



AUSTRALIAN TIMETABLE
ASSOCIATION

TABLE TALK

AUSTRALASIAN TIMETABLE NEWS

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RAIL & TRAM NEWS

NEW SOUTH WALES



Sydney Trains: February timetable update

A new Standard Working Timetable, designated as version 7.20, will come into use across the Sydney Trains network from Sunday, 28 February. There will be virtually no impact to passengers as the changes relate to general internal operation improvements.

It is noted that C Set trains will no longer be rostered. Additional B Set train rosters will operate using the new B Sets that entered service throughout the second half of 2020. The C Sets will be stripped for spare parts then permanently decommissioned. There has also been a small reduction in the number of K Set rosters. **TRANSPORT FOR NSW**

Bankstown Metro

Contracts are now being awarded to upgrade the Bankstown Line's heavy rail stations between Punchbowl and Marrickville (inclusive) to metro rail standard.

Works will include re-leveling of platform surfaces, improved paving, tiling and lighting, and the installation of screen doors on platforms. Lifts will also be installed at stations that do not already have them (Punchbowl, Wiley Park, Canterbury, Hurlstone Park and Dulwich Hill).

A consortium of Stephen Edwards Constructions and Haslin Constructions has been awarded the contract to upgrade Lakemba, Canterbury and Marrickville stations. Contracts for the remaining stations are due later this year. **ROADS ONLINE, INFRASTRUCTURE MAGAZINE**

TrainLink Regional service update

On Sunday, 20 December, the ACT government announced that it considered Greater Sydney to be a COVID-19 hotspot. As a result, from 21 December, NSW TrainLink's Sydney-Canberra Xplorer service began terminating at Queanbeyan, which is just before the border with the ACT. From 27 January, in light of the territory government's loosened entry restrictions, the NSW TrainLink service resumed running with passengers through to Canberra.

Meanwhile, Transport for NSW also advises that the Sydney-Melbourne XPT continues to terminate at Albury with no service into Victoria, and the Sydney-Brisbane XPT continues to terminate at Casino, with replacement coaches operating between Casino and Roma Street, Brisbane. Border permits continue to be required for travel into Victoria, while the requirement for travel permits into Queensland will expire on 31 January. **TRANSPORT FOR NSW**

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



Light rail: Mitchell

Between 10-23 January, trams only operated between EPIC & Racecourse and City Interchange stations to enable the construction of the new Mitchell light rail stop. Qcity operated free replacement buses from Dickson Interchange stopping all stations to Gungahlin Place and return. Locals have told *Table Talk* that some buses from Hunter Valley Buses have been seen operating these services.

Whilst construction of the stop was originally slated as part of stage 2A of Canberra's light rail system, it was brought forward as part of the territory government's COVID economic stimulus. **THE CANBERRA TIMES (2), TRANSPORT CANBERRA**

VICTORIA



WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Trains and trams replaced by buses

An Melbourne observation from January provided by ATA member Albert Isaacs around differences in reporting of service disruptions between Melbourne's commuter rail operator, Metro Trains, and Public Transport Victoria (PT>):

On the foot of p.5 of January's *Table Talk* is a list of some of the bus replacements to trains and trams in Melbourne in January, including buses on tram routes 48, 75 and 78. Incredibly, the PT> online timetable did not show any bus replacements!

One example (tram route 75 *Ethad Stadium Docklands to Vermont South*) from 15 January is provided below showing trams that did not exist.

On the weekend of 16th/17th January, buses also replaced trains on the **Alamein, Belgrave and Lilydale** lines, even though the disruption was not listed on the Metro Trains list of disruptions, but in early January it was conversely shown on the PT> website. Belgrave and Lilydale buses ran express Richmond-Camberwell, with East Richmond, Burnley, Hawthorn, Glenferrie and Auburn being served by Alamein buses, which, for many commuters, meant a change of buses at Camberwell.

On 16th January, the tram and train disruptions mentioned above coincided. This meant that for the many people in the suburbs of Richmond, Burnley, Hawthorn, East Hawthorn and Camberwell who normally have a choice of tram or train, on this day they had to choose between a bus replacement and a bus replacement. Your correspondent saw both bus replacements in Burwood Road, Hawthorn, at the same time. **ALBERT ISAACS**

Perth Metronet

Avid *Table Talk* reader and enthusiast, Hilaire Fraser, has provided the following overview on Perth's ongoing Metronet program. Enhancing Perth's rail system through new lines and extensions, the Metronet project will see:

Forrestfield-Airport Link

A new rail link will branch from the Midland Line at Bayswater with new underground stations built at Redcliffe and Airport Central, and an above-ground station built at the end of the line at High Wycombe. This new line is due to open in late 2021.

New Turnback at Claremont Station

To allow the turnback of Airport Line trains, two new train turnbacks are being built at Claremont station on the Fremantle Line. Thus, Perth to Claremont will have additional service capacity available in peak periods.

To facilitate the construction of the new turnbacks from 5 February to 5 April, there will be various service changes. The weekends of 5-7 February, 26-28 February and 3-5 April (Easter) will have a full line closure with bus replacement, Monday 8 and Tuesday 9 February will have half-line closures with trains operating from Perth to Showgrounds then replacement bus services operating from Karrakatta to Fremantle. The replacement buses will not stop at Showgrounds station.

(Continues next page >)

PUBLIC TRANSPORT VICTORIA **PT>** PLAN ▾ DISRUPTIONS ▾ TICKETS ▾ MORE ▾ myki 🔍 Search

➔ 75 Ethad Stadium Docklands - Vermont South

ⓘ Restrictions are in place to help slow the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) and save lives. [Learn more >](#)

