



# TABLE TALK

## AUSTRALASIAN TIMETABLE NEWS

No. 296, April 2017

ISSN 1038-3697, RRP \$4.95

Published by the Australian Timetable Association

[www.austta.org.au](http://www.austta.org.au)

## TOP TABLE TALK – WHAT TIMETABLES ARE PUBLISHED

PDFs of Australasian Railway and Tram **Public timetables** are listed below. Unless noted, these are individual brochures or booklets for each line. Almost always, paper copies are also available at staffed stations. In addition, operators' websites also always have non-PDF format timetables for all services (except Queensland Rail Travel). A very odd aspect is that where operators are divided into different operational units, they do not produce integrated timetables. So, for example, there are no combined timetables of passenger trains from Gympie to Brisbane (Queensland Rail) or Goulburn to Sydney (NSW TrainLink).

Queensland Rail Travel (long-distance): System timetable at  
<http://www.queenslandrailtravel.com.au/Planyourtrip/timetable>

Queensland Rail CityTrain (on TransLink site):  
<https://jp.translink.com.au/plan-your-journey/timetables>

G: link tram (on TransLink site. PDF format not available):

<https://jp.translink.com.au/plan-your-journey/timetables/tram/t/g-link>

NSW TrainLink: Booklets for North Coast, North West, Western and Southern Regions at  
<http://www.nswtrainlink.info/timetables>

Sydney Trains:  
<http://www.sydneytrains.info/timetables/#landingPoint> (bottom of page)

Sydney Tram (No PDF available):  
<http://www.transportnsw.info/sites/en/maps-and-timetables/light-rail.page>

V/Line:  
<https://www.vline.com.au/Timetables/Additional-pages/Timetable-list>

Metro Trains Melbourne (on Public Transport Victoria site): <https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/timetables>

Yarra Trams (on Public Transport Victoria site):  
<https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/timetables>

Great Southern Rail (PDF format not available):  
<https://www.greatsouthernrail.com.au/fares-and-timetables/timetables>

Adelaide Metro (train):  
<https://www.adelaidemetro.com.au/timetables/trains>

Adelaide Metro (tram):  
<https://www.adelaidemetro.com.au/timetables/trams>

TransWA: <http://www.transwa.wa.gov.au/Bookings-and-fares/Timetables>

TransPerth:  
<http://www.transperth.wa.gov.au/Timetables>

KiwiRail (a hard-to-find area of their website):  
<http://www.kiwirailscenic.co.nz/about-us/trade-and-media/> for Northern Explorer, Coastal Pacific and Tranz Alpine, but does not include Capital Connection which has a non-PDF format timetable at  
<http://www.kiwirailscenic.co.nz/other-services/capital-connection/>

Auckland Transport:  
<https://at.govt.nz/ptimetables#Train>

Wellington Metlink:  
<https://www.metlink.org.nz/#timetables>

The following Railway **Working Timetables** are available on public websites. Other Working Timetables are occasionally available via the Australian Timetable Association's monthly Distribution Lists.

Australian Rail Track Corporation (a large, cumbersome set of documents):  
<http://www.artc.com.au/customers/operations/mtp/>

John Holland Rail NSW Country Regional Network:  
<http://www.jhrcrn.com.au/what-we-do/network-operations-access/standard-working-timetable-swtt/>

V/Line (Passenger and Freight trains in separate documents. The Passenger WTTs are a large, cumbersome set of documents):  
<https://corporate.vline.com.au/Network-Access/Network-service-plan>

Train Times: Passenger Trains of Australia and New Zealand (including working times where available) [www.traintimes.net.au](http://www.traintimes.net.au)

**Privately produced** compilations of passenger train times are:

Australian Rail Maps (timetables for main routes only)  
<http://www.railmaps.com.au/#>

## RAIL AND TRAM NEWS

### QR CityTrain timetable crisis

Another senior Queensland Rail manager has been sacked as a result of its timetable and staffing crisis, bringing the headcount to five. Train Service Delivery general manager Mick Skinner was sacked in early March. He stood aside in October after he failed to act on warnings about the impending crisis. Former chief executive Helen Gluer and board chairman Michael Klug resigned in October after the initial timetable crisis exploded when the Redcliffe Peninsula Line was opened and not enough train crew were employed to deliver the new services. QR's chief operating officer Kevin Wright resigned just days after the troubled rail operator was forced to cancel nearly a third of its services on Christmas Day because of a major roster failure. The Minister for Transport, Stirling Hinchliffe, took responsibility and resigned on 6 February. Citytrain general manager Shannon Iwanow, who commissioned the Indec report, has also left. Former Port of Melbourne CEO Nick Easy was named the new CEO of QR on 8 March.

