



# TABLE TALK

## AUSTRALASIAN TIMETABLE NEWS

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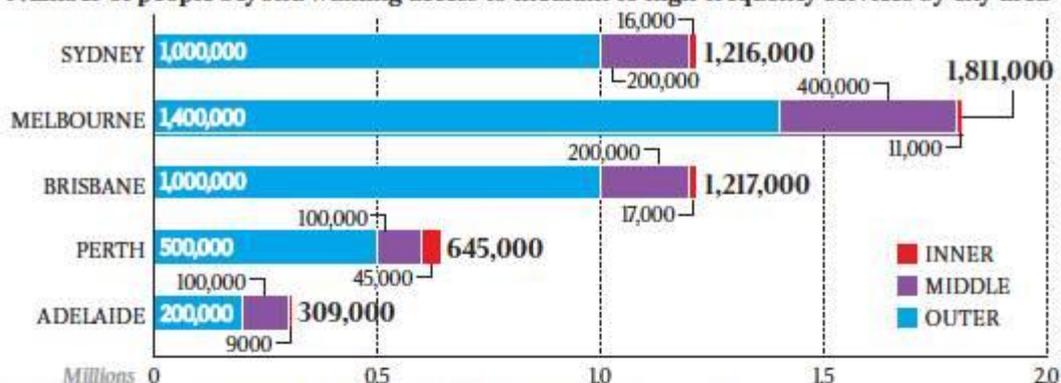
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## TOP TABLE TALK – TRANSPORT IN AUSTRALIAN CITIES

### PUBLIC TRANSPORT DEPRIVED

Number of people beyond walking access to medium to high-frequency services by city area

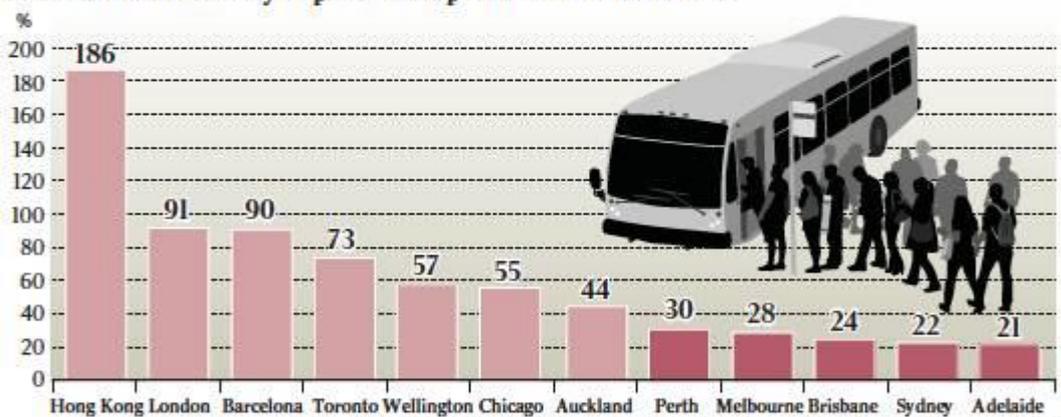


Walking access defined as 800m for heavy rail and 400m for all other services

Medium to high frequency defined as four or more services during AM peak

Source: Infrastructure Australia

### Estimated cost recovery of public transport networks from fares



Source: L.E.K. Consulting (2015), Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport, and Regional Economics (2013)

### Biggest public transport projects either under construction or in the planning phase

Sydney Metro City & Southwest	\$11.5bn-\$12.5bn
Melbourne Metro	\$10.9bn
Sydney Metro Northwest, right	\$8.3bn
Brisbane Cross River Rail	\$5.4bn
Perth Metronet	\$3.6bn



### Outer Suburban Transport

Growing communities on the outskirts of our major cities are being left behind by a lack of access to public transport, according to a new report from Infrastructure

Australia, the nation's independent infrastructure advisor. The newest release in Infrastructure Australia's Reform Series, *Outer Urban Public Transport: Improving accessibility in lower-density*

areas, assesses the frequency and accessibility of public transport services in our major cities as we prepare for unprecedented population growth in coming years.

Infrastructure Australia Executive Director of Policy and Research, Peter Colacino said: "With the release of this new report, *Outer Urban Public Transport*, Infrastructure Australia is calling on state governments to improve the efficiency of existing transport networks and consider new models to service communities in the growing outer suburbs. While existing transport infrastructure serves inner city areas well, people living on the outskirts of our major cities are being disadvantaged by a lack of access to frequent public transport services. This impacts their ability to access jobs, education and other opportunities to improve their quality of life. Close to half the population of our five largest cities – Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth and Adelaide – live in the outer suburbs, however our research shows that people living in these areas experience lower levels of service and accessibility to public transport, poor service frequencies and longer travel times compared to inner city residents. Across all five cities, a substantial number of people living in the outer suburbs do not have frequent public transport services within walking distance of their home. In Melbourne more than 1.4 million people fall into this category, with more than 1 million in Sydney and Brisbane, half a million people in Perth and 200,000 people in Adelaide. While costs of housing can be cheaper in outer suburbs, often they are less well-served by public transport. Without access to reasonable public transport services, people living or working in our outer suburbs are more reliant on their cars – meaning they shoulder the burden of additional vehicle operating costs, leaving less money for other household expenses compared to commuters in inner suburbs. In the past, it has been very costly to deliver public transport in lower density, outer suburban areas where houses and employment centres are typically spread over large distances. As a result, people prefer to take the most direct route by driving, rather than taking a train or bus – adding to congestion in our growing cities. Traditional public transport models are most efficient and effective in areas of high demand, often requiring higher density. However, new technology and delivery models, such as on-demand buses, offer an immediate opportunity to confront these challenges by increasing the flexibility and reach of the network and therefore serving a more diverse range of destinations. "This report makes a clear case for governments to consider new models such as on-demand buses and ride-sharing to complement more traditional modes, like bus and rail. We also want governments and transport operators to do more to encourage people to transfer between public transport services, which helps to increase the flexibility and reach of the network. This includes investing in well-designed interchanges, extending integrated ticketing systems to new modes, and introducing fare incentives that actively encourage people to transfer between modes to get to their destination," Mr Colacino said.

The report is available at <http://infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/policy-publications/publications/outer-urban-public-transport.aspx>

## Travel times

A report by research body, the Grattan Institute, has found that Australia's urban commuters have little to fear from population growth, if recent experience is any guide. *Remarkably adaptive: Australian cities in a time of growth* shows that the population boom has had little impact on commuting – contrary to frequent media reports.

The average commute distances and times barely increased over the five years to 2016, even as Sydney and Melbourne's populations grew at rates among the highest in the developed world, by 1.9% and 2.3% each year. Brisbane, the Gold Coast, the Sunshine Coast, Canberra and Darwin also grew strongly.

The benign impact of population growth is partly explained by the spread of jobs within the major cities. It's a misconception that jobs are centred in CBDs, which become harder to get to as cities grow. In reality, fewer than two in ten people work in CBDs, whereas three in ten work in a suburb just away from home. The importance of suburban employment centres is overblown. Parramatta is the location of only 2.3% cent of Sydney's jobs, and Clayton, home of Monash University and medical centre, accounts for only 1.7% of Melbourne's jobs. In Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth, three quarters of jobs are dispersed all over the city, in shops, offices, schools, clinics, and construction sites.

Even though commutes are not getting much worse, the level of congestion in the largest cities is a problem. Trains, buses and trams can be overcrowded, and commuting times can be unreliable. While most drivers are delayed no more than five minutes getting to work, the delay can be much longer on bad routes.

But the situation is not spiralling out of control. Migration has not brought cities to a standstill. Cities have coped, even though major new projects, including Melbourne Metro, WestConnex in Sydney, and Brisbane's Cross River Rail have not yet been completed. People adapt – they are not hapless victims of population growth, depending for their wellbeing on governments building the next freeway or rail extension," said Grattan Institute Transport Program Director Marion Terrill.