Replacement Bus Service	10:25am	10:35am	10:45am	10:55am	11:05am	11:15am	11:25am	11:35am	11:45am	11:55am	12:05pm	12:15pm	12:25pm	12:35pm	12:45pm	12:55pm
Vermont South Shopping Centre / Burwood Hwy #75 (Vermont South)	15 Jan															
Stanley Rd / Burwood Hwy #74 (Vermont South)	15 Jan															
Springvale Rd / Burwood Hwy #73 (Burwood East)	10:28am	10:38am	10:48am	10:58am	11:08am	11:18am	11:28am	11:38am	11:48am	11:58am	12:08pm	12:18pm	12:28pm	12:38pm	12:48pm	12:58pm
Lakeside Dr / Burwood Hwy #72 (Burwood East)	10:28am	10:38am	10:48am	10:58am	11:08am	11:18am	11:28am	11:38am	11:48am	11:58am	12:08pm	12:18pm	12:28pm	12:38pm	12:48pm	12:58pm
Sevensoaks Rd / Burwood Hwy #71 (Burwood East)	10:30am	10:40am	10:50am	11:00am	11:10am	11:20am	11:30am	11:40am	11:50am	12:00pm	12:10pm	12:20pm	12:30pm	12:40pm	12:50pm	1:00pm
Blackburn Rd / Burwood Hwy #70 (Burwood East)	10:31am	10:41am	10:51am	11:01am	11:11am	11:21am	11:31am	11:41am	11:51am	12:01pm	12:11pm	12:21pm	12:31pm	12:41pm	12:51pm	1:01pm
Highview Gr / Burwood Hwy #69 (Burwood East)	10:32am	10:42am	10:52am	11:02am	11:12am	11:22am	11:32am	11:42am	11:52am	12:02pm	12:12pm	12:22pm	12:32pm	12:42pm	12:52pm	1:02pm
Benewarrin Reserve / Burwood Hwy #68 (Burwood East)	10:33am	10:43am	10:53am	11:03am	11:13am	11:23am	11:33am	11:43am	11:53am	12:03pm	12:13pm	12:23pm	12:33pm	12:43pm	12:53pm	1:03pm
Old Burwood Rd / Burwood Hwy #67 (Burwood East)	10:34am	10:44am	10:54am	11:04am	11:14am	11:24am	11:34am	11:44am	11:54am	12:04pm	12:14pm	12:24pm	12:34pm	12:44pm	12:54pm	1:04pm
Middleborough Rd / Burwood Hwy #66 (Burwood)	10:35am	10:45am	10:55am	11:05am	11:15am	11:25am	11:35am	11:45am	11:55am	12:05pm	12:15pm	12:25pm	12:35pm	12:45pm	12:55pm	1:05pm
Starling St / Burwood Hwy #65 (Burwood)	10:36am	10:46am	10:56am	11:06am	11:16am	11:26am	11:36am	11:46am	11:56am	12:06pm	12:16pm	12:26pm	12:36pm	12:46pm	12:56pm	1:06pm
Station St / Burwood Hwy #64 (Burwood)	10:38am	10:48am	10:58am	11:08am	11:18am	11:28am	11:38am	11:48am	11:58am	12:08pm	12:18pm	12:28pm	12:38pm	12:48pm	12:58pm	1:08pm
Daakin University / Burwood Hwy #63 (Burwood)	10:39am	10:49am	10:59am	11:09am	11:19am	11:29am	11:39am	11:49am	11:59am	12:09pm	12:19pm	12:29pm	12:39pm	12:49pm	12:59pm	1:09pm
Elgar Rd / Burwood Hwy #62 (Burwood)	10:40am	10:50am	11:00am	11:10am	11:20am	11:30am	11:40am	11:50am	12:00pm	12:10pm	12:20pm	12:30pm	12:40pm	12:50pm	1:00pm	1:10pm
Presbyterian Ladies College / Burwood Hwy #61 (Burwood)	10:41am	10:51am	11:01am	11:11am	11:21am	11:31am	11:41am	11:51am	12:01pm	12:11pm	12:21pm	12:31pm	12:41pm	12:51pm	1:01pm	1:11pm

On other days between 5 February and 5 April, a reduced 30-minute service will operate beyond Showgrounds. Curiously, city passengers travelling to and from Fremantle and the intermediate stations between Fremantle and Cottesloe will need to change at Cottesloe. Possibly, as single-track working will be in place between Showgrounds and Fremantle, a change in trains will avoid the delay that waiting for a passing train may cause. Claremont station will be closed and passengers will need to use Showgrounds station which is approximately 700 metres away. During line closures, the rail replacement buses will service Claremont station.

Inner Armadale Line Level Crossing Removals

This project is similar to the Melbourne Skyrail project. The plan includes elevating the rail line to eliminate level crossings at Mint St, Oats St, Welshpool Rd, Hamilton St, Wharf St and William St. New elevated stations will be built at Carlisle, Oats Street, Queens Park and Beckenham. Welshpool station will be permanently closed due to low patronage. With no level crossings adjacent to the station, Cannington station will not be involved in redevelopment.



Morley-Ellenbrook Line

A new rail line will also branch from the Midland Line at Bayswater. Bayswater station will be extended from two platforms to four platforms. The new line will be 21 kilometres long. For its first section, the line will be in the centre of the Tonkin Highway. New stations will be built at Morley, Noranda, Malaga, Whiteman Park and Ellenbrook.

Yanchep Extension

The Joondalup Line is being extended by 14.5 kilometres north from Butler, with new stations at Alkimos, Eglinton and Yanchep. The September 2020 edition of *Table Talk* (pp. 4-5) provided some early design images for these stations.

Byford Extension

The Armadale Line is being extended 8 kilometres south from Armadale to Byford.

Thornlie-Cockburn Link

This link will provide a connection between the Thornlie Line and Cockburn Central on the Mandurah Line. New stations will be built at Nicholson Rd and Ranford Rd.

Karnup and Lakelands Stations

Due to increasing settlement along the Mandurah Line, new stations are proposed for Karnup and Lakelands.

HILAIRE FRASER

Government unleashes hook for votes

With the next state election only weeks away, the state government pledged to cap public transport fares from Perth's outer suburbs to the Zone 2 fare. The Premier, Mark McGowan, said if re-elected in March, the fare cap would begin from January 2022. **ABC NEWS**

NEW ZEALAND



Auckland: Trains return to Britomart

Track maintenance teams continued to repair the conditions of line in Inner Auckland across December and January. As initially reported in *Table Talk's* October 2020 edition (pg. 5), issues include poor condition of rails and track alignment, use of sleepers up to 60 years old, and reduced service reliability due to long stretches of track speed restrictions.

KiwiRail undertook works in Inner Auckland over a three-week shutdown that finished in time for trains to resume on Monday 18 January. Works included replacing six kilometres of worn rail and replacement of two turnouts between Newmarket and the city, and installation of a new scissor track crossing in Britomart Tunnel.

KiwiRail's chief operating officer, David Gordon, said that "on the average day, more than 350 trains travel on this section of line [into Britomart], so we made the most of the shutdown and worked 24/7".

The first two weeks of the shutdown was network-wide, as KiwiRail took advantage of the Summer holiday to accelerate works with the other lines returning on 11 January. Another 18 kilometres of worn rail was replaced across those lines, while preliminary electrification works were also completed at Papakura and Pukekohe.

Mr Gordon said that 70 per cent of the damaged rail has now been replaced.

Now, attention has turned to the **Western Line** with a two-week closure until Monday 1 February. Buses also replace peak-hour services between Henderson, New Lynn and Britomart. From 2-8 February, from around 20:30 each night, buses replace trains between Britomart and Swanson. Buses also replace **Eastern Line** trains between Britomart and Otahuhu from 25 January to 7 February.

Across the weekend of 30 January-1 February, the entire network will be closed down, with replacement buses operating on all lines. Over the long weekend of 6-8 February, buses will replace trains on all lines, excepting between Britomart and Swanson on the Eastern Line which will have trains running daily until 20:30. **STUFF.CO.NZ, AUCKLAND TRANSPORT**

Auckland: fare changes

Auckland Transport (AT) has announced a permanent 10 per cent discount for off-peak fares using AT HOP across trains, buses and ferries effective from 7 February. General fares will increase by an average of four per cent, and a \$20 daily travel cap will also be introduced (the cap will exclude SkyBus services).