Deputy Premier and Transport Minister Jackie Trad has instructed QR to:

- Appoint a Chief Customer Service Officer with responsibility for putting customers first.
- Introduce Commuter Catch-ups as a forum to provide feedback directly to QR and the government.
- Strengthen QR's Customer Charter so it's a contract with commuters delivering improved customer service benchmarks.
- Deliver more timely and reliable information so commuters can confidently plan their journeys.
- Facilitate entrepreneurs, developers and researchers to use transport data to develop more innovative products and services to benefit customers.
- Commence a station audit to determine which stations need an immediate improvement to customer access and facilities.
- Return bins to inner-city stations between Toowong, South Brisbane and Bowen Hills.

QR has recruited 152 guards and completed training for 56 of them, according to data released by the Citytrain Response Unit.

TransLink statistics indicate that patronage on the Kippa-Ring line is far below estimates. Data showed 4312 passenger movements each day in October, and 4431 each day in November. Figures for December and January were not provided yet. Forecast usage

data included in a 2011 report on the project predicted a total of 20,358 passenger movements each day when the line opened.

A prediction has been made by the Opposition that millions of dollars are expected to be spent on overtime pay for extra train drivers and guards during Commonwealth Games in April 2018.

### QR CityTrain EMUs

On 1 March, Queensland Deputy Premier and Transport Minister Jackie Trad announced she was so unhappy with progress that Queensland would stop accepting any more of the 75 New Generation Rollingstock trains from next month until design faults were ironed out. None of the 13 trains delivered over the past year has passed testing. There are continuing issues around brakes, driver cab comfort and driver sightlines that would require new stopping markers at every platform across the southeast. Ms Trad said there were "quite a number of issues across the whole spectrum". She further revealed problems with the air-conditioning and ventilation system and that doorways between carriages were too narrow for wheelchairs and did not meet Australian standards. She conceded design changes would push up the project's \$4.4 billion price tag and there was no "hard deadline" on when the issues would be fixed, saying only that trains would be deployed to the network "as soon as possible". She said the extra price depended on the complexity of the changes.

### Brisbane City Council: Brisbane Metro

A revised plan for Brisbane City Council's proposed Brisbane Metro provides a significantly expanded network while claiming more than \$500 million in ratepayer savings. The redesign, proposes two lines instead of one (which was Herston to Woolloongabba). Following community feedback, one route is now planned from the Roma St Transit Centre to Eight Mile Plains in the city's south, mostly along the southeast busway. A second high-frequency line is proposed from the Royal Brisbane Women's Hospital to the University of Queensland Lakes in the west, using parts of the State government controlled northern and southeast busways. Brisbane Lord Mayor Graham Quirk says the revised plans will remove 125 buses from the CBD at morning peak hour. The two lines would carry Metro vehicles every three minutes in peak times. Suburban buses would feed into the Metro, removing some services from the busways to free up space for quicker Metro, BUZ, Rocket and CityGlider services. He predicted the new plans, using 21km of existing busway infrastructure, would slash

travel times by up to 50%. "Metro services will be expanded to the suburbs and will help address Brisbane's existing congestion and capacity issues with a fast and reliable public transport service to keep Brisbane heading in the right direction," he said on 3 March. "People's journeys from the suburbs to the city and home again will be faster, with journeys between Buranda and King George Square 50% faster in the afternoon peak and 30% faster in the morning peak. It provides a better solution for Brisbane that redirects buses to the suburbs, integrates with the proposed Cross River Rail project and connects our key knowledge and health hubs."

Despite the significant expansion, the Council believes the project will cost less than \$1 billion, well under the \$1.54 billion originally estimated in January last year. The Council has pledged to pay for the lion's share of the Metro.

Integration between the State government's Cross River Rail and the Metro has been a goal of Cr Quirk, with Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull tying any rail funding to that result last year. It means commuters would be able to now change between the Metro and Cross River Rail at the Boggo Road and Roma St busway stations. When BUZ, Rocket and CityGlider services were included, Cr Quirk said the Metro could carry up to 22,000 passengers every hour in the morning peak. A "state-of-the-art" underground station would be built at the Cultural Centre. The Metro fleet would be about 60 vehicles, of 150 passenger capacity.

However there are challenges as the proposals rely on converting Victoria Bridge, linking the CBD to South Bank, to a green bridge for Metro and other bus services. The move has been supported by council's Labor Opposition but has been resisted by the State government, in particular, over how it would relate to the proposed Cross-River Rail tunnel. Council plans to undertake community consultation before finalising a preliminary business case in May.