Sydney and Melbourne should introduce congestion charges, to encourage drivers who don't really need to travel at peak times to stay off the most congested roads. "With these changes, the benefits that draw people to live and work close together can outweigh the congestion and crowding that trigger demands to shut new people out," Ms Terrill said.

The report is available at <https://grattan.edu.au/report/remarkably-adaptive/>

# RAIL AND TRAM NEWS

## ARTC: Inland Rail

On 5 October, businesses were invited to register to take part in the Public Private Partnership to build the Gowrie to Kagaru, Qld section of the Inland Freight Railway. This will cover:

- approximately 130 kms of new dual gauge railway, including 11 passing loops to cater to 1,800-metre trains.
- three tunnels at Toowoomba Range (approximately 6.4 kms), at Little Liverpool Range (ap. 1.1 kms) and at Teviot Range, Scenic Rim (ap. 1 km),
- a number of viaducts and bridges totalling around 12 kms,
- approximately 10 million cubic metres of cut to fill in earthworks,
- a number of road-over-rail grade separations and level crossings,
- new roads and realignment of local roads, and
- performance of maintenance services over a maintenance phase of 15 to 30 years.

The proposal is at <https://inlandrail.artc.com.au/public-private-partnership>

## Aurizon and Linfox: Queensland Intermodal

On 12 October, Aurizon announced it would sell its Queensland Intermodal business to Linfox for \$7.3 million. Linfox will acquire freight forwarding and pick-up-and-delivery assets, rail wagons, customer contracts, and terminal access. The companies also announced a separate 10-year take-or-pay deal between Linfox and Aurizon's Bulk business, which will provide rail linehaul services and some terminal services to Linfox using Aurizon locomotives and employees. Roughly 190 existing Aurizon employees will move to Linfox. The sale comes after the ACCC blocked a sale to a Pacific National-Linfox partnership earlier this year. Aurizon says it will continue to push for the other half of that deal, which is the \$205 million sale of its Acacia Ridge intermodal terminal to Pacific National.

## Queensland Rail CityTrain

Queensland Transport Minister Mark Bailey says he does not know when hundreds of train services in Brisbane will be restored, nearly two years after the so-called "rail fail" that saw rides slashed from the timetable. "We will have a date ... when we are absolutely certain that we have the sustainability, in terms of the number of drivers and resources to ensure that it definitely can be delivered — there's a few issues to work through in terms of that," he said.

QR has again been plunged into chaos after three directors — chairman Philip Strachan, Paul Wallis and Sandra Birkenleigh — suddenly resigned on 4 October. A few days earlier it was revealed the QR board had approved \$3.6 million in bonuses for senior management, despite ongoing issues with the rail network. The Queensland government was forced to

intervene to block the bonuses of up to 15%, which would have been given to about 380 senior staffers.

## Mary Valley Rattler

The Mary Valley Rattler heritage railway re-opened on 6 October from Gympie to Amamoor, Queensland, 23 km. Trains run on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays, departing Gympie (old station) at 0930 and 1400, arriving back at 1230 and 1700.

## Sydney Trains: Stresses

The NSW Labor Party has promised that if elected in the state election in March 2019 it will introduce refunds for Sydney rail commuters for avoidable train delays of 30 minutes or more. NSW Labor leader Luke Foley said his party's fare refund policy was intended to "concentrate the minds" of Sydney Trains management and reduce avoidable delays from problems such as staff shortages or mechanical breakdowns. "At the moment there is just no incentive for the people running the railways to do better," he said. "There will be under a Labor government, because the government will be refunding passengers if this continues." Under the proposal, the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal would help determine the criteria for refunds, and commuters would have 28 days to apply. However, commuters would not be able to claim for delays caused by natural events such as floods and bushfires, or fatalities or incidents such as trespassing on tracks. Labor estimates it could cost the government up to \$6 million over four years.

But Transport Minister Andrew Constance has ruled out refunding passengers for delays and demanded Mr Foley explain how he would implement a scheme that he said would require about \$100 million in technology upgrades to the Opal system. "The way the current Opal system works means passengers tap on and off at station gates — not specific trains," he said. "It is impossible to track which trains passengers are boarding, therefore impossible to know if they are late."

This was announced on a day, Monday 8 October, when there were significant delays during the morning and afternoon peaks after 112 staff called in sick. Sydney Trains cancelled a number of services on the T1 Western, Northern and North Shore, and the T2 Inner West. Earlier, Mr Constance apologised to commuters for the delays but said railway staff were "doing a phenomenal job" given a surge in demand for services across the rail network. "We have had some additional sick leave but that is no reflection on staff," he said, adding that there was "nothing untoward" about the extra staff absences.

Pressure on Sydney's Town Hall train station has grown significantly during peak periods due to a 23% surge in passengers from 2015 to 2018 from 55 million to 68 million per annum, raising the prospect of staff limiting access to platforms more often to avoid severe overcrowding.

Sydney Trains chief executive Howard Collins warned that staff would have to slow access at Town Hall more

regularly during peak periods because the station was reaching capacity. It meant passengers might have to wait five or 10 minutes until platforms were "clear and safe". "It doesn't mean to say we have rail chaos. It means we're just managing people through the station," he said. He said there was "very little" room to expand the capacity of Town Hall in Sydney's CBD because foundations from large buildings sat either side of the underground station. [But] there are opportunities for us to consider whether we can look at another exit or entrance or look at whether there are better choices for people to make that journey to Central Station or to Wynyard," he said.

Station staff have on occasions slowed passengers from accessing platforms on days when an incident on the rail network causes delays and crowds build.

Mr Collins said a major surge in passengers at Town Hall during peak periods – especially evenings – was partly due to a near doubling in people catching trains to and from fast-growing suburbs such as Mascot and the Green Square precinct in Sydney's inner south.

An analysis of Opal ticketing data by Sydney University senior transport researcher Chinh Ho shows the number of passengers at Town Hall during the evening peak easily exceeds that at Central station, despite the latter having many more platforms. "Town Hall is severely suffering from overcrowding during the PM peak. It is a big concern now," he said. Dr Ho said the station would struggle to cope with an expected increase in passengers over the coming years, and people needed to be encouraged to use other CBD stations such as Wynyard, because the ability to increase capacity at Town Hall was extremely limited.

In comparison, St James and Museum stations in the CBD were under-utilised. A new CBD station on Pitt St for the \$20 billion-plus metro line under construction will relieve pressure on Town Hall station but is not due to open to passengers until 2024. Strathfield station is also experiencing significant growth in passengers during peak periods but Dr Ho said it was better able to handle high volumes due to its longer platforms and larger concourse.

Dr Ho said difficulties passengers had in getting on trains during peak periods at stations due to overcrowding reflected the maximum 20 trains per hour that could run on a line. Express trains help reduce journey times for many passengers over long distances but they result in passengers at stations such as North Strathfield, which are skipped by express trains, waiting longer and finding it difficult to board trains that do stop due to crowding at peak periods. "You can only speed up journeys by skipping stops. But if you stopped at every station, crowding would be worse. Sydney Trains is designed for longer commuting, unlike metro systems where the trains are supposed to stop at every station. Express services are sometimes a good way to tackle crowding on trains but it needs to be designed carefully. Not every station along the train line is equally important in terms of demand," he said.

**Sydney Trains: New rail operations centre**  
Sydney Train's new operations centre, being built near Green Square station, is subject to delays, increased costs and "leadership and governance issues". Cost has increased by \$20 million to \$296 million, even after it was scaled back last year in an attempt to avoid budget overruns. Under the original plans, the "target completion date" for the centre near Green Square station was last year. Since then, it has failed to meet a revised date for opening of last April.