Commenting on the off-peak discount, AT's executive general manager of Integrated Networks, Mark Lambert, said "during COVID we trialled reduced off-peak fare prices and we are making that permanent to encourage people to travel when buses and trains are a little quieter". Regarding the fare increase, he said it would reduce pressure on Auckland Council's fare subsidy, while also enabling AT to invest in the next steps of the transfer to an electric bus fleet. **SCOOP.CO.NZ**

Auckland: Northland trains recommence

KiwiRail got a boost to its freight network capacity following the January re-opening of the line between Whangarei and Swanson, in west Auckland.

Meanwhile, works continue on the North Auckland line where a number of tunnel bases are being dropped to allow the use of hi-cube containers on freight services.

Supplied by – DENNIS McLEAN

Source – NEW ZEALAND HERALD

INTERNATIONAL

Eurostar on the brink

“Without additional funding from government, there is a real risk to the survival of Eurostar... the current situation is very serious”.

Western European rail operator Eurostar has reported that its future is looking shaky. Since the pandemic took hold in March last year, patronage levels have averaged just five per cent of normal levels. However, multiple reports suggest that towards the end of 2020, patronage was as low as just one per cent of normal pre-COVID levels. This has resulted in an erosion of most of its revenue base. It continues to lose money, even without the latest restrictions in Britain.

Eurostar's chief executive officer, Jacques Damas, said that government had invested various financial assistance packages for airlines and airports flying over the English Channel, but, to date, Eurostar has been left out in the cold. Meanwhile, for the services it operates, regardless of passenger numbers, Eurostar must also continue to pay network access charges on the high-speed railway section in Britain.

In a letter to British Chancellor (finance minister) Rishi Sunak, 28 business leaders, who call themselves “London First”, have written in the hope of saving the service. They urged “swift action to safeguard its future. If this viable business is allowed to fall between the cracks of support – [Britain's] recovery could be damaged”.

The chief executive officer of Eurostar's majority owner, French railroad operator SNCF, concurred, saying “the situation is very critical for Eurostar”. Despite majority French ownership, reports suggest that Eurostar has exhausted options for financial assistance from the French government. SNCF executive, Christophe Fanichet, said there has been a long-term dispute between France and the United Kingdom on how much of the service the other side should be funding. Eurostar has indicated that its shareholders have already provided some funds to enable the service to continue, however it believed it should be able to access the same help as other companies in similar positions had received.

Due to the ongoing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, including the latest wave in Britain which has forced the re-tightening of international travel restrictions, since 18 January, only one train a day has been timetabled to operate from St Pancras International (London) to Gare du Nord (Paris) and return. Eurostar also currently operates one return service between St Pancras and Amsterdam Centraal. Eurostar has said they expect this timetable to remain in force until at least the end of February. *THE GUARDIAN (2), BLOOMBERG, EUROSTAR*

UK: Rail services reduced

West Coast mainline train operator, Avanti West Coast, introduced a new temporary timetable on Monday, 18 January. The operator is now running a reduced service level, which it says better meets current demand in light of Britain's recent COVID-19 surge of infections and lockdown. *BBC NEWS*

Flash jacks city's rail network

Trains across the rail network in the Chinese city of Dalian ground to a halt on 12 January. Initially acknowledged by the local railway online, the cause was Adobe's termination of support for Adobe Flash Player.

In 2017, Adobe announced it would stop support for Adobe Flash Player by the end of 2020 after many years of success, as the online world progressively moved on in recent years to more advanced software. It appears the Dalian railway either did not receive this news or forgot.

On the morning of 12 January, the train control system in Dalian stopped working causing trains to grind to a halt. The service suspension is reported to have lasted for the rest of the day as technicians worked to figure out the problem. As it turned out, the culprit was Adobe's move to block Flash Player content.

Adobe's message (screenshot further below) states:

Adobe will stop supporting Flash Player after December 31, 2020. To help secure your system, Adobe will block Flash content from running in Flash Player beginning January 12, 2021...

Technicians then set about to fix their problem, finding a work-around - using an older version of Flash on a spare computer to get the system back online and the trains back on the move.

To make matters worse, online reports state that the local railway also chronicled their efforts on WeChat, where it accounted for how it resolved the issue over the span of 20 hours. These posts were subsequently deleted, but saved on the Github website, see below (with assistance from Google Translate):

08:16:00	Segment microcomputer room received the station transfer area director's fault report repair telephone, by the district chief's description, the road bureau now the car system can not display the page, resulting in the train operation map can not be viewed, the train formation sequence table can not be formulated, the transfer plan can not be arranged. Within the next 30 minutes, almost all of the transport production computers had the same fault. After contacting the Road Bureau and retrieving information on the network, it was confirmed that the source of the failure was related to Adobe's total ban on flash content in the United States.	22:20:00	A third failure is now coming again, with the on-site Master version of the system Flash all loaded and the full version of the five stations currently operating well. The microcomputer room held the third attack meeting. Just to be clear, you have to take the Host version of flash run tonight.
08:41:00	The microcomputer room immediately convened an emergency meeting to take emergency measures against this phenomenon. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First, immediately notify the bureau, paragraph related departments, report information failure. • Second, immediately specify temporary alternative products, the initial solution to the site can not see the page problem. • Third, set up a team in the software, breakthrough test run • Fourth, set up a team in the hardware, equipment construction, backup equipment update testing. 	01:09:00	"Wanjialing is right": With the microcomputer room Marlene's shout, ghost version of the car is now back up and running, everyone immediately onlookers over, really good use, cheers, applause burst out in a flash. After a brief cheer, the computer room staff ready to analyse the cause of the failure, immediately held a fourth rectification meeting: AC solutions, the entire remote solution.
08:51:00	Full room staff, remote connection station, temporary product replacement, to ensure the operation of the web page.	02:34:00	All stations in the section, except the Dalian West Power Plant dedicated line, all solve the Flash deactivation problem. In view of the special problems of Dalian West Power Plant, the microcomputer room decided to go deep into the field again, carry out hardware replacement, and completely cure the problem. Late at night, another team of people began loading cars, ready to drive themselves to Dalian West Power Plant.
09:30:00	Station feedback again, page glitches continue, bugs frequently. After studying the scheme with the Road Bureau, solve the unexpected problems remotely again.	03:42:00	Dalian West Power Plant dedicated line, on-site personnel called, commissioning completed. Now the car Flash load problem, the last post to solve.
12:10:00	With the joint efforts of the Road Bureau Information Institute and the traffic section, the situation of out-of-control station was temporarily stabilised.	04:30:00	The entire vehicle system is now running steadily and the fault is lifted.
13:00:00	The microcomputer room holds a second solution meeting to determine the next response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First, problems must be addressed and temporary alternatives should not be used for long periods of time. • Second, the hardware backup device, must be updated all, ready to come out to replace. • Third, the software side to make further breakthroughs, find problems, eliminate problems. 	08:34:00	The microcomputer room Zhao Jiaxuan and the bureau information institute software four section Qinlin to get in touch, share the car segment solution, get the bureau information highly appraised - Dalian traffic section everyone is a master. Fighting for more than 20 hours, no one complains, let alone give up, even if the hope is slim, there is hope there is momentum to move forward. All the members of the microcomputer room in solving the Flash failure of the project, really did the Song Zhenglong studio wall that sentence, dare to attack, dare to innovate, dare to lead.
14:11:00	Problems such as station feedback, printed pages not loading, resurfaced. The problem came again, after contact with the relevant departments of the Road Bureau to learn that the information institute and related departments are also studying the phenomenon of the fault, communication learned that the failure is a global outbreak, there is no better solution.		
20:17:00	The microcomputer room will be the backup host all downgraded debugging completed, the first group immediately loaded the car, self-driving to Nanguanling, Dalian West Station for on-site testing.		
20:31:00	Software testing made a breakthrough, and then immediately contact the computer room field personnel, for the original Microsoft system debugging. Finally, Nanguanling district chief computer failure lifted, the troubleshooting of this fault, triggered cheers on the scene, but also to the computer room people played a strong heart agent.	<p><i>Adobe has ended support for Flash (screenshot source: Gamepressure.com).</i></p> <p>The railway later denied any such event, releasing a statement that “the railway transport production has not been affected in any way” (Google translation). MOBYGEEK.COM, THE EPOCH TIMES, GAMEPRESSURE, HOT HARDWARE, GITHUB</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ENDS</p>	