### **Hooray for Women's football!**

All passengers across the entire southeast Queensland public transport network travelled for free on Saturday 25 March. This was the bizarre result of the Australian Football League's decision not to issue tickets to the first women's AFL grand final – a free event – at the Gold Coast Metricon Stadium. This caused a major problem for the State government, which usually allows people travelling to big events to ride free. The absence of tickets made it impossible to prove who was going to the match forcing the government to allow every bus, train and ferry passenger to travel free. The decision cost TransLink about \$400,000 in revenue. (And in another twist the AFL moved the grand final from the Gabba after it was deemed unsafe after two Adele concerts there.)

### **Brisbane-Melbourne Inland Freight Railway**

Two key sections of the proposed Inland Rail line have been declared coordinated projects by Queensland's coordinator-general. This applies to a 26 km, \$1.35

billion section between Gowrie and Helidon, and a 47 km, \$1 billion section between Helidon and Calvert. This will trigger the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement. Federal Infrastructure and Transport Minister Darren Chester noted the second phase of market testing for delivery of the project was close to finalisation. He said, "After the market testing has concluded I'm keen to see construction commence sooner rather than later."

A \$235 million rail freight terminal is planned for construction at Charlton, 13 km west of Toowoomba, by InterlinkSQ. It will connect with the Queensland network and the planned Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Railway. Their website is <http://www.interlinksq.com.au/>

### **Sydney Trains: October 2017 and 2018 Timetables**

On 27 February, NSW Premier, Gladys Berejiklian, announced that the next Sydney Trains timetable (expected in **October 2017**) would have:

- An extra 20 express trains per week in peak hour to Campbelltown and Macarthur from Sydney CBD, via the T2 Airport Line
- Train services every 6 minutes on average, with 10 express trains an hour in the busiest periods on this line,
- A new direct link from Leppington to Parramatta and Blacktown
- The addition of late night and weekend services on the T5 Cumberland Line.

What this appears to be mean in practice is that the Cumberland line will run Blacktown-Parramatta-Leppington, and not to Campbelltown as the southern terminus. But there will be partial compensation with an increase of two Campbelltown-City express trains in each peak hour.

Another new timetable is scheduled for **2018**.

On 21 March the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal (NCAT) ordered Transport for New South Wales to hand over "highly confidential" drafts of the 2018 train timetables to the ABC. These detail the impact of the construction of Sydney Metro.

In evidence to the tribunal, Transport for NSW's principal manager for rail service planning, Nikolai Prince, said a 2013 leak of the previous standard timetable had interfered with the department's work. He said there were 1,500 complaints and resources were diverted to respond to the Transport Minister's Office and the media. Mr Prince added the leak raised an expectation that the timetable could be changed, when it had been "effectively locked down". It was argued a similar situation could develop if the material requested by the ABC about the 2018 timetable was released. He also said the material had been superseded and if released could be misunderstood or misinterpreted, resulting in industrial action and possibly delaying major infrastructure projects.

NCAT senior member hearing the case, Suzanne Leal, said: "I accept that the release of the material may be misinterpreted or misunderstood by the public but this

is not something I can take into account in my determination. On this evidence before me, I am not satisfied that there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the requested material."

### **Sydney Trains: Documentation**

For personal reasons, Rail Graphics has discontinued its production of Sydney area hard-copy track diagrams. Other track diagrams are however still available online at <https://railsafe.org.au/network-local-appendices>

Real time information on Sydney Trains and NSW Train Link is at <https://anytrip.com.au/map>

### **John Holland Rail NSW Country Regional Network Working Timetable 6 May**

A new Working Timetable will be dated 6 May and have the following alterations:

**Alterations: 3MC2** (Pacific National) Tuesdays will depart Junee 2345, pass Junee Sub Terminal 2353, Old Junee 0001, arrive Marrar 0022, depart 0055, pass Coolamon ABA Main Line Loader 0116, Coolamon 0125, Brushwood 0137, Ganmain 0144, Matong 0159, Grong Grong 0216, Narrandera 0237, Yanco 0307, arrive Leeton 0322, depart 0452, pass Murrumbidgee 0522, arrive Griffith 0635, (ie, 24-25 minutes later throughout), forms 3372 / 4CM3.

**1223** (Pacific National 660m) Mondays to Fridays is decreased in length to 520m.

**Addition: D801** (SCT 100m) Mondays will run as tabled by ARTC to pass Parkes Junction (ADU) 2113, arrive Parkes 2117, depart 2127, arrive CRN/ARTC Boundary Main Line Parkes 2131 thence as tabled by ARTC.