Facing a cost increase of up to \$50 million last year, Sydney Trains made a "substantial" change to the scope of the project by removing a customer information management system "due to budget constraints and a loss of confidence in the solution". This was due to "challenges" such as site contamination, land acquisitions and design issues. There is also a further \$17.25 million to construct and fit out an extra floor for staff who will be shifted from offices in the city.

The new centre is aimed at modernising "ageing rail operation technology", providing faster information, reducing train delays and widespread disruptions like those in January. Its highly secure control room floor will be large enough for about 100 people, while about 44 support staff will be housed on the second floor.

Sydney Trains said in a statement that the centre remained "on time and on budget for 2018".

### **NSW Trainlink: Blue Mountains**

At a public meeting on 13 October Labor promised a complete review of Blue Mountains rail services if elected at the 23 March 2019 state election.

### **NSW transport information**

In mid October Transport for NSW distributed notices to select community groups which said it would "remove" top up services via the Opal customer care line, and trip planning and timetable services over the 131 500 transport infoline. This was countermanded by the Transport Minister Andrew Constance, who said the "services will remain in place".

### **NSW Freight plan**

On 25 September the NSW government released the *NSW Freight and Ports Plan 2018-2023*, to guide the investment of over \$5 billion across the sector to support the state's growing freight task. It aims at increasing in the share of freight transport via rail to the Port of Botany to 28% by 2021, protecting land for future corridors, and making investments – including targeted improvements to the NSW rail network – that will expand the capacity of east-west freight rail movements. The plan is on the web at <https://www.transport.nsw.gov.au/projects/strategy/nsw-freight-and-ports-plan>

## **JHR NSW CRN WTT**

Commencing Monday 22 October, the Country Regional Network Working Timetable was amended by deleting Pacific National's Southern Region freight trains 3372 and 3373 on Mondays to Fridays. These were merely local shunting runs Griffith to Murrumbidgee and return.

## **ARTC: NW NSW line closed**

A loaded coal train derailed and its wagons were hit by a locomotive on Wednesday 26 September near Newdell Junction, between Singleton and Muswellbrook. The locomotives and wagons were removed from the line on Friday 28 September, after which repairs to the tracks began. An ARTC spokesperson said signalling, points, sleepers and track would be repaired over approximately 10 km. Buses replaced passenger trains between Scone and Singleton. The line between Singleton and Muswellbrook was re-opened at 0100 on Monday 1 October.

## **Practising disasters**

**Sydney Trains:** An internal report claims there is inadequate training, limited oversight and an overall need for "significant improvement" to deal with emergencies, including "excessive business disruption and threats to safety due to poor response" to emergencies or incidents. The report warns of the need for "significant improvement." It found:

- Gaps in emergency training for senior management and staff,
- Limited oversight of emergency preparedness activities, and risk of non-compliance,
- Ill-defined priorities for incidents which have a major impact on the rail network,
- Poor decision making and longer response times from parallel communication, and
- Lack of responsibility for emergency training.

One of the biggest concerns is limited oversight and monitoring of activities to prepare for emergencies, which auditors gave a "high" rating, meaning it is a significant weakness and needs to be fixed as a matter of urgency.

The report also warns that centralising Sydney Trains' rail management incident control centre and security at their new \$296 million facility near Green Square station "could create a risk of a network disruption in the event of the building requiring evacuation".

The internal audit focused on Sydney Trains' preparedness for level-three incidents, which are defined as emergencies or incidents which have a major impact on the rail network or passengers. In warning of limited oversight, the report said gaps in governance meant non-compliance "may not be detected", and that there were conflicting definitions of level-three incident response priorities. It describes emergency training for staff as "of varying quality." The last training on incident and emergency preparedness for train crews was in 2015, while the executive management team "has not exercised their response in the last 24 months".

But Sydney Trains said it regularly reviews emergency-response processes and continually updates its safety plans, including on-site incident management. It said it had held 11 emergency drills, operations and familiarisations with emergency services at locations such as Central station since April. "Sydney Trains is committed to keeping our customers and staff safe on the network at all times and our operating model for emergencies is based on the same framework as other emergency services in NSW," it said in a statement. The new operations centre at Green Square would bring together critical areas of its business under one roof to better respond to incidents on the rail network, it said.

## **John Holland Rail NSW Country Regional Network:**

From Wednesday 28 November until Thursday 29 November 2100, the JHR CRN Network Control functions will be transferred to the Disaster Recovery Site for testing purposes.

**Metro Trains Melbourne:** From 0230 on Friday 5 October until 0230 on Monday 29 October, the operation of the Signalling and Train Control functions at Metrol was temporarily transferred to the Disaster Recovery Site.

## **Sydney-Canberra Fast Rail**

NSW Deputy Premier John Barilaro says the fast train project from Canberra to Sydney was one of the big investments that could come out of \$4.2 billion raised from the sale of Snowy Hydro. Any such rail project would be done in a partnership deal, he said. The NSW government has been warned to buy up land for the railway before land prices make it unfeasible. Mr Barilaro said that the current service, which takes four and a half hours, could be dramatically improved upon "Part of the big problem is the alignment of the rail lines, the tracks themselves need realignment, straightening and new technology. We have an opportunity to invest now in the infrastructure." He added that that other rail projects would potentially receive investment to improve the speed of travel between the state's regional and metropolitan areas. "We want to identify where we can invest in faster rail. Long term, it's got to be the VFT [Very Fast Train]. It's not just the Canberra-Sydney corridor – it's getting up to the Central West, it's getting up to Newcastle. And we've got an opportunity to do it."

Earlier this year, the NSW Labor Opposition promised to fund a business case into a faster rail link between Sydney and Canberra if it won government.

## **Newcastle Tram**

Testing commenced in the week commencing 22 October. Services are scheduled to begin in early 2019.

## Canberra Tram stage 1 opening, stage 2 doubts

**Stage 1** of Canberra's light rail project from Gungahlin to Civic is running behind schedule. The start of operations will be delayed until early 2019 because of safety concerns and the sheer complexity of the project. Canberra Metro will also miss out on its first availability payment - worth millions of dollars - because of the delays.

ACT Transport Minister Meegan Fitzharris said while construction is still due to be finished in late December, Canberra Metro will need to obtain third-party rail accreditation from the Office of National Rail Safety Regulator and the Independent Certifier before the system begins operations. "As with any complex infrastructure project, there are risks that affect timing such as weather, the testing and commissioning of rail and signalling systems, and finalising of the stops. It is clear to all that significant progress is being made on the project, and I look forward to updating the community on a start date as soon as possible. While this means we don't yet have an exact date, I am expecting the first services to begin in early 2019, which is really exciting."

Transport Canberra executives have previously said building the light rail safely was more important than finishing the project on time.

One target, the full energisation of the network for testing, was due to be completed in May. While the overhead wiring system was completed earlier this month - 382 poles and 24 kms of cable - the network is yet to be fully energised. Sections on the northern end of the track have been electrified as light rail vehicles undergo testing. The last rail was ceremonially laid on 26 October.