BUS & COACH NEWS

NEW SOUTH WALES



VICTORIA



Sydney: January timetable changes

The Lower North Shore and North-West Sydney timetable changes reported in the January edition of *Table Talk* were implemented on Sunday 24 January.

Sutherland Shire bus changes (part 2)

Further from our January article, Transdev loop routes 977 and 987 also have updated timetables effective 11 January:

- **977** (Caringbah-Lilli Pilli-Caringbah) had its weekday intra-peak service frequency doubled, with buses now operating every 30 minutes.
- **987** (Cronulla-Kurnell-Cronulla) also had its weekday intra-peak service frequency doubled – buses on this route now operate every 60 minutes instead of two-hourly. A copy of the weekday timetable, dated 29 January is provided on page 19.

Report kindly provided by HILARIE FRASER

Wollongong shuttle

The Wollongong free city shuttle service will continue to operate for a further three years, following successful re-negotiations between Transport for NSW, Wollongong City Council and the University of Wollongong (UoW).

The supremely popular service, which accounted for roughly two-thirds of local bus patronage pre-COVID, has been secured until the end of June 2024.

To pay for the costs of the free service, Council and UoW will both continue to provide \$350,000 annually. However, to cover increases in labour and maintenance costs, from July the operating hours of the service on Saturdays will be reduced – bringing it into line with the Sunday timetable (09:40-16:40).

The service will continue to operate in both directions on the loop (route 55A runs anti-clockwise and 55C runs clockwise).

Meanwhile, effective 1 February, route 55C had part of its route altered to use Market Street instead of Smith Street by continuing along Harbour Street. One bus stop previously north of Market Street on Corrimal Street has been moved south by 120 metres to accommodate the changed route. **ILLAWARRA STAR, TRANSPORT FOR NSW**

Melbourne timetable update

The following bus routes had updated timetables effective Sunday, 31 January to coincide with updated suburban and V/Line rail timetables. This is the first of several timetable updates to be rolled out across the first quarter of 2021.

Outer northern metropolitan Melbourne

- 511 Donnybrook – Beveridge
- 528 Craigieburn R/S – Craigieburn Central SC
- 529 Craigieburn R/S – Craigieburn North
- 530 Campbellfield – Coburg
- 531 Upfield R/S – North Coburg
- 532 Broadmeadows – Craigieburn
- 533 Craigieburn – Craigieburn North
- 537 Craigieburn – Craigieburn West
- 538 Somerset Estate – Broadmeadows
- 540 Upfield – Broadmeadows
- 541 Broadmeadows R/S – Craigieburn North
- 542 Roxburgh Park – Pascoe Vale
- 544 Craigieburn – Roxburgh Park
- 546 Heidelberg R/S – Queen Victoria Market
- 561 Macleod – Pascoe Vale

Inner northwestern suburbs

- 469 Moonee Ponds – Keilor East
- 476 Watergardens – Moonee Ponds
- 504 Moonee Ponds – Clifton Hill
- 505 Moonee Ponds – Melbourne University
- 509 Brunswick West – Barkly Square SC
- 513 Eltham – Glenroy
- 534 Glenroy – Coburg
- 536 Gowrie – Glenroy

Western suburbs

- 406 Keilor East – Footscray R/S
- 408 St Albans R/S – Highpoint SC

- 409 Yarraville – Highpoint SC
- 410 Sunshine R/S – Footscray
- 418 St Albans R/S – Caroline Springs
- 421 St Albans R/S – Watergardens
- 423 St Albans R/S – Brimbank Central S/C
- 424 St Albans R/S – Brimbank Central S/C
- 425 Watergardens R/S – St Albans R/S
- 460 Watergardens – Caroline Springs R/S
- 461 Watergardens R/S – Caroline Springs
- 462 Watergardens – Caroline Springs R/S
- 463 Hillside – Watergardens

- Ballan – Hepburn
- Ballan – Mt Egerton

Bendigo

- 70 Bendigo R/S – Strathfieldsaye
- 71 Strathfieldsaye town service

Gisborne

- 473 Gisborne R/S – Gisborne
- 474 Gisborne R/S – Gisborne

Kilmore

- Kilmore town service
- Kilmore link service

Kyneton

- 1 Kyneton – Kyneton R/S
- 2 Kyneton – Kyneton West
- 3 Kyneton – Kyneton R/S via Hospital
- 4 Kyneton – Trentham
- Sunbury – Lancefield

Seymour

- 1 Seymour East
- 2 Seymour West
- 3 Seymour – Puckapunyal
- 4 Seymour town (am peak)
- 5 Seymour North East (pm peak)

Sunbury

- 481 Sunbury – Mt Lion
- 483 Sunbury – Moonee Ponds
- 485 Sunbury – Wilsons Lane
- 487 Sunbury – Killara Heights
- 488 Sunbury – Jacksons Hill
- 489 Sunbury – Canterbury Hills

Wallan

- 1 Wallan – Wallan R/S
- 2 Springridge – Wallan R/S
- 3 Wallara Waters – Wallan R/S
- Link Service A and B

STEVEN HABY

Southeastern suburbs

- 789 Frankston R/S – Langwarrin
- 790 Frankston R/S – Langwarrin
- 791 Frankston R/S – Cranbourne R/S
- 792 Frankston R/S – Pearcedale
- 795 Cranbourne R/S – Warnett
- 796 Cranbourne R/S – Clyde
- 798 Cranbourne Park SC – Selandra Rise
- 799 Merinda Park R/S – The Avenue Village
- 890 Dandenong R/S – Lynbrook R/S
- 891 Fountain Gate SC – Lynbrook R/S
- 892 Casey Central SC – Dandenong R/S
- 893 Cranbourne Park SC – Dandenong R/S
- 894 Amberly Park – Hallam
- 895 Narre Warren South – Fountain Gate S/C
- 897 Clyde – Lynbrook R/S
- 898 Cranbourne East – Cranbourne R/S

Night network buses

- 953 Broadmeadows – Craigieburn
- 970 Carrum – Rosebud
- 978 Elsternwick – Dandenong
- 979 Elsternwick – Dandenong
- 981 Dandenong – Cranbourne
- 982 Dandenong – Cranbourne

Ballan and Bacchus Marsh routes

- 433 Bacchus Marsh R/S – Hillview
- 434 Bacchus Marsh R/S – Telford Park
- 435 Bacchus Marsh R/S – Darley

TASMANIA



Trial school bus 288PM

Effective from Wednesday, 3 February, Metro Tasmania started to operate a new trial school bus route, 288PM, operating on the same route path as school bus 258PM between South Hobart Primary School and Fern Tree terminus. The school day trip commences from the school at 15:05, which is four minutes earlier than the existing 258PM service.

