement system. The previous \$75 penalty fare meant a passenger could get caught fare evading more than 20 times in one year, and still pay less than the cost of a regular Zone 1 and 2 yearly pass. Penalty fares were also anonymous, so there was no record kept of serial offenders, meaning the worst fare evaders couldn't be identified and targeted. The changes are supported by a range of measures to make it easier for passengers to travel with a valid ticket. These include reducing the time it takes to top up online from 24 hours to 90 minutes, trialling fast top-up devices on trams stops

and major stations and reviewing concessions and concession IDs. The new enforcement system will begin on 1 January next year, to provide time for staff training, public education and legislative change to bring the changes into force.

BusTracker arrives in Bendigo

Real-time bus departures for Bendigo Transit services were switched on for the PTV app, website and selected third-party apps on 27 June, as part of the rollout of the BusTracker system to regional areas. It is understood Geelong, Ballarat and the LaTrobe Valley will be progressively switched on over coming months.

Regional Consultation

Residents on Bendigo's outskirts were surveyed on their bus travel habits in April and May, as part of network revisions proposed for the townships of Junortoun, Goornong and Strathfieldsaye, succeeding the major changes to Bendigo's bus network in January.

PTV is currently undertaking consultation for bus network upgrades in Ballarat, Warragul/Drouin and the La Trobe Valley. This follows the release of the Victorian Government's Regional Network Development Plan at the end of May along with increased funding in the recent stage budget. The Ballarat network changes propose to increase frequency and directness, improve train connectivity (with all routes serving Ballarat station) and consolidate the number of routes from 19 to 15. Coverage will be expanded in Brown Hill while a new full time route will directly connect Sebastopol students to Federation University.

A considerable expansion of coverage is planned for Warragul and Drouin, along with extended operating hours to include the commuter peaks – currently services are limited to interpeak shopper trips. The changes are a resurrection of a 2009 proposal that was not implemented.

In the LaTrobe Valley, a new kink on route 45 in Traralgon will serve the expanding homemaker district on Princes Hwy as well as McMahon St. The Moe - Traralgon intertown service (Route 1) will become faster by dropping the deviation through Newborough, set to be replaced by a local 15 service. Two options have been proposed to bring buses to the area west of Moe Racecourse.

A new regional numbering system across Victoria has also been foreshadowed to remove duplication on online apps and websites – each route would get a letter prefix based on the town's name – e.g. B25 in Ballarat. This would explain the high numbers now used in Bendigo, avoiding potential clashes with routes in Ballarat, Bairnsdale and Benalla.

Ballarat: Public Transport Victoria has released details of a new network as detailed below. Ballarat routes will

have a "B" prefix as part of what will become a state wide route-numbering network.

- B10 City-Sturt St West (previously 15 Sturt St West, 16 Lake Gardens). Now via Howitt St Wendouree instead of Sturt St direct
- B11 City-Wendouree West (previously 1)
- B12 City-Wendouree (previously 2 City-Wendouree and 6 Webbcona Loop). Now via Creswick Road instead of Lydiard St North
- B13 City-Invermay (previously 4). Now via Lydiard St North instead of Doveton St North
- B14 City-Black Hill (previously 5). Now via Huntley St North instead of Peel St
- B15 City-Brown Hill (previously 7). Now via Water St both ways
- B20 City-Canadian (previously 8 Eureka, 9 Canadian)
- B21 City-Buninyong (previously 10)
- B22 City-University via Sebastopol (previously 12 Sebastopol)
- B23 City-Mt Pleasant (previously 11)
- B24 City-Sebastopol (previously 14 Delacombe via Sutton St, 19 Delacombe-Sebastopol West)
- B25 City-Delacombe via Pleasant St (previously 13)
- B26 City-Alfredton (previously 18)
- B30 City-Creswick (previously 3)
- B31 Wendouree-Miners Rest (previously 17).