On 22 October the Federal Parliament's Joint Standing Committee on the National Capital and External Territories released its report into Commonwealth and Parliamentary approvals for the proposed **Stage 2** of the ACT light rail project. As stage 2 would pass through areas of national significance it requires the approval of the Federal government. Committee Chair, Ben Morton MP, said the "Commonwealth's role in safeguarding the character and heritage of Canberra, meant that 'the development of light rail must not come at the cost of the long-term character and heritage of the National Capital. We are not seeking to slow or hinder the approvals process, but rather to provide certainty for the ACT government and the people of Canberra. Stage 2 passes through and adjacent to a number of key cultural and heritage sites and must be consistent with the legal requirements imposed by the National Capital Plan.' He said routes for rapid transit such as light rail are already provided for in the National Capital Plan, and that "if the ACT Government were to use these routes the project could quickly and easily move forward through the other approval processes. However, should the ACT government choose to pursue a route alignment that is only partially consistent with the National Capital Plan, this will unavoidably add further complexity, time, and cost to the project. The committee has recommended that

in that case, the ACT government should work with the National Capital Authority to ensure Commonwealth approval of the route, by amending the National Capital Plan. This should be done before undertaking the full Works Approval application and other Commonwealth approval processes." The report makes six recommendations regarding the approvals process and heritage requirements. It can be accessed at

[https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary\\_Business/Committees/Joint/National\\_Capital\\_and\\_External\\_Territories/Lightrail/Report](https://www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Joint/National_Capital_and_External_Territories/Lightrail/Report)

ACT Transport Minister Meegan Fitzharris said the Territory government was prepared to engage with the National Capital Authority to get its preferred alignment green-lit. "The planned route attracts more passengers, creates less impacts and provides critical connectivity for more national attractions, universities, residential areas and employment centres," she said. She said roughly 75% of respondents surveyed throughout an extensive community consultation process preferred the alignment through Barton, rather than the alternatives suggested by the committee. The ACT government is acutely aware of the national significance of many locations along the City to Woden route, particularly within the Parliamentary Zone. [The route] will support the revitalisation of suburbs along the corridor, and create more vibrant, community-focused, active and modern precincts. The Barton route also incorporates as many of the key employment hubs and national institutions as possible in the Parliamentary Triangle."

## V/Line: Albury line additional weekday bus services

Additional services have been introduced on the Albury line on weekdays, albeit buses. From Monday 1 October, a bus departs Albury at 0520, stopping only at Wodonga (0530), to arrive Seymour at 0800, connecting there with a broad gauge local train which arrives Melbourne Southern Cross at 0939. Another bus departs Wangaratta at 0600, stopping only at Benalla (0635), and also arriving at Seymour at 0800, for the same connection to Melbourne.

The return connection, also only on weekdays, is from the 0933 SX - Shepparton broad gauge train, which arrives at Seymour at 1053. Both buses depart Seymour at 1110. One is express to Wodonga (1340) and Albury (1350). The other bus is for Benalla (1225) and Wangaratta (1300).

These new bus services join the existing weekdays 0900 Albury-Seymour and 1605 Seymour-Albury buses. On weekdays, there are now the following services from Albury to Melbourne and v.v.: Three V/Line trains, two NSW TrainLink trains, and two V/Line bus/train combinations.

North East Victorians have been complaining that they have not recently received upgrades to V/Line services, as have residents along other passenger lines.

The V/Line Albury train service is unusual in being identical on weekdays and weekends.

## V/Line: Great Ocean Road additional weekend bus services

Additional weekend bus services were introduced from 30 September. These are 1145 Geelong-Lorne, 1505 Geelong-Lorne-Apollo Bay, 0947 Apollo Bay-Lorne-Geelong, 1329 Lorne-Geelong. This makes the weekday and weekend timetables virtually identical.

The 1500 Mondays-Thursdays and 1520 Sundays Ballarat- Ararat-Warracknabeal-Hopetoun-Ouyen now departs at 1355 Sundays to Fridays. The return service (formerly 0635 Mon-Fri and 0735 Sundays) now departs at 0625 Sunday to Friday.

## V/Line: Fleet Plan

Fleet Plan FP49A was introduced by V/Line from 29 October for the introduction of additional VLocity units 76 and 77. There are minor changes to Southern Cross platforms and routings for a few services.

## ARTC and V/Line: Albury line

On 11 October Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack announced the provision of \$235 million to upgrade the ARTC line from Melbourne to Albury. This will allow for standard gauge VLocity trains to run on the line. Mr McCormack said the project would make V/Line services more reliable and help reduce major delays. The project is also consistent with upgrading necessary for the line's incorporation in the Inland Freight Railway.

The state government announced on 16 October that it had reached an agreement with Bombardier to complete the design of the bogies for the new standard gauge VLocity trains

## V/Line: Wyndham Vale stabling yard

A new train stabling yard will be built north of Wyndham Vale station on the Geelong line in Melbourne's south west. It will replace an existing facility near Southern Cross, needed for an extension of Wurundjeri Way as part of the West Gate Tunnel Project. The project is expected to start later this year and be completed by 2020. There will be a stabling yard, driver facilities and a bypass track to allow trains to access the facility without delaying scheduled services. It will house up to six V/Line VLocity trains and is designed to cater for a further stabling expansion and a maintenance facility if required in the future.

## V/Line: Cobblebank

Construction on the new station at Cobblebank, at Ferris Road between Rockbank and Melton on the Ballarat line, is scheduled to start later this year, with preparatory works already underway. This is part of the half-a-billion-dollar Ballarat line upgrade and will eventually service a community of 55,000 people, a

massive increase from the area's current population of around 1,000. This proposed station had formerly been referred to as Toolern. It appears to be at or close to the former Rail Motor Stopping Place no. 65.

## V/Line: Warrnambool line

Expressions of interest are being invited for major works on the Warrnambool and Geelong line upgrade project. A multi-million-dollar design and build contract will be awarded. The contract will include a major upgrade to Waurn Ponds station, as well as upgrades along the Warrnambool line to enable extra services and pave the way for VLocity trains to run on the line. For the Geelong Line Upgrade, the contract will cover a second platform and a crossing loop at Waurn Ponds station. The projects are part of the Federal and Victorian governments' Regional Rail Revival program. The upgrade would allow for a fifth daily return service between Warrnambool and Melbourne.

## Victoria: Freight links

Major freight hubs in Melbourne's north and west will be connected to the Port of Melbourne, with a \$25.7 million expenditure that will see more than 70,000 containers moved on rail instead of on local roads. Victorian Minister for Ports Luke Donnellan has announced \$16.2 million to connect Austrak's facility at Somerton and \$9.5 million to connect the SCT Logistics facility at Altona to the Port Rail Shuttle Network. There will be an additional \$46m in private-sector funded upgrades.

An inland terminal in the south east remains a key priority for the Victorian government given its critical role in freight. Options to connect Melbourne's south-east to the Port Rail Shuttle network are still being investigated.