The route will operate for six months to gauge patronage levels before any further decisions are made. If successful, route 258PM could have its route altered to bypass the school. **METRO TASMANIA**

SOUTH AUSTRALIA



Adelaide Metro changes

From Tuesday, 26 January, many routes will have minor changes to running times and other amendments. There is no reduction to service frequencies.

Timetables	Changes
100, 101	Running times
106	Running times
110, 112	Running times, timing point change
115, 117, 118	Running times
140, 144, 147	Running times
141, 142	Running times
150, 350	Running times
155, 157, 376	Running times
167, 168	Running times
170, 172	Running times
171, 173	Running times
174, N178	Running times
176, 178, 578, 579, N178	Running times
190	Running times, timing point change
195, 196, 197X	Running times, timing point change

200	Running times
202, 203, 209F	Running times
206, 208, 528	Running times
222	Running times
224, N224	Running times
225	Running times
228, T228	Running times
229	Running times
230, 232	Running times
235, 238, 239	Running times
241, 245, 248	Running times, timetable layout change
251, 252	Running times
253, 254	Running times
262, 263, 265, N262	Running times
271, 273	Running times
281	Running times
286, 287, 288	Running times
300	Running times
333	Running times
361	Running times
411	Timing point change
500, 501, 502	Running times
503, 507	Running times
506, 546	Running times
528	Running times
530	Running times, timing point change on through-linking H30
540, 541	Running times
542	Running times
543	Running times
544, M44	Running times
545	Running times
548, 591A, 591C	Running times
556, 557, 559	Running times
578	Running times
600, 601, 605, G30F	Running times
640, 719, 720	Running times
645, 646	Running times
681, 682, 683	Running times

721, T721	Running times
722, T722	Running times
723, 733	Running times
725	Running times
734	Running times
737	Running times
741, 750, 751, 752, 755, 756	Running times
743, 744	Running times
745, 747	Running times
C1, C2, J1, J2, 163, N1	Running times
G10	Running times, timing point change
G20, G21, G22X, 320, N10, N21	Running times, timing point change
G40	Running times
H20, H21, 580	Running times
H22, H23, H24, H32, N22	Running times
H30, X30, N30	Running times, timing point change
H33	Running times
M44, 544	Running times
W90, W91	Running times

Report kindly provided by **RICHARD TALBOT**

WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Transperth service changes

The following Transperth service changes reported in the December "Table Talk" were implemented on 31 January, along with many other timetable changes:

- **210 & 211** Thornlie to Gosnells - route changes in Gosnells
- New route **233** Cockburn Central to Gosnells via Harrisdale
- New route **338** Henley Brook to Ellenbrook Central via Aveley East
- **517** Murdoch to Thornlie - route change in Southern River
- New route **523** Cockburn Central to Treeby
- New route **544** Kwinana to Wellard via Bertram & Wellard East

- **567** Warnbro to Baldivis - extended to Sixty Eight Rd

HILAIRE FRASER

Perth December network changes

Page 18 of *Table Talk*, January 2021, contained Perth bus service changes notes but the official Transperth notices were rather misleading about two of the changes.

Route **284** (Belmont Forum – Curtin Uni) – as well as cutting service numbers, the twice daily (M-F) extension to and from Redcliffe has disappeared, leaving a large part of Redcliffe's residences with long walks to other services. That was never noted in any publicity for the 284 changes.

Route **935** (Kings Park – Belmont Forum – Perth Airport) – it is not Belmont Forum that is the terminus of withdrawn night trips to the airport but Belvidere Street, Belmont, beyond the Forum, that is the terminus of all non-Airport runs. The Forum has never been a 935 terminal point. Posters in 935 buses continued to carry this wrong message after the new timetable was introduced. **DAVID WHITEFORD**

NEW ZEALAND



Auckland: January network changes

Auckland Transport implemented timetable changes for selected routes effective from Sunday 24 January:

- **38** – New route due to introduction of Airport Link service. Runs between Onehunga and Auckland International Airport via Mangere Town Centre. Adds Mountain Road to the previous route. 15-minute service frequency between 07:00 and late.
- **50A** – The Ostend route deviation trial implemented in December 2019 has been removed.
- **114** – No longer serves Herald Island, an additional early morning trip to Westgate, and timing changes to even out the spread of services.
- 151X, 171X and 172X – replaced by additional services on existing routes **151**, **171** and **172** respectively.
- **171** – Additional services in place of the withdrawn 171X, timing changes to even out the spread of services, and the introduction of a two-hourly service on Sundays between Laingholm and New Lynn.

- 221X, 223X, 243X and 248X – replaced by additional services on the existing all-stops routes.
- **313** – No longer runs between Onehunga and Mangere Town Centre due to low patronage.
- **355** – Route diversion to better serve Donegal Park's residential development.
- **378** – Extended to Karaka Lakes residential area.
- 380 – Route split into **38** and **Airport Link**.
- **774** – No longer serves Crossfield Road.
- **783** – Additional clockwise evening trips.
- **806** and **807** – Introduction of a temporary timetable until late February. Peak service frequency of every 40 minutes and a connection with every second ferry.
- **814** – Some timing adjustments.
- **842** – Service frequency reduced to every 20 minutes.
- 97V – Two post-21:00 trips transferred to **97B** and **97R** (starting from Verrans Corner).
- **Airport Link** – see next article.
- **NX2** – Weekend 23:36 and 00:06 trips from the city stop now short at Albany station.

Routes **111, 112, 114, 131, 132, 133, 134, 141, 142, 143, 146, 152, 154, 170** and **186** also have new timetables issued. Meanwhile, 95G and 97V peak services, 890 and trial 987 have all been withdrawn. Routes 728 and 729 ceased to operate after Friday 18 December. The new timetables also coincide with the opening of the new bus station at Hibiscus Coast.

AUCKLAND TRANSPORT

Auckland: Airport Link commences

Further to *Table Talk's* November 2020 article, the new Airport Link electric bus route started operating on Sunday 24 January between Manukau Bus Station and Auckland International Airport. Services are initially timetabled to operate every 15 minutes between 04:30 and 00:40 daily via Papatoetoe.