**Deletion: D802** (SCT, 100m, Western line) Mondays.

Presumably there will also be ARTC and Sydney Trains WTTs dated 6 May 2017.

### **Long wait for a train no. 1 – Badgerys Creek**

NSW Transport Minister Andrew Constance says a final decision on a rail link to Sydney's planned new airport at Badgerys Creek is "many years off", and urged the federal government to consider the large cost of such transport infrastructure. While extending the \$1.8 billion South West Rail Link from Leppington is regarded as the simplest and cheapest option, Mr Constance said "some very significant homework" about the best choice for a rail connection had yet to be completed. I know Canberra is keen to see a rail line up and running from day one [of the airport opening in 2026]. But I would say to Canberra, if you're going to invest in an airport, you also have to look at the costs associated with the infrastructure around it."

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has said his goal is to have a rail link to Western Sydney Airport when it opens in 2026, or shortly thereafter. However, his government has yet to commit to funding a connection.

### **Long wait for a train no.2 – Maldon-Dumbarton**

Infrastructure Australia has recommended that the Maldon-Dombarton railway not receive federal funding. The partially constructed 35km rail line would allow for the transport of freight to and from Port Kembla without using the South Coast line or the road network. IA found the line "would not justify its costs. Given there is sufficient capacity on the existing lines to meet projected rail freight demand in the medium term and, given the project would impose a net cost on the Australian economy and not justify its costs, IA has not placed the project on the Infrastructure Priority List at this time," it stated in the evaluation. It recommended looking for "alternative interventions to improve freight rail access to Port Kembla". During a Senate Estimates hearing into regional transport on 27 February, Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development secretary Mike Mrdak said Commonwealth government money would be unlikely given the IA assessment.

### **NSW Train Link: Call centre future**

In mid-March, NSW Train Link informed the 71 employees at its Newcastle call centre that negotiations had begun to merge it with Service NSW to "streamline customer service offices". This call centre has operated efficiently for a number of years.

### **NSW Train Link under water**

The weekend of 18 and 19 March brought extensive flooding to NE NSW. NSW Train Link XPT services on the North Coast line were replaced by buses, often with lengthy detours, eg, via Armidale.

### **ARTC: Victorian NE line**

At the Senate Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Estimates Committee hearing on 27 February, the Australian Rail Track Corporation was accused of keeping the extent of the problem with the North East rail line a secret from passengers. Greens Senator Janet Rice told ARTC chief executive John Fullerton that community members had counted 23 speed restrictions between Melbourne and Albury. He had claimed there were only eight to 10 restrictions. The contract between the ARTC and Victorian government, detailing what standards the track has to meet, remains a secret, as does data collected on how well trains are running. Mr Fullerton told the committee it was because of a "commercial confidence". Mr Fullerton also denied information from Senator Derryn Hinch that passengers claimed the trains were an hour slower than 10 years ago. Mr Fullerton said passenger trains were treated with equal importance as freight trains.

It is believed that track monitoring equipment has been placed under the V/Line buffet carriages and the information will be used to pinpoint hotspot locations on the Albury line that need immediate work by ARTC. Once trackwork by ARTC is completed, V/Line will continue to monitor the engineering data to confirm likely improvements. A meeting between V/Line and ARTC in early March is believed to have resulted in an agreement to use the engineering data to carry out the

works over a 10-day period in late March. Jaclyn Symes (MLC, Northern Victoria) attended the meeting and said that there was “a positive switch in language” that moves away from claims by the ARTC that they’re “meeting their agreement” and “it’s not their problem”. Ms Symes has been told that it’s the poor condition of the tracks which is the main cause of the V/Line train faults, and once this is fixed it would create a better case for fewer speed restrictions, shorter travel times and potentially new rolling stock. “With the improvement of the tracks and the inclusion of the back-up train set, the number of incidents that require the use of coach replacements are expected to reduce,” she said.

Thirty projects on the NE line, involving expenditure of more than \$3 million, were undertaken during a major maintenance shutdown by ARTC from 11 to 13 March. The works included:

- Concrete deck upgrades for four bridges
- Upgrade for two level crossings
- Turnout grinding at 20 locations
- V-Crossing repairs at two turnouts
- Full replacements of two V-Crossings
- Track undercutting and mud-hole removal
- Steel bridge repairs and upgrade
- Two level crossing road surface repairs
- Track resurfacing and
- Drainage improvements.