Western Australia

TransPerth: Service Changes Effective 7 August 2016

- 37 Kings Park- Perth Airport Terminals 3 and 4 via Belmont is now a high frequency service numbered 935.
- 40 Perth-Perth Airport Terminals 3 and 4 via Great Eastern Highway has time changes and additional weekend trips.
- 551 Rockingham-Shoalwater via Parkin St has time changes and fewer trips deviating to Arcadia Drive.
- 825 Fremantle-Rockingham via Cockburn and Patterson Roads has been renumbered 548 with some trips discontinued.
- 920 Fremantle-Rockingham via Rockingham Rd and Kwinana Town Centre has been renumbered 549 with some trips discontinued. Now runs all stops between Fremantle Station and the corner of Rockingham Road and Mayor Road, Munster. South of Mayor Road continues to be a limited stops service.
- Routes 36, 282, 283, 285, 286, 287, 288, 293, 295, 296, 298, 299, 584, 587, 588, 589, 591, 592, 593, 594, 597 and 598 have time changes.

14 Mt Hawthorn Shuttle was withdrawn on Sunday 14 August. Route 14 had operated for 12 months covering an area not covered by an amended 15 Perth-Glendalough.

It is proposed to extend 450 Warwick-Landsdale further into Landsdale to serve the Corimbia Estate.

It is proposed to extend 467 Whitfords-Joondalup further into Pearsall.

Stadium Station shutdown

After a series of night and weekend closures during the first half of the year to facilitate construction of the new station at Perth Stadium, a nine day closure of the Armadale/Thornlie line was undertaken from Friday 1 to Saturday 9 July. Rail replacement routes were:

- 917 – all stops between Armadale - Cannington then express to Claisebrook (weekdays)
- 918 – all stops between Claisebrook - Cannington (weekdays)
- 908 – Cannington to Thornlie (weekends and weekdays)
- 907 – all stations Claisebrook to Armadale (evenings & weekends)

Transperth operators Path Transit, Swan Transit and Transdev were assisted by several charter operators on weekdays prior to 1900. These included ATG (Buswest), Horizons West, Kalamunda Bus Service, Metropolitan Omnibus Company, Ryan & Ryan and Westwide.

Bunbury The WA Public Transport Authority has released details of a proposed new network as follows:

- 825 Bunbury-Dolphin Discovery Centre (new service replacing 827 along Koombana Drive)

- 826 Bunbury-Bunbury Passenger Terminal Direct (new service)
- 827 Bunbury-Glen Iris via Bunbury East and Bunbury Passenger Terminal (replaces 845 in East Bunbury and no longer serves Eaton)
- 828 Bunbury-Health Campus via Carey Park East (unchanged)
- 829 Bunbury-Health Campus via Carey Park West (unchanged)
- 830 Bunbury-College Grove via Ocean Drive (replaces discontinued 831 along Ocean Drive and extended to College Grove from Health Campus)
- 832 Bunbury-Health Campus via South Bunbury and Withers (replaces 830 in South Bunbury)
- 841 Bunbury Kingston (unchanged)
- 843 Bunbury-Dalyellup (unchanged).
- 844 Bunbury-Eaton (extended to Ryeland St)
- 845 Bunbury-Millbridge (to omit East Bunbury and operate along Eaton Drive instead of Hamilton Road Eaton)

Note: 831 Bunbury-Dalyellup via Ocean Drive and Withers discontinued, Ocean Drive served by altered 830, Withers served by existing 832 and Dalyellup by existing 843.

Thanks to Tony Bailey, Ian Cooper, Hilaire Fraser, Craig Halsall, Victor Isaacs and Sydney Morning Herald and *Transit Australia* for Bus news.

FERRY NEWS

Port Phillip Ferry Flounders

Paul Little's privately funded ferry trial between Wyndham Harbour and Docklands has reportedly cost him over a million dollars since being launched in May, with loadings often struggling to hit double figures on the 400-seat vessel. An attempt to attract passengers saw the \$20 trial return fare slashed to match a \$7.80 myki fare. A speed restriction along the Yarra is partly to blame, along with a lack of a stop at Point Cook. Attempts to attract leisure travellers have fared better, with higher weekend loadings events to encourage families to travel to Werribee Open Range Zoo and Friday Winter Fireworks in Docklands. Three trials of daytime services to Portarlington on the Bellarine Peninsula have been much more successful, with reports of sell-out trips. It was decided to abandon ship on the Wyndham Harbour commuter trial on August 10 to divert resources to a commuter trial from Portarlington effective the following morning. Voyages are currently timed at 90 minutes, with a \$25 return fare. If speed restrictions are removed on the Yarra, the route will be around 30 minutes faster than commuting by road via Geelong. Trips were unfortunately cancelled at short notice on Saturday 13 August & Tuesday 16 August with harbour works at Portarlington blamed. Weekday commuter services depart Portarlington at 0700, returning at 1730. On