Once the new Puhinui station opens, now anticipated for May (see *Table Talk* December 2019 edition {pg. 2}), the permanent route via Puhinui will begin operation, with services increased to meet the previously advertised 10-minute all-day service frequency. **AUCKLAND TRANSPORT**

Auckland: Rideshare trial axed

Auckland Transport has axed its *AT Local* rideshare service after continued low patronage (see July 2020, pg. 16 for further detail) despite numerous extensions since its creation in 2018. Additional peak trips on bus

routes 806 and 807 will be timetabled from 1 March. **STUFF.CO.NZ**

Christchurch: 2020 network changes

In February 2020, following a tendering process, it was announced that Kinetic-owned Go Bus had won three new nine-year contracts to operate commuter bus routes in the city (replacing the previous operator – then-Christchurch City Council-owned Red Bus) – accounting for eight per cent of the city's bus network. Red Bus also lost some school route work.

From Monday, 28 September, Canterbury Regional Council (also known as Environment Canterbury), introduced stage one of its Christchurch bus network changes due to amendments to employment legislation, the outcomes from the 2019 community consultation process, and a general review of patronage levels.

Timetable effects included:

- Blue Line (Rangiora-Cashmere) became route **1**.
- Route **95** (Pegasus/Waikuku-City) had routing and timing changes.
- **New route 97** (Rangiora-Pegasus) was introduced, operating hourly 07:30-18:30 weekdays, 08:30-18:30 Saturdays, and 09:30-18:30 Sundays.

In September, Metro also revealed its new standard 'teal' livery which it says will be rolled out to all Christchurch buses by the end of 2022 – with the exception of the Orbiter buses.

From Sunday, 29 November, Metro introduced stage two of its bus network changes – these were a result of aforementioned bus operator changes on some routes as well as a general operational review:

- Purple Line (Airport/Sheffield Crescent-Summer) became route **3**. On weekdays, services operate every 10 minutes between 07:00 and 19:00 (up from every 15 minutes), while the Sunday timetable now matches Saturday (a doubling of services to every 15 minutes for most of the day). The airport branch remains at every 30 minutes.
- Routes 44 and 45 were merged to become the new route **44** (Shirley-Westmorland). The route no longer services the area between the Bus Interchange and Ara.
- Route **100** had adjustments made to peak service frequency, which Metro said better reflects current patronage levels.
- Routes **85, 120** and **135** had a change in operator to Go Bus with no timetable changes.

- Routes **17, 28, 29, 107** and **140** had some timing changes.

METRO CHRISTCHURCH, THE PRESS(2), STUFF.CO.NZ (2)

Christchurch: New Waimakariri services

On Monday, 11 January, Christchurch welcomed two new direct peak-direction bus routes between the Waimakariri district and central Christchurch.

- **Route 91:** Rangiora – Christchurch Hospital
- **Route 92:** Kaiapoi – Christchurch Hospital

Both routes have four trips into the city timetabled on weekday mornings, and five trips timetabled out of the city on weekday afternoons operating at 30-minute intervals.

The new services also benefit from newly established 'park and ride' facilities in both Rangiora and Kaiapoi, and new T2 transit lanes on the Christchurch Northern Motorway.

The first two weeks of the service were fare-free.
SCOOP.CO.NZ, METRO CHRISTCHURCH

Christchurch: February network changes

From February, Metro will introduce its third and final stage of bus network changes resulting from amendments to employment legislation and changes to bus operators:

- Yellow Line (Rolleston-New Brighton) becomes **route 5** with some timing changes.
- Orange Line (Halswell-Queenspark) becomes **route 7** with some timing changes.
- **Route 820** will have a routing change.
- Routes **60, 80** and **130** have some timing changes.

METRO CHRISTCHURCH

Red Bus acquired by Ritchies

Christchurch City Council-owned bus operator, Red Bus, announced in November it had been sold to Ritchies Transport. The sale included Red Bus' five remaining commuter bus routes and 52 bus vehicles.

While almost 30 per cent of positions had since been cut from the business, many were effectively a fait accompli due to the company losing work. In February 2020, Environment Canterbury announced that Go Bus had picked up three commuter bus contracts from Red Bus to begin from November 2020, while Ritchies Transport had itself won the tender to operate some school bus routes operated by Red Bus. Red Bus chief executive, Tony King, said that "many of the jobs lost at Red Bus have been replaced by new jobs with the operators taking over routes previously served by Red Bus".

Red Bus was also reported to be Christchurch City Council's worst performing business unit, notching up a \$5.3 million loss in FY 2018/19. Mr King said since the contract losses early last year, the business had evaluated whether it should continue as a smaller company, sell up or liquidate. He also said of purchaser Ritchies, "[Ritchies] are a long-standing business for whom urban transport is their core activity. We believe they will make an excellent and committed owner". *STUFF.CO.NZ (2)*

INTERNATIONAL

UK: National Express network suspended

BBC reports that due to tighter COVID-19 restrictions and commensurate drop in patronage, the entire National Express coach network has been suspended from Monday, 11 January until at least 1 March. *BBC NEWS*

Indonesia eyes electric bus fleet

Following on from *Table Talk* articles in recent months around the introduction of electric buses across Australia, Indonesian capital Jakarta's government-owned bus operator, PT Transjakarta, has confirmed it plans to roll out 10,000 new electric buses over the next ten years.

In an effort to reduce the city's air pollution, the Jakarta Governor is aiming for half of Jakarta's buses to be electric by 2025, and the remainder by 2030. However Transjakarta's plans see it reaching only 83 per cent of its fleet by 2030. It plans to introduce 100 of these new e-buses this year.

Bus operators will fund the initial purchase of each electric bus, then for every kilometre in service, the government will pay the operator a fixed amount.

This will not be the first use of electric buses in Jakarta, as the Governor launched a "pre-trial" of three e-buses in April 2020 servicing key tourist attractions. A Transjakarta spokesperson said that a trial of another two e-buses was due to launch in mid-January for likely operation on the GR1 route. *THE JAKARTA POST (2)*

Russia: Capital's electric bus expansion

Moscow now has 600 electric buses in operation across the capital after little more than two years – reportedly Europe's leader in the transition from internal combustion engines to electric.

Moving forward, an average of 400 new Russian-built e-buses are expected to be built annually. Moscow's deputy mayor said "it is important for the city to support domestic companies with production in Moscow". *AUST'N BUS & COACH MAGAZINE (2)*

ENDS

FERRY & SHIP NEWS

NATIONAL



Cruise liner industry

The cruise industry is gearing up for the potential resumption of cruise tours by as early as April. Cruise Lines International Association told WIN News plans are afoot for a “carefully controlled resumption of local cruise ship operations in Australia”. The industry is looking towards potential tours operating between Brisbane and Airlie Beach, or even further north.

However, these plans could very well not materialise, as is the nature of the fight against COVID-19. **WIN NEWS**

TASMANIA



Spirit's free car deal

In an effort to stimulate post-COVID travel into Tasmania, the federal government will be subsidising free car and motorcycle bookings on board the Spirit of Tasmania.