This work went over time, and both V/Line and NSW TrainLink trains were also replaced by buses on Tuesday morning 14 March.

In a statement on 7 March, the ARTC said that, like other infrastructure in North East Victoria, the rail network was impacted by the widespread flooding in Spring 2016. It is not unusual to experience a reduction in track condition from when weather incidents of this nature occur. In response, since November nearly 1 km of targeted sections of track was undercut and tamped before more major works planned this weekend are delivered.

The ARTC said its **Victorian** quarterly lease KPI reports will now be published on its website along with the 2000 (amended to 2012) lease agreement. To view these click on <http://www.artc.com.au/about/reports/victorian-lease/>

ARTC has also now added to its website similar reports on the condition of its infrastructure in **NSW** dating back to 2005 – see <http://www.artc.com.au/about/reports/nsw-lease/>

On 16 March the Border Rail Action Group released a Hume Corridor Passenger Rail Study. This claims that an upgraded line and new rolling stock would deliver a minimum of 75% more passenger rail trips a year. It claims there were 385,000 fewer train trips in 2015-16 than could be achieved due to poor services. During this period up to one in five trains did not meet timetables and 117 train services were cancelled.

## **V/Line: Geelong/Warrnambool trains**

All V/Line trains on the Geelong/Warrnambool line will be replaced by buses from 8 until 16 April. There will be delays of up to 45 minutes. On April 17 trains from Warrnambool to Geelong will be replaced with buses.

V/Line will undertake a \$4.4 million maintenance program to the Geelong tunnel, signal upgrades and 2500 concrete sleepers to be laid between Marshall and Waurm Ponds. Other work includes signal upgrades between Wyndham Vale and Geelong and crews laying ballast on the Geelong and Warrnambool lines. A deck on a bridge near Terang will be replaced. Level crossings improvement works will take place between Winchelsea and Warrnambool. Platform maintenance and sunshade replacement will be carried out at Geelong

## **Metro Trains Melbourne: Frankston line**

Ten level crossings will be removed between Cheltenham and Frankston, two more than were originally promised, at a cost of up to \$2 billion. The Frankston line will get a mix of four rail trenches, two bridges and one "hybrid" crossing in place of ten sets of boom gates that currently hold up traffic and create danger for motorists and rail passengers.

The project will include the removal of a train stabling yard, construction of a 900-metre rail bridge, and the removal of an extra crossing at Mascot Avenue, which was not included in the government’s original list of 50 crossings that it wanted to remove. A new "village" will be built on the site of the current "ugly" train stables and level crossings. The rail bridge will stretch out for 900 metres while a new road bridge will also be constructed over the Patterson River. There will be a new station at Carrum. New stabling sidings will be built at Kananook to replace the existing facility at Carrum. Work on the project is expected to start in 2018.

## **Victoria: Projects**

Rail Futures, a Victorian rail lobby group, in its 2017-18 State budget submission, advocated a number of projects to improve passenger travel:

- Improvements to the Geelong line at a cost of \$215 million, including a new station, Corio Parkway, replacing the present Corio station, with 2,000 car parking spaces for commuters;
- Improvements to the Gippsland line, a "poor relation" of Victorian lines, at a cost of \$170 million over two years; comprising:
  - ✓ \$95 million for duplication between Bunyip and Longwarry.
  - ✓ \$40 million to build a second platform at Morwell and a crossing loop extension.
  - ✓ \$25 million to replace the Avon River rail bridge so that it can handle freight trains.
  - ✓ \$10 million for a major expansion of the Drouin station car park.
- in the Metropolitan area, \$810 million for a range of projects including duplication Dandenong-Cranbourne, Greensborough-Eltham and Ferntree Gully-Upper Ferntree Gully.

Passengers in Victoria will particularly face delays in April as upgrades, track maintenance and level crossing removals get underway. Much of the work will take place during the school holidays and Easter long weekend. Geotechnical works for the \$11 billion Melbourne Metro Rail Tunnel have been completed, laying the groundwork - literally - for construction to begin. City Square in the CBD will be surrounded by hoarding next month as work proceeds on the tunnel project.

Passengers using the Pakenham, Cranbourne and Craigieburn lines have been warned to allow an additional 40 minutes for their journeys over several days in early April. Buses will replace trains between Dandenong and Pakenham stations between 1 and 6 April for signalling upgrades to prepare for high capacity trains. Track maintenance work on the Cranbourne line means passengers will be forced onto replacement buses between Dandenong and Cranbourne. On the Frankston line from the evening of 7 April until 10 April, buses will replace trains between Moorabbin and Mordialloc while track and signalling works are undertaken at the new Southland station.