Mondays and Thursdays, an 1130 departure allows for Melbourne lunch and shopping excursions. On Tuesday and Wednesday, Melburnians can enjoy 3 and half hours down in Portarlington, departing Docklands at 0930. On weekends two return sailings operate, leaving Portarlington at 0900 and 1600 and Docklands at 1110 and 1745. Limited services continue to serve Wydnham Harbour on Fridays, catering for daytrips from Melbourne to Werribee Open Range Zoo and Mansion (via the connecting 439 bus) or lunch outings into Melbourne. The service after the Docklands Evening Fireworks has been suspended. On weekends, the 0900 and 1745 services call at Wyndham Harbour, extending the Portarlington travel time by around 20 minutes. Little has foreshadowed a service from south-east suburbs such as Frankston, Brighton and St Kilda may be trailed in the future.

From Monday 29 August, the **Southern Moreton Bay Island** ferry timetable was altered to improve connections with buses on both weekdays and weekends. A copy is at <https://translink.com.au/service-updates/89471>

Botany Bay: A Transport for NSW draft study proposes \$17 million be spent rebuilding wharves on the both sides of the Bay to provide a service for tourists and commuters between La Perouse and

Kurnell. The study says there could be stops at Brighton-Le-Sands and — to service workers at Sydney Airport — one either at the mouth of the Cooks River or at an existing recreational facility at Hayes Dock in Port Botany, which could then be linked by a shuttle bus to the airport.

The draft report estimates commuter use in peak hour at 135 trips, with the journey between Kurnell and La Perouse, 1.5km, taking 15 to 20 minutes. By comparison, travelling the 32km between the two points via bus and train currently takes two hours and 20 minutes, or between 32 and 46 minutes in the car without traffic. However, the study shows a ferry

service would be primarily for tourists, as it would not generate the revenue needed to operate as a stand-alone commuter shuttle and would need a cash injection from the NSW government. Nevertheless, it is expected to “provide numerous indirect social, economic and tourism benefits for La Perouse, Kurnell and wider Sydney” that would bolster any economic shortfall. Transport for NSW is seeking feedback on the draft feasibility study.

There were ferries on Botany Bay from the 1890s until the wharves were destroyed by a storm in 1974.

Thanks to the *Daily Telegraph* for Ferry news.

AIR NEWS

Domestic

Tigerair will recommence flights between Melbourne and Canberra from 9 December. This will be a return to a route it flew between 2008 and 2011. It ceased when Tigerair had a very poor reputation for reliability and safety. Since then, it has undergone change in ownership and it promises a completely changed approach. The move will re-establish a low-cost service to Canberra. On Mon, Tues, Wed, Sat dep Melb 1030, Canberra arr 1135, dep 1205, Melb arr 1315. On Thurs, Fri, Sat Melb dep 1735, Canberra arr 1840, dep 1920, Melb arr 2020.

Figures by the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics of **passenger numbers at major Australian airports** in 2014-2015 are:

Sydney	39.02 m
Melbourne	31.94.m
Brisbane	21.92 m
Perth	12.72.m
Adelaide	7.67.m
Gold Coast	5.87 m
Cairns	4.39 m
Canberra	2.80 m
Hobart	2.18 m
Darwin	2.06 m

Thanks to the *Canberra Times* and the BITRE for Air news.

About Table Talk

Table Talk is published monthly by the Australian Timetable Association Inc. (Registration No. A0043673H) to record timetable news. 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.

The **deadline for Table Talk** is the second last weekend of the month, but contributions are welcome at all times.

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