From 1 March to late June, the free car/motorcycle gap fare will apply in both directions between Melbourne and Devonport. Additionally, the deal also applies to vehicle movements in and out of both King Island and the Furneaux Islands Group.

Tasmanian senator and Assistant Industry Development Minister, Jonathon Duniam, said the Spirit's patronage had dropped by 85 per cent at the height of the pandemic and the associated border restrictions. The promotion is a temporary expansion of the existing Bass Strait Passenger Vehicle Equalisation Scheme.

The federal government has budgeted for 25,000 return fares at a maximum cost of \$6 million. Although the promotion has been publicised to run until 30 June, it will finish earlier if the \$6 million is used up before that date. **WIN NEWS ILLAWARRA, ABC NEWS**

NEW ZEALAND



Auckland: Ferry service changes

From Monday, 25 January, Auckland Transport (AT) implemented some changes to its ferry network to meet demand, whilst also managing its available resources. It should be noted that AT operates most of its ferry services as a “loop” - starting and finishing at the same location.

- For **Hobsonville/Beach Haven**, extra morning peak services depart Downtown Auckland at 06:45 and 08:00 then depart Beach Haven at 07:20 and 08:40. Extra afternoon peak services depart Downtown Auckland at 15:35 and 17:30 then depart Beach Haven at 16:15 and 18:10. The previous 19:40 from Downtown Auckland now departs at 20:10 – dropping off at Hobsonville Point only. Some existing trips have had times adjusted by up to 30 minutes either earlier or later to better even out the services. The extra services have been facilitated by the axing of the Stanley Bay route in December (see *Table Talk*, October 2020 edition, pg. 13).
- For **West Harbour**, an extra weekday early morning trip departs West Harbour at 06:30 then Downtown Auckland at 07:05. An extra weekday afternoon trip departs West Harbour at 13:25 then Downtown Auckland at 14:10. Some other trips have timing adjustments. Only on Friday nights, an additional late-night service now operates departing Downtown Auckland at 21:00.

A copy of the old and new West Harbour timetables is provided on the next page.

- On the **Birkenhead** route, services now also stop at Northcote Point. To accommodate the extra running time, peak service intervals on the **Birkenhead** route have been reduced to every 40 minutes (previously 30/35). On weekdays between 10:30 and 16:00, after 19:00, and all day on weekends, ferries only stop at Northcote Point on request. A customer at Northcote Point wishing to board one of these services must “make yourself visible and signal the ferry crew”.
- **Devonport** peak services now only operate every 20 minutes.

AUCKLAND TRANSPORT

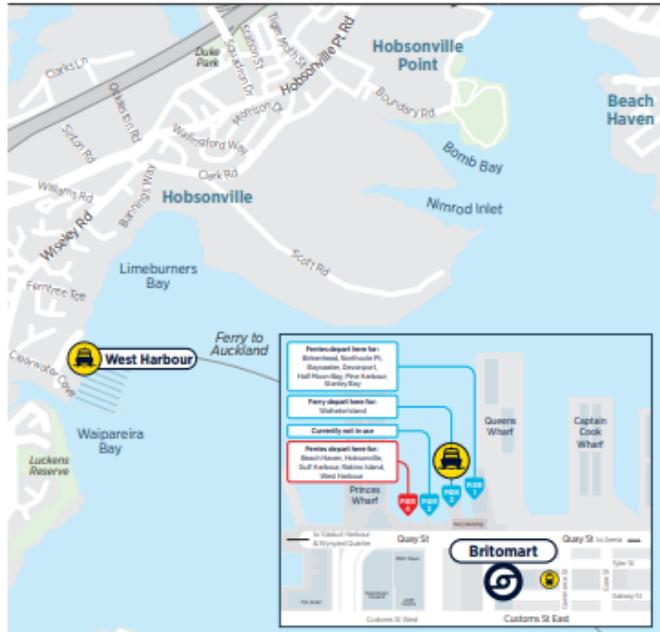
West Harbour | City Ferry



Monday to Friday only (excluding public holidays)

Depart West Harbour	Arrive Downtown Pier 4	Depart Downtown Pier 4	Arrive West Harbour
06:50	07:20	07:20	07:55
07:20	07:50	07:50	08:25
07:40	08:10	08:10	08:45
08:10	08:40	08:45	09:15
08:40	09:10	09:15	09:45
09:20	09:50	-	-
11:00	11:30	12:45	13:15
14:30	15:00	15:05	15:35
15:55	16:25	16:30	17:00
16:15	16:45	16:50	17:20
16:45	17:15	17:20	17:50
17:15	17:45	17:50	18:20
17:55	18:25	18:30	19:00
18:25	18:55	19:00	19:30

Arrival times are approximate only and are subject to weather and other unplanned circumstances
For more information on fares and fare products visit AT.govt.nz/fares



Effective 2 December 2019

Previous West Harbour ferry timetable (source: AT).

West Harbour | City Ferry



Monday to Friday only (excluding public holidays)

Depart West Harbour	Arrive Downtown Pier 4	Depart Downtown Pier 4	Arrive West Harbour
06:30	07:05	07:05	07:40
06:55	07:30	07:30	08:05
07:20	07:55	07:55	08:30
07:45	08:20	08:20	08:55
08:10	08:45	-	-
08:35	09:10	-	-
09:15	09:50	10:00	10:35
11:15	11:50	12:15	12:50
13:25	14:00	14:10	14:45
14:55	15:30	15:30	16:05
15:40	16:15	16:15	16:50
16:05	16:40	16:40	17:15
16:30	17:05	17:05	17:40
16:55	17:30	17:30	18:05
17:20	17:55	18:00	18:35
18:25	19:00	19:00	19:35
-	-	21:00*	21:35*

* Operates Friday only



Effective 25 January 2021

New West Harbour ferry timetable (source: AT).

ENDS

AIR NEWS

DOMESTIC



Alliance Airlines: new charter flights

Alliance Airlines will operate a two-day tour between Cairns and Longreach on 9-11 April. The local Cairns travel agent who organised the tour as a trial, Mercedes Gonzales, said she hoped the flights would stimulate greater access into regional areas, with further tours to be scheduled if successful. **WIN NEWS NORTH QUEENSLAND**

INTERNATIONAL



UK increases COVID restrictions

Effective from Saturday, 9 January, the United Kingdom (UK) banned people who had travelled through Southern African countries in the previous ten days, from entering the country in an effort to stop the

introduction of the “South African” strain of COVID-19. From Friday, 15 January, the UK also banned travellers from South America, Portugal, Panama or Cape Verde, to stop a Brazilian-linked strain from entering.

Effective from Monday, 18 January at 04:00 GMT, the UK made it mandatory for all incoming international passengers to quarantine for between five and ten days. They also need proof of a negative COVID-19 test taken within the 72 hours prior to their departure from their place of origin. Northern Ireland applied similar rules from Thursday, 21 January. However, air, international rail and maritime crews are exempt from the requirements. Prior to this date, the UK had a list of “travel corridors” where international travellers were exempted from quarantine requirements.