Most regional train lines will experience long delays in early April. On the Traralgon and Bairnsdale lines, delays of one hour are expected from 1 to 6 April and from 8 to 10 April. The Maryborough, Seymour, Geelong and Warrnambool lines will also experience delays throughout next month.

Tram routes 8, 12, 78 and 109 lines will also be affected in April.

### **Melbourne: Transport planning**

Melbourne's transport network will need to cater for 10 million more trips a day to more than 23 million trips by 2050, an increase of more than 80%, to ease the city's growing pains. This is in the Victorian government's new planning blueprint, **Plan Melbourne 2017-2050**.

Train patronage will be boosted by the completion of the \$10.9 billion Metro Rail Tunnel project in 2026. Placing three of the busiest train lines under the city will free up capacity in the City Loop. Patronage on the Upfield line is expected to increase by 71% over a two-hour peak period (up 4500 passengers), the Sunbury line by 60% (up 11,300 passengers) and the Sandringham line by 48% (up 7200 passengers).

The government says it would create a rail system with better timetabling, enabling a "turn up and go" frequency to service the needs of a growing population. More services would allow easy interchange with other train lines as well as trams and buses, whose routes would also be extended to offer Victorians a better integrated transport system. The government says it will investigate changes to the road space allocation to prioritise bus and tram movements in key locations. It concedes that many of Melbourne's outer suburbs need to be better serviced by public transport.

More details are at <http://www.planmelbourne.vic.gov.au/> The maps on this site are especially recommended.

### **Melbourne: Second port**

A huge man-made island south of Werribee could become Melbourne's second container port. It would be four kms long and 600 metres wide, connected to the mainland via a 1½-km road and rail bridge. Infrastructure Victoria has not chosen between the two options, Bay West near Werribee or the Port of Hastings south-east of Melbourne, but it did estimate that expanding the existing Port of Hastings would cost more than double what it would cost to build a new port at Bay West. This is because of the need to build a new \$5 billion freight rail line through the heart of the south-eastern suburbs, between the Dynon rail yards in West Melbourne and Hastings. The line would be built on either side of suburban trains on the Cranbourne-Pakenham line, where the state government is currently removing nine level crossings as part of the sky rail project. Treasurer Tim Pallas said a second port might not be needed for another 50 years, but there was a "very good economic case" to start planning for a second port. This could require 30 to 50 years of planning.

### **Yarra Trams: North Richmond-Balaclava**

From Saturday 1 April, tram route 78, North Richmond-Balaclava, will be operated from Kew Depot rather than Glenhuntly Depot. This may be because Glenhuntly is about to get some B-class trams which are not suitable for route 78 because of the heavy stop-start travel in Chapel Street. This will reduce the number of Glenhuntly routes to three, and increase the number of Kew routes to three. Kew Depot is closer to route 78 than is Glenhuntly. It is expected that a number of A class trams will be transferred from Glenhuntly to Kew, at this time. This is a return to the situation prior to 1997 when, in preparation for privatisation, the tram network was split into two companies, Swanston Trams and Yarra Trams. With very minor exceptions, north-south routes were operated by Swanston Trams, whilst east-west routes were the province of Yarra Trams, which is why route 78 was then taken away from Kew Depot.

### **Pacific National & V/Line: Merbein freight**

From 12 March, the freight trains to/from Merbein (near Mildura) take 30 minutes longer. This is because of increased shunting requirements at Donald - now taking 60 rather than 30 minutes. Pacific National's train, operating on V/Line tracks, departing Appleton Dock Melbourne on Mondays at 1900 now arrives Merbein at 0655 instead of 0625, the Wednesday and Friday 2100 departure now arrives at 0855 instead of 0825. Up trains now depart 30 minutes earlier - from Merbein at 1700 on Sundays, instead of 1730, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2125 instead of 2155.

### **Wheat haulage**

Strong export demand combined with favourable seasonal conditions caused a 32% increase in the amount of grain hauled by **Aurizon** in 2016 - more than 750,000 tonnes. Craig Acutt, the company's key account manager for grain, said Aurizon rails ten grain trains a week in South West Queensland, up to seven a week in Central Queensland, and up to four in NSW, during peak grain season. Trains were loaded with

wheat, sorghum, chick peas and barley. "A fully loaded Queensland grain train carries up to 1,750 tonnes of grain to export, the same as 44 trucks, and is the most efficient way of transporting grain to port for export."