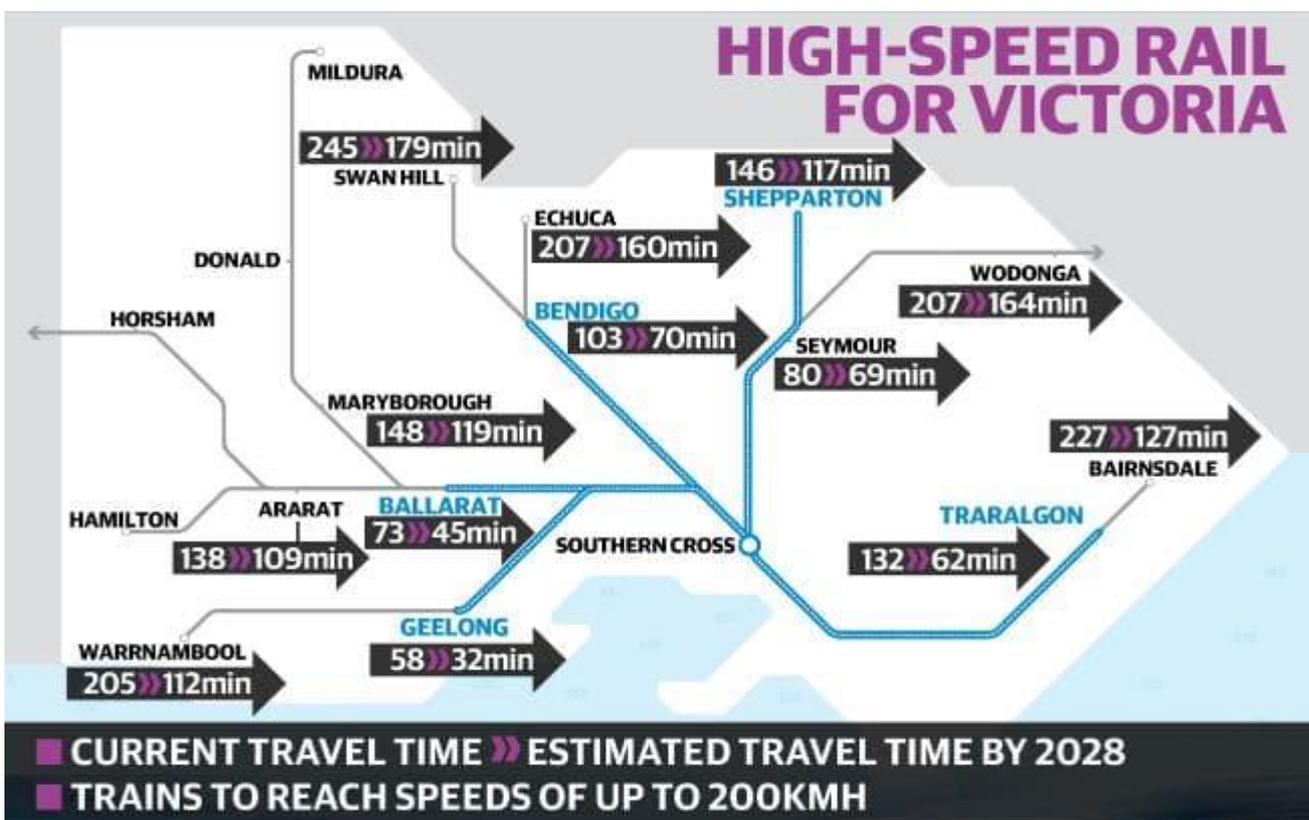
## Victoria: Regional Rail promises

The big promises for Victoria continue to come. On 3 October, Opposition Leader Matthew Guy promised to build a "European-style" rail network to encourage more people to live in the country rather than in a booming Melbourne.

A \$19 billion rebuilding of the regional railway network will introduce 200 kph trains if the Opposition wins the 24 November state election. A Geelong-Melbourne journey would take as little as 32 minutes by 2022, and Ballarat to Melbourne would decrease to 45 minutes later in the decade. The Opposition says an express train from Bendigo could ultimately reach Melbourne in as little as 70 minutes — significantly quicker than the time it takes to make the trip by car. Trip times from Warrnambool and Traralgon would effectively be halved within a decade, and that to Shepparton cut to less than two hours.

Line	Current travel times	Travel times after 2019 timetable changes	Travel times after regional city line upgrades	Travel times after country line upgrades
Geelong-Melbourne	58 minutes	50 minutes	32 minutes	32 minutes
Ballarat-Melbourne	73 minutes	65 minutes	<45 minutes	<45 minutes
Bendigo-Melbourne	103 minutes	90 minutes	70 minutes	70 minutes

Traralgon-Melbourne	132 minutes	120 minutes	62 minutes	62 minutes
Shepparton-Melbourne	146 minutes	146 minutes	117 minutes	117 minutes
Wodonga-Melbourne	207 minutes	204 minutes	204 minutes	164 minutes
Seymour-Melbourne	80 minutes	80 minutes	69 minutes	69 minutes
Warrnambool-Melbourne	205 minutes	197 minutes	173 minutes	112 minutes
Echuca-Melbourne	207 minutes	207 minutes	174 minutes	160 minutes
Swan Hill-Melbourne	245 minutes	232 minutes	212 minutes	179 minutes
Bairnsdale-Melbourne	227 minutes	218 minutes	160 minutes	127 minutes
Ararat – Melbourne	138 minutes	130 minutes	109 minutes	109 minutes
Maryborough – Melbourne	148 minutes	140 minutes	119 minutes	119 minutes



Under the Opposition's plan, regional rail lines would be upgraded over ten years, creating 10,000 jobs, and money would be poured into track and signal upgrades as well as two fleets of new-generation trains. Mr Guy said that about a fifth of the project's budget of \$15–19 billion would be spent during his government's first term to "revolutionise the passenger rail network". Mr Guy said the project would complement the current \$1.75 billion Regional Rail Revival, a partnership between the Victorian and Federal governments. The project would be done in three stages over the decade. Stage one, including Geelong timetable changes next year, would create more express services, cutting trip times from 58 to 50 minutes. Replacements of tracks to Warrnambool, Bairnsdale and Swan Hill would be done towards the mid-2020s.

Victoria's best tracks now allow for train speeds of up to only 160kmh. On Class 2 tracks, the speed limit is 115–130kmh. Other sections have even lower speed limits. To reach the maximum speeds envisaged, some major sections of track would need to be replaced. Safety upgrades and timetable changes would be required.

Mr Guy said a necessary "untangling" of regional and metropolitan services would be helped by the planned \$15 billion airport rail link plan and Sunshine super-hub. He said the Coalition backed the plan by the two governments to start building an airport rail link next term, saying the fast rail plan would "complement existing plans for an Airport Rail Link and the Metro Tunnel".

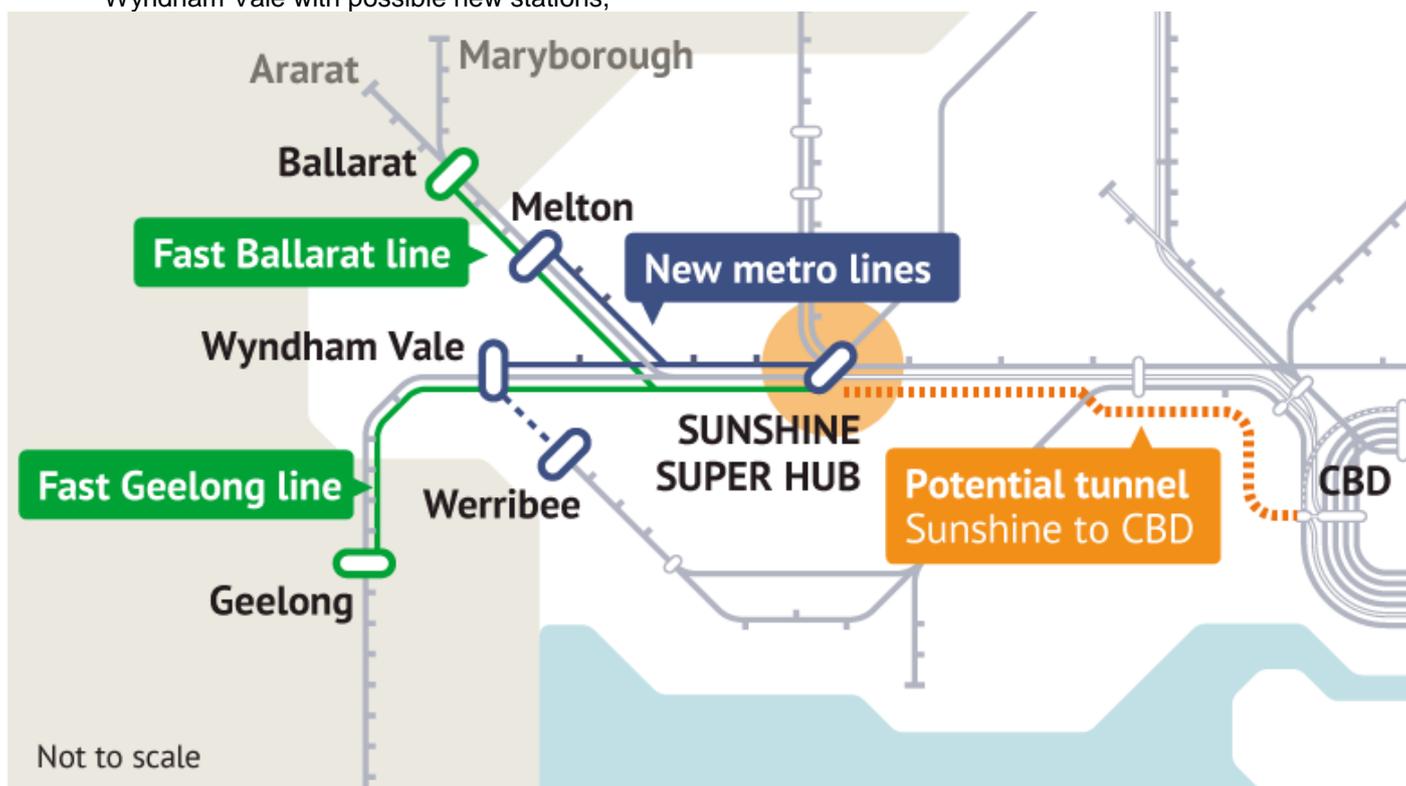
In addition, Victorian Nationals leader Peter Walsh says passenger rail will return to Horsham, Hamilton, and Mildura if the Coalition is elected to power.