A 3.5 km connection to **Broadbent Grain's** facility in Moree opened in early March. Jonathan Vandervoort, ARTC's executive general manager for the Hunter Valley, said the Port of Newcastle had seen a threefold increase in tonnage and train numbers during the latest harvest, compared to the same time last year. He said bulk rail loading capabilities in Moree enable a 48-hour cycle to Newcastle, making it one of the most efficient rail loading operations in the Moree region. "With increased train axle loads now available between the Port and Moree on ARTC's network, the new connection to Broadbent Grain's site means heavier, more efficient trains can now run out of the facility,"

### **Great Southern Rail: Indian Pacific**

GSR had previously advised that the Indian Pacific would depart East Perth Terminal at 0900 from 1 April 2017. This advice has now been reversed in conjunction with rail track authorities and departure will now remain as it was in the 2016/17 travel year at 1000.

### **TransWA: Kalgoorlie timetable 30 January 2017**

A new Public timetable for the Prospector Perth-Kalgoorlie and v.v. was published, dated 30 January 2017. The Editor was unable to find any changes, except that on weekdays Toodyay is now a pick-up stop only for down trains and set-down only for up trains. (Toodyay is also served by Avonlink trains.)

### **KiwiRail: Midland line reopens**

The South Island Midland line from Christchurch to Greymouth and Westport reopened for passenger and freight trains from 22 March, after repair of severe bushfire damage to bridges.

### **United States: Trump's train wreck**

On 17 March the new US Administration transmitted its Budget proposals to Congress. It proposes zero funding for all Amtrak long-distance trains. It proposes zero funding for urban transit projects, other than those already agreed on (despite campaign promises of increased infrastructure spending).

### **Germany to improve on-time running**

The long-distance passenger services of German Railways, DB, are facing various challenges. One is the need to improve punctuality. It has therefore changed despatch arrangements. Trains now start to move when at zero seconds of the scheduled minute. Formerly, this was when door closing started, so that trains did not move for another 30-60 seconds. For long-distance trains with multiple stops, this accumulated into many minutes of delay.

### **Switzerland: The last Kursbuch**

*Following are extracts from an article by Bryan Stone published in **Swiss Express**, the magazine of the Swiss Railways Society ([www.swissrailsoc.org.uk](http://www.swissrailsoc.org.uk)), issue 129, March 2017:*

The last printed official Swiss timetable, '*Antliches Kursbuch / Indicateur Officiel*', appeared on 26 November and is valid for 12 months from 12 December 2016, at a cost of CHF16. The official side is quickly described: The last print order is for 25,000 copies, many of which are reserved for service points and official bodies – and it does not pay. It is published by the SBB in Bern but under national legal authority and with an obligation to incorporate all service times of all providers. It has been published, in various forms, since the 1850s. During the 1980s and early 1990s the print order was 500,000 copies. Up to 1988 it appeared twice yearly, summer and winter. Differences were extensive. It was sold at every booking office, and at many bookshops and newspaper kiosks. It had, like the telephone book, a place in most Swiss homes. Although passenger numbers have doubled since the 1980s, on-line information sites, Apps and I-phones have largely replaced the old Kursbuch. These were not the only reasons for its demise; there were others, often overlooked. For a start, it had also become its own worst enemy, with the last edition running to 6,000 pages in three cumbersome volumes, two of which were for PostAuto and other bus services, and the whole came to some 5 kg.

Another setback was, unexpectedly, the Takfahrplan introduced in 1982. This had several aspects: one was regular interval train service, which meant far less need to know when the next train left; on most lines they all had the same schedules. More insidious, the Takfahrplan brought a new timetable layout; the old through tables and their familiar numbers disappeared, and new regional, fragmented tables took their place. These were in themselves clearer, but made finding connections more difficult (involving a finger in several pages and a notepad) and sometimes cut across established patterns of travel. Finally, there are today many more trains, and far more local buses. Bahn 2000, adopted by popular vote, imposed stable patterns of public service, and was widely supported by new lines and facilities. A timetable was, for most everyday journeys, no longer indispensable; people could take the next train, knowing that the times and connections will work. There is another operational factor that affected the need for the timetable. The complex schedules of through coaches and international trains have largely fallen away, and many services are worked by fixed formation train sets. This and the Takfahrplan together have greatly simplified and stabilised many services.

It could not last - change was inevitable. The salient dates are:

1982 (summer edition) - Introduction of the Takfahrplan.

1988 – Annual timetable, then summer to summer.

1989 – Separation of rail and bus timetable.

2003 – Change to winter start of Annual Timetable

(UIC international agreement), also international services fall away to separate booklets, partly because they were difficult to confirm in time for the timetable publishing schedule, and they often changed during the validity period.

What next? A public timetable is a legal obligation, as is its respect by operators. There will be local printed timetables, including those published by PostAuto. The official timetables will remain online ([www.fahrplanfelder.ch](http://www.fahrplanfelder.ch)) and can be downloaded as pdf files. This will also form the archive.

### Europe: What is still published?

According to the Sales List of our member, Samuel Rachdi's Fahrplancenter (<http://www.fahrplancenter.com/Fahrplanpreisliste03.html>), the following hard copy timetables were published for the 2017 timetable year:

Austria (only the Lander (States) of Vorarlberg and Steiermark, Britain (published by Middleton Press), Bulgaria, Croatia (probably the last printed edition), Czech Rep., Denmark, Germany (only the Lander (States) of Baden-Wurttemberg, Bavaria, Thuringia, Sachsen-Anhalt, North Rhine-Westphalia, Hessen and Schleswig-Holstein), Hungary (final hard copy edition), Northern Ireland (set of leaflets), Italy (published by Orario Veltropalagi, issued twice a year in December

and June), Luxembourg (set of leaflets), Netherlands (published by Treinreiziger.nl), Poland (only the Lower Silesia region), Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Switzerland (final hard copy edition).

In addition, Fahrplancenter itself publishes timetables for Bosnia-Hercegovina (both railways), Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Kosovo, Montenegro and the Kaliningrad region of Russia. Macedonia will be published when timetables next change (probably in Summer).

And, of course, there is the trusty European Rail Timetable (formerly Thomas Cook TT) covering all of Europe and most of the rest of the World as well.

**Thanks** to Tony Bailey, Scott Ferris, Albert Isaacs, Victor Isaacs, Geoff Lambert, Samuel Rachdi, Len Regan, Bryan Stone, Stephen Ward, Fahrplancenter, [www.railexpress.com.au](http://www.railexpress.com.au), [www.railpage.com.au](http://www.railpage.com.au), *Swiss Express*, *Today's Railways Europe*, *Transit Australia*, *Age*, *Australian*, *Courier-Mail*, *Border Mail*, *Chronicle* (Toowoomba), *Gold Coast Bulletin*, *Herald* (Newcastle) and *Herald Sun* for Rail news.

## ODD SPOT

From 1 April passengers ("guests" as GSR calls them) will not be allowed to board Great Southern Rail trains without the presentation of current visual ID – passport or Australian driver's licence.

Users of the current 2017 hard copy version of the Bulgarian Railways, BDZ, timetable may be surprised,

because the book commences and ends with pictures of a steam locomotive. This seems to be advertising special excursion trains. However, knowledge of Bulgarian and the Cyrillic alphabet is too limited to say for sure. However, this is not a problem with using the book to plan international train journeys. This section is presented in the familiar Latin alphabet.

## BUS NEWS

### Australian Capital Territory

From Monday 20 March, route 11 has served the Canberra Airport Terminal before continuing to Brindabella Business Park and Fairbairn. Additional services were introduced (route 11A) to the Airport (via Russell) and return. On weekdays, buses depart the City half-hourly from 0626 to 2111, on weekends hourly from 0735 until 1935 Saturdays / 1835 Sundays. Services from the Airport are about twenty minutes later.

There has been a long history of various operators unsuccessfully providing services to Canberra Airport. The current bus operator, Royale Coaches, operates infrequently, at a high fare. No notice was provided to

Royale of the replacement plans. Indeed, Royale plans to continue operating. The ACT government will construct a park and ride facility for about 60 cars on the Blue Rapid route near the Wanniasa shops in Tuggeranong. There is currently no bus stop at this location so construction will also include stops on each side of Athllon Drive and a signalised pedestrian crossing over this busy two lane road. It will also enable residents in the area to access the Blue Rapid 300 series service on weekdays (on weekends the Blue Rapid route 900 is diverted to travel through Wanniasa and the Erindale Centre on its way to and from Tuggeranong).

**Thanks** to David Cranney, and Victor Isaacs, for Bus news.

## RECOMMENDED READING

**Intercity Passenger Fares:** This information sheet by the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics presents estimates of air, rail and bus passenger fares between major Australian cities from 1960 to 2016. Data for nine intercity routes are

analysed. The conclusion is that real dollar fare values for the medium-distance routes have declined across all modes since 1960, but the trends have not been similar and fare trends have often been disrupted. See [https://bitre.gov.au/publications/2017/is\\_085.aspx](https://bitre.gov.au/publications/2017/is_085.aspx)