Well over \$100 billion of major infrastructure projects has now been promised by both major parties. Indeed, the incumbent Labor State government has also promised major upgrading which will improve services on the Regional Rail Network, partly, by separating outer suburban traffic (which has grown so hugely around Melbourne lately). On 16 October, the Premier, Daniel Andrews, announced that, if re-elected, they will provide:

- Two new electrified Metro lines to Melton and Wyndham Vale with possible new stations,

with the Wyndham Vale line potentially becoming the western section of the Suburban Rail Loop.

- Additional tracks between Sunshine and the CBD to run extra services, most likely through a new rail tunnel which would also be used by Airport trains and integrated with the Airport Rail Link.
- A major overhaul to the Geelong and Ballarat lines to run fast trains, including the potential for full electrification with new electric regional rolling stock.



### Melbourne suburban loop railway

Federal Opposition Leader Bill Shorten has promised \$300 million to support Victorian Labor’s suburban rail project (see October *Table Talk*, page 1) if Federal Labor wins the next election. The new pledge matches state Labor’s initial funding and brings the total earmarked for the project to \$600 million. That is enough to start work on the first section, from Cheltenham to Box Hill, within four years. Mr Shorten said more transport infrastructure was needed to cope with Melbourne’s forecast population of 7.3 million by 2046. “This is the sort of vision Melbourne needs — to keep up with the demands of Australia’s fastest-growing capital city. Labor understands how important it is to invest in decent public transport.” he said.

### Melbourne: More level crossings to go

Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews has named the next 14 level crossings to be removed under a \$6.6 billion extension of the level crossing removal program. Victoria’s Level Crossing Removal Authority has removed 29 Melbourne level crossings and is on track to remove a further 21 by 2022. The new

announcement is the first tranche of another \$6.6 billion and 25 crossings to the Authority’s charter, extending the project timeline to 2025. The 14 additional crossings, selected for removal after “rigorous analysis by experts at the Level Crossing Removal Authority and Transport for Victoria”, are:

- Sunbury line, Gap Road in Sunbury,
- Mernda line, Cramer St, Murray Road and Oakover Road in Preston,
- Werribee line, Old Geelong Road in Hoppers Crossing. (This is ironic: Hoppers Crossing is named after this level crossing. It is the only locality in Australia to be named after a level crossing),
- Frankston line, Glen Huntly Road and Neerim Road in Glen Huntly, and Chelsea Road, Argyle Avenue, and Swanpool Avenue in Chelsea,
- Upfield line, Munro St and Reynard St in Coburg, and
- Belgrave/Lilydale line, Union Road in Surrey Hills and Mont Albert Road in Mont Albert.

## Metro Trains Melbourne: Frankston line closedown

The Frankston line was closed from Friday evening 26 October until end of service Sunday 28 October for planned maintenance. Separate timetable posters were issued for each day urging people to “take a Sandringham line train to South Yarra and change to a replacement bus” but neglected to provide times at Flinders St, or to mention that there were additional trains running on the Sandringham line.

## Adelaide Metro: North Terrace tram extension opened

With little pre-publicity, services on the tram extension eastwards along North Terrace, Adelaide City, plus the short stub along King William Road to Festival Plaza, commenced from first service on Saturday 13 October. This was about ten weeks later than originally scheduled. There are three journey options, colour coded on the timetable:

- Yellow for Entertainment Centre to Botanic Gardens and return (off-peak frequency 10 minutes)
- Red for Glenelg to Royal Adelaide Hospital and return (off-peak frequency 10 minutes)
  - limited weekday peak services operate to and from the Entertainment Centre
- Blue for Glenelg to Festival Plaza and return
  - weekends and Adelaide Oval event days only (frequency 20 minutes).

Thus on weekends every second tram from Glenelg goes to the Royal Adelaide Hospital, and every second service to Festival Plaza.

The timetable – undated – can be accessed at <https://www.adelaidemetro.com.au/Announcements/Planned-Disruptions/New-tram-services-now-operating> or <https://www.adelaidemetro.com.au/timetables/trams>

The Adelaide Metro website has a video to explain a new concept for Adelaide - possibly having to change trams to reach your destination.

The previous line along North Terrace commenced on 5 May 1909, when the Payneham and Maylands lines were opened and closed in 1958.

## TransWA changes

Commencing 13 October, the weekend service on the Australind returned to the timetable that applied prior to 7 April. Service B55 reverts to departure from Perth at 1755 arriving Bunbury at 2024. Service B56 reverts to departure from Bunbury at 1445 arriving Perth at 1712. Therefore, the 0800 Albany-Bunbury bus has its train connection restored at Bunbury.

From 30 September, the following bus services changed:

- **Gnowangerup:** East Perth to Gnowangerup 1700 Tuesday altered to 0945 and extended to Albany. The Wednesday return starts from Albany 0730 and runs about one hour later.
- **Esperance:** The 1430 Kalgoorlie to Esperance Monday service instead now operates on

Sundays. It operates to the same times, but on Sundays there is no connection from Perth.

- **Geraldton to East Perth:** Geraldton to East Perth services no longer stops at Mogumber. The 1530 Fridays and 0930 Sundays Perth-Geraldton both leave 15 minutes later but arrive at the same time as formerly.

TransWA's website also refers vaguely to “New services via Collie” and “New services from Pemberton, Bunbury and Donnybrook”, but it is unclear what these are.

The Bunbury and Kalgoorlie rail public timetables have been re-issued. The Kalgoorlie-Esperance, all Northern, South West and Great Southern bus public timetables have been re-issued.

## Wellington: Wairarapa line upgrade

On 9 October, NZ Transport Minister Phil Twyford announced \$NZ 196 million will be spent to improve infrastructure and capacity on the Wairarapa, Hutt and Kapiti rail lines around Wellington. \$NZ 96 million will provide for a significant upgrade of the Wairarapa line to Masterton. This includes \$NZ 50 million for track infrastructure, and \$NZ 46.2 million for the line south of the Rimutaka Hill tunnel, including track duplication between Trentham and Upper Hutt (3 km). Twyford said without the commitment the Wairarapa line would continue to deteriorate, meaning more service disruptions.

## KiwiRail: South Island Main North line

Daytime freight trains ran for the first time in two years between Blenheim and Christchurch in the week beginning 8 October, marking a milestone in rebuilding after the Kaikoura earthquake in late 2016. Intense repair works allowed an initial restricted re-opening of the line in September 2017 for low-frequency freight services running five nights a week. The Coastal Pacific passenger train will re-commence on 1 December.

## European timetables 2019

Early advice concerning changes in European paper timetables for 2019 (via the Fahrplancenter) is:

**Switzerland:** Due to the large scope of construction works on the Gotthard line, the Swiss timetable will be printed in two volumes.

**Serbia:** Unlikely to be produced.

## Dutch timekeeping

NS, Netherlands Railways, is trialling the use of smartwatches by conductors. They will vibrate shortly before departure time, and ensure the conductor and driver receive the same departure time.

**Thanks** to Agnes Boskovitz, Paul Brown, Scott Ferris, Hilaire Fraser, Alan Gray, Steven Haby, Victor Isaacs, Geoff Lambert, Ross Morrison, Len Regan, Jim Wells, Ross Willson, Fahrplancenter, Grattan Institute, Liberal Party Victoria, [www.railexpress.com.au](http://www.railexpress.com.au), [www.railpage.com.au](http://www.railpage.com.au). *Railway Digest*, *Railway Gazette International*, *Australian*, *Canberra Times*,

## ODD SPOT

### ARTC: Can't be too careful 1

The enormously complex rail ownership structure in Victoria is obvious in some categories of railway operational documentation. The *Weekly Operational Notice* (first published by the Victorian Railways as the *Weekly Notice* in 1894) is now jointly published by Metro Trains and V/Line. It also includes operational information of the ARTC relevant to Victoria.

When signalling diagrams are issued, they are also joint productions of the relevant infrastructure controllers. A recent signalling diagram issued for V/Line's Corio to North Shore segment also included the parallel ARTC line. A note on the diagram says, "ARTC does not approve the drawing but accepts the drawing based on evidence provided by the 'checking & approval' process."

### ARTC: Can't be too careful 2

ARTC's current Pricing Schedule effective from 1 July 2018 is enormously complex. It is on the ARTC website at <https://www.artc.com.au/customers/access/access-interstate/> It differentiates by type of train, as well as by individual line. The practical effect is that almost every train has a unique price for access to the ARTC network. One of the specified lines is Tarcoola to Alice Springs. However, this line was divested from ARTC ownership in 1999.

### Tasmania: Unusual method to obtain timetables

Would you like a consolidated, albeit incomplete, set of Tasmanian rural bus timetables? Then it is useful to be

a reader of the *Canberra Times*! Once a year, each spring, a copy of *Tasmanian Travelways*, the Tasmanian tourist information magazine, is inserted in the *Canberra Times*. Most recently, this occurred on Friday 12 October. *Tasmanian Travelways* as it usually does, included the full timetable of Tasmanian Redline's major routes: Hobart-Launceston-Devonport-Burnie (probably the most important long-distance bus route in Tasmania), Launceston-Mole Creek and Burnie-Smithton. Calow's Coaches had full timetables for Launceston--St Helens, Launceston-Bicheno and St Helens-Bicheno. There were smaller advertisements, with no times, for Tassielink Transit and SkyBus Hobart.

*Tasmanian Travelways* has been published since 1960. It has always included timetables and much other tourist information. It is currently published bi-monthly.

It is believed that no other newspaper in the North Island distributes *Tasmanian Travelways*. So, why do Canberra residents receive the benefit of annual updates to their Tasmanian rural bus timetable collection? This is the probable explanation: In 1998 the *Canberra Times* was acquired by Rural Press Ltd. Hitherto, Rural Press' biggest newspaper was the Launceston *Examiner*. The *Examiner* publishes *Tasmanian Travelways*, and presumably the *Examiner* made it available to the *Canberra Times*. Rural Press is now part of Fairfax Media, but twenty years later this arrangement continues.

**Thanks** to Len Regan, Victor Isaacs and the *Canberra Times* for Odd Spot.

## TABLE TALK BUS EDITOR

The ATA is delighted to announce the appointment of Steven Haby as Bus Editor of *Table Talk*. Steven also recently joined the ATA Committee. Victor Isaacs will continue as the *Table Talk* Rail and Tram, Air and Ferry Editor, as well as putting the final product together. Steven has an email to receive your contributions of Bus news. Please send Bus news to Steven at [busnews@timetable.org.au](mailto:busnews@timetable.org.au)

## BUS NEWS

### New South Wales

A timetable is now available for the new **Skybus** service Byron Bay-Gold Coast Airport, mentioned in the October *Table Talk* (page 10). From 16 September ten trips are operated between 0715 and 1815 from Byron Bay returning at 0715 to 1915 daily – see <https://www.skybus.com.au/byron-bay-express/timetable/>

**Forest Coach Lines** introduced new timetables on 29 October on the Coffs Harbour-Sawtell routes 362, 363 and 364.

**Punchbowl Bus Company's** On Demand service in the Bankstown area ceased on 14 October.

### Australian Capital Territory

On 16 October ACT Minister for Transport Meegan Fitzharris announced the 2019 public transport network for Canberra, to commence early next year. Timetables will be released in late 2018. There are 37 changes across the 58 routes.

The proposed Rapid service will travel from Tuggeranong and Woden to Belconnen via the City (as now). There will also be direct local connections to Woden from Weston Creek, better coverage in south-west Belconnen, and new peak express services from the south of Tuggeranong. Almost six out of 10 Canberrans will live within walking distance of a rapid bus stop. There will be services at least every 15 minutes along 10 Rapid transport corridors from 0700

to 1900 Monday to Friday, continuing into the evening with less frequency. Sunday and public holiday service times will now run until 2200.

The updated network also includes 78 more dedicated school services than in the initial consultation to help students get to school.

The new network to be introduced is detailed below. This is a revised network taking into account the feedback on the original proposals released in July:

#### **Rapid Services:**

- R1 City-Dickson-Gungahlin (Light Rail)
- R2 Fraser-Macgregor-Belconnen-City-Fyshwick
- R3 Spence-Belconnen-City-Airport
- R4 Belconnen-City-Woden-Tuggeranong
- R5 City-Russell-Woden-Erindale-Lanyon
- R6 City-South Canberra-Woden
- R7 City-Weston Creek-Chapman
- R8 Belconnen-Gungahlin
- R9 Belconnen-Dickson-Watson
- R10 City-Molonglo.

#### **Gungahlin:**

- 18 Gungahlin-Harrison-Mitchell
- 19 Gungahlin-Forde-Bonner-Amaroo-Gungahlin
- 20 Gungahlin-Amaroo-Bonner-Forder-Gungahlin
- 21 Gungahlin-Palmerston-Franklin-Throsby-Gungahlin
- 22 Gungahlin-Throsby-Franklin-Palmerston-Gungahlin
- 23 Gungahlin-Nicholls-Crace-Gungahlin
- 24 Gungahlin-Crace-Nicholls-Gungahlin
- 25 Gungahlin-Moncrieff-Casey-Gungahlin
- 26 Gungahlin-Casey-Moncrieff-Gungahlin
- 27 Gungahlin-Ngunnawal South-Casey
- 28 Gungahlin-Ngunnawal North-Casey.

#### **Belconnen:**

- 30 Dickson-Kaleen North-Giralang-Belconnen
- 31 City-Cowper St-Dickson-Kaleen South-Belconnen
- 32 City-Aranda-Cook-Macquarie-Belconnen
- 40 Belconnen- Florey-Latham -Kippax-Charnwood-Fraser
- 41 Belconnen-Evatt South-Melba-Flynn West-Fraser
- 42 Belconnen-Page-Scullin-Flynn East-Fraser East
- 43 Belconnen-McKellar-Evatt North-Spence
- 44 Belconnen-Holt-Kippax
- 45 Belconnen-Weetangera-Hawker-Kippax.

#### **Central Canberra:**

- 50 City-Miller St-Lyneham-Dickson-Antill St-Watson
- 51 City-Turner-O'Connor-Lyneham-North Lyneham-Dickson
- 53 National Museum City-Ainslie-Hackett-Dickson
- 54 City-Fairbairn Av-Majura Park
- 55 City-Campbell-Russell-ADFA
- 56 City-Russell-Red Hill-Narrabunbah-Fyshwick
- 57 City-Yarralumla-Hughes-Garran-Woden
- 58 City-Deakin-Hughes-Curtin-Woden.

#### **Woden/Weston Creek/Molonglo:**

- 60 Woden-O'Malley-Isaacs-Farrer-Mawson-Woden
- 61 Woden-Mawson-Farrer-Isaacs-O'Malley-Woden

- 62 Woden-Lyons-Chifley-Pearce-Torrens-Southlands
- 63 Woden-Waramanga-Fisher-Stirling-Cooleman
- 64 Woden-Rivett-Chapman
- 65 Woden-Holder-Duffy
- 66 Woden-Coombs-Denman Prospect-Wright-Weston-Cooleman.

#### **Tuggeranong:**

- 70 Woden-Cooleman-Kambah West-Tuggeranong
- 71 Woden-Cooleman-Kambah East-Tuggeranong
- 72 Tuggeranong-Oxley-Erindale-Monash North-Tuggeranong
- 73 Tuggeranong-Monash North-Erindale-Oxley-Tuggeranong
- 74 Tuggeranong-Erindale-Fadden-Macarthur-Gilmore-Tuggeranong
- 75 Tuggeranong-Gilmore-Macarthur-Fadden-Erindale-Tuggeranong
- 76 Tuggeranong-Erindale-Gowrie East-Chisholm East-Richardson
- 77 Tuggeranong-Monash South-Gowrie West-Erindale
- 78 Tuggeranong-Isabella Plains-Chisholm West
- 79 Tuggeranong-Calwell-Theodore
- 80 Tuggeranong-Banks
- 81 Tuggeranong-Gordon
- 180 City-Banks
- 181 City-Gordon
- 182 City-Lanyon via Russell.

Under this proposal the following will be discontinued: 200 series for Red Rapid services from Gungahlin, 300 series for Blue Rapid intertown services, 700 series for "Xpresso" peak hour services and 900 series for weekend services. The same network will now operate seven days a week.

This is the third large renumbering of Canberra bus routes in the last 50 years.

New electronic ticket machines will be installed at various interchange. The ACT government has committed to increasing and renewing the bus fleet. Woden Bus Depot will be recommissioned and Belconnen and Tuggeranong depots expanded.

Source, including maps: [www.transport.act.gov.au](http://www.transport.act.gov.au)

## **Victoria**

**V/Line** bus news is in the Rail News above.

The *2018 Victorian Regional Bus Fares Supplement* to the *Victorian Fares and Ticketing Manual* was re-issued from 23 September and is available at <https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/tickets/general-information/victorian-fares-and-ticketing-manual/>

**Melbourne:** New timetables were introduced on **Transdev** routes 235 and 237 from 7 October with additional morning peak trips, and to routes 309 905 906 and 907 with additional AM and PM peak trips. Updated timetables were reissued for routes 305 and 908. New timetables were also issued for routes 216 219 and 220 taking these routes out of St Kilda Road. Services now terminate either side of the city at Queen

St and the Alfred Hospital in Commercial Road

New timetables were introduced on 14 October for **Ventura** routes 709 and 815 in conjunction with a new bus interchange at Clayton station.

**GisBus introduces weekend services:** On Sunday 14 October, GisBus commenced weekend services on their route 473 town service. The Saturday and Sunday timetables are identical and connect with most V/Line trains at Gisborne station (in New Gisborne). Trips depart the station on the hour from 1031 to 1731 with the exception of the 0950, which departs from Brantome and Robertson Streets. One bus is required for the run. This follows on from a timetable upgrade to their weekday services earlier this year. Interestingly patronage has declined in relative terms since the extension of the electrification to Sunbury and changes to Myki fare zones whereby it is cheaper to travel from Riddells Creek – the next station heading to Melbourne - however the operators of GisBus (Sunshine Coaches) are hopeful that weekend services will boost patronage.

On 20 September a new timetable was introduced on the unusual **Timboon Camperdown** service. There are no services on Mondays to Wednesdays, six return services on Thursdays, two on Fridays, four on Saturdays, and two on Sundays.

## South Australia

Adelaide Service Changes 14 October:

- C1 City-Elizabeth via O-Bahn and C2 City-Greenwith via O-Bahn linked with J1 City-Glenelg via Sir Donald Bradman Drive and 163 City-West Beach via Sir Donald Bradman Drive to form new J1 Elizabeth-Glenelg via O-Bahn, City and Sir Donald Bradman Drive and J2 Greenwith-Harbour Town via O-Bahn, City and Sir Donald Bradman. C1, C2 and 163 continue as peak services to and from the City. J1 now serves the Lyell McEwin Hospital, Elizabeth.
- B10 West Lakes-Magill via Frederick Road, City and Magill Road split into 110 City-West Lakes via Frederick Rd and 106 City-Magill via Magill Road. B12 City-West Lakes via Tennyson renumbered 112.110 now through-linked with 500/501/502 from City to Elizabeth/Mawson Lakes/Salisbury via

Paradise. 106 now through linked with 167/168 from City to Glenelg via Richmond Road.

- Royal Adelaide Hospital is now served by 500/501/502 and 541/541G from City West to Fairview Park and Golden Grove via O-Bahn. Some peak services operate as 540 City West to Tea Tree Plaza via O-Bahn.
- 530 City-Firle via O-Bahn and 578 City-Athelstone via O-Bahn have been restored.
- The on-line PDF timetables do not have an effective date. One needs to refer to the version number on the back page of the timetable leaflet.

## Western Australia

Changes to **TransWA** bus services are in Rail News above.

Monday 1 October saw the launch of a free heritage style “tram” service operating through Subiaco and Shenton Park. It operates an extended loop from Subiaco railway station and will normally run Monday to Friday between 0900 and 1700. The “tram” owner is Ms Niki Peinke, owner of the Property Exchange real estate company in Subiaco, and she has a team of qualified volunteer drivers. The “tram” is in the style of the tourist services operating in Perth and Fremantle and the service is financed by advertising in the “tram”.

**TransPerth:** Changes were made to many timetables on 7 October. Timetables re-issued were numbers 1 3 6 9 13 15 17 18 32 33 34 39 44 46 65 66 73 80 86 90 96 100 108 109 116/123 132/4 136/7 139 and 207.

Timetable changes to routes 204/8 464 514/6 519 520 522 525/6 530/2 534/6 584 587 589 591/3 594 598 600 and 604/5.

Routes with fewer trips are 111 114 115 220 517 527 and 537. Routes with additional trips are 518 597. Routes 170 and 176 are merged into new route 178. Route 910 no longer serves Elizabeth Quay, but now serves the Busport.

There are further timetable revisions to routes 307 313 314 315 323/7 352 450 and 460/9.

**Thanks** to Agnes Boskovitz, Hilaire Fraser, Alan Gray, Steven Haby, Alex Sims, David Whiteford and *Subiaco Post* for Bus news.

## FERRY NEWS

**Brisbane:** A new City Cat and City Ferry timetable was introduced on 24 September. Changes include the introduction of Speed Cat Express peak hour services and reopening of the New Farm Park Ferry Terminal. The Cityhopper frequency changes from 30 minutes to 36 minutes. The Holman St to Thornton St frequency changes from 10 to 12 minutes before 1900 hours and from 15 to 18 minutes after 1900.

**Hobart:** Sealink Travel Group took control of the Bruny Island Ferry on 23 September. Features include two new passenger and car ferries to be built with greater capacity and reduced travel times. The first is expected to go into service in December 2019 and the second is planned for launch in 2021. Until then the company will continue to operate a 44-year-old ferry,

the MV Moongalba, that was brought down from Stradbroke Island in September, and a ferry taken over from the old service, the Mirambeena. SeaLink will immediately add a third ferry to the service — the MV Bowen — which had been supplanted by the Moongalba. The Bowen would run "mornings and afternoons in peak times".

**Melbourne:** Westernport Ferry introduced a summer timetable between Stony Point and Phillip and French Islands commencing on 26 October. The timetable is available at <https://www.ptv.vic.gov.au/getting-around/ferries/western-port-ferry/>

**Thanks** to Alan Gray, Ross Morrison, Len Regan and ABC news for Ferry news.

## AIR NEWS

On 26 September the Tasmanian government called for expressions of interest to operate a trial air service between Hobart and Strahan.

**Thanks** to the *Australian* for Air news.

## About *Table Talk*

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

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