Effective from 13:00 Friday, 29 January, one of the country's busiest routes, London-Dubai, was halted indefinitely after the United Arab Emirates was added (along with Rwanda and Burundi) to the no-fly zone list. This latest move followed information with the government regarding the global spread of the South African strain. The move also affects citizens of other countries as Dubai is a popular stopover point.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has confirmed that the restrictions are planned to remain in place until at least early March. **SAMCHUI.COM (2), BBC NEWS, UK GOVERNMENT**

ENDS

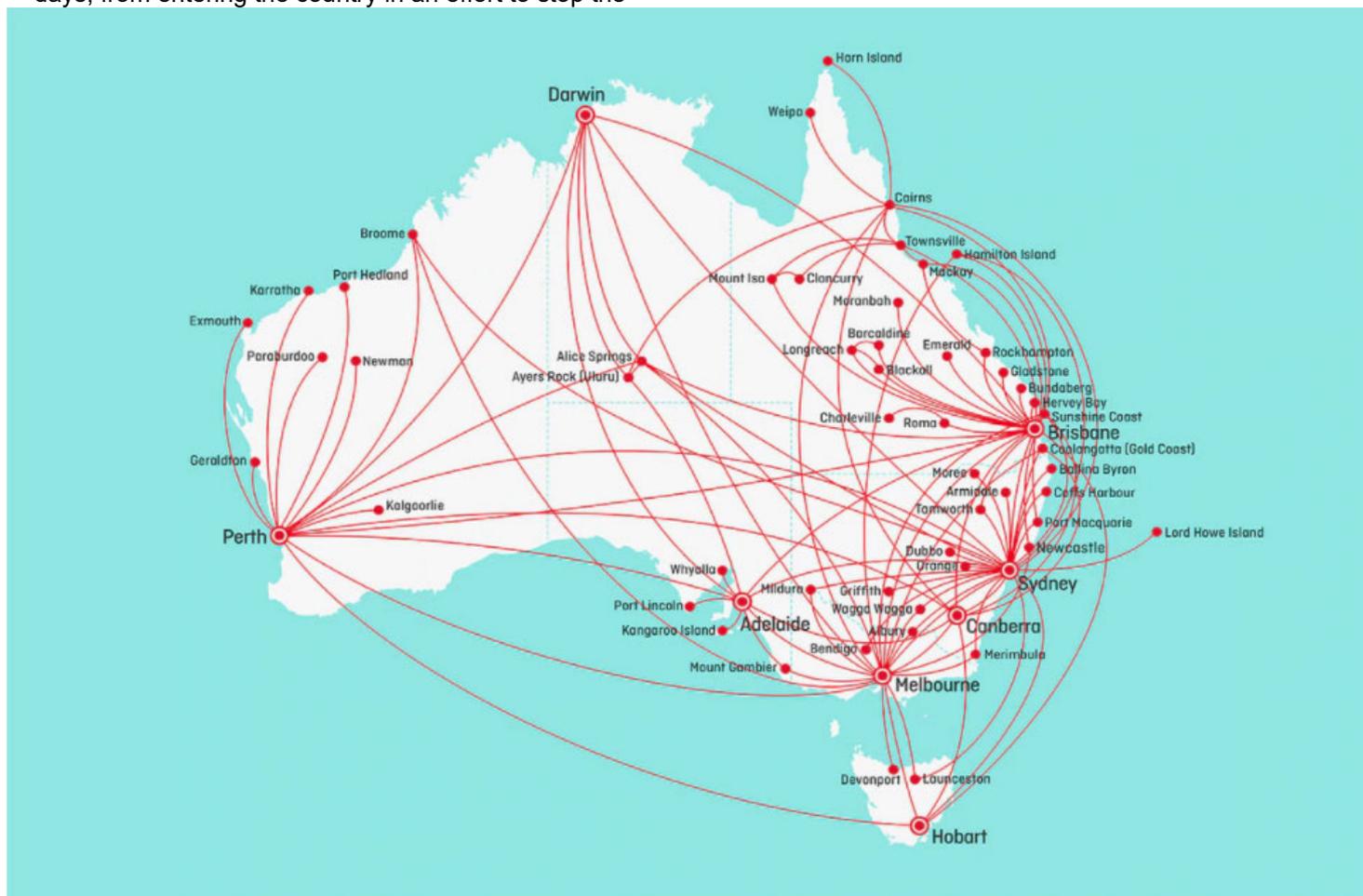


Illustration 1: Qantas' intended Australian route network for 2021 – note with the gradual easing of border restrictions, this map has become much more dense with routes than only several months ago (see prior issues of Table Talk) (source: Qantas).

TALKING IN-DEPTH

Public transport facing huge cuts (US)

The following is a lightly-edited November article from The New York Times by Emily Cochrane, Aishvarya Kavi and Pranshu Verma on the potential impact of COVID-19 on the provision of public transportation as lower patronage starves operating agencies of revenue – for digital readers, a link to the original article is provided at the end.

In Boston, transit officials warned of ending weekend service on the commuter rail and shutting down the city's ferries; in Washington, weekend and late-night metro service would be eliminated and 19 of the system's 91 stations would close; in Atlanta, 70 of the city's 110 bus routes have already been suspended, a move that could become permanent; and in New York City, home to the largest mass transportation system in North America, transit officials have unveiled a plan that could slash subway service by 40 per cent and cut commuter rail service in half.

Across the United States, public transportation systems are confronting an extraordinary financial crisis set off by the [COVID-19] pandemic, which has starved transit agencies of huge amounts of revenue and threatens to cripple transportation services for years. The profound cuts agencies are contemplating could hobble the recoveries of major cities from New York to Los Angeles and San Francisco, where reliable transit is a lifeblood of the local economies. Trains and buses carry the office workers, shoppers and tourists who will help revive stores, restaurants, cultural attractions, hotels and other key businesses that have been battered by the outbreak. The financial collapse of transportation agencies would especially hurt minority and low-income riders who tend to be among the biggest users of subways and buses.

For months, transit officials around the country have pleaded for help from the federal government, but with no new lifeline forthcoming and many systems facing December deadlines to balance their budgets, agencies have started to outline doomsday service plans that would take effect next year [2021]. A glimmer of hope emerged [more recently], when a bipartisan group of lawmakers in Congress proposed \$US15 billion for public transit agencies as part of a \$908 billion framework for a pandemic-relief package. The plan, which President-elect Joe Biden has said he supports, would provide nearly half of the \$32 billion that transit leaders have lobbied for in recent months and that is intended to provide short-term relief.

But [the plan] has yet to be endorsed by Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, the Republican majority leader, who has proposed a smaller stimulus plan that contains no financing for public transit. Nancy Pelosi, the House speaker and a Democrat, expressed optimism that a compromise deal could be achieved before the end of the year.

Even if they receive some aid, transit agencies in some large cities have experienced such severe financial losses that officials say they will be forced to pare back service to save operating funds while serving riderships that are far below normal levels. It is unclear whether ridership will ever fully return to pre-pandemic levels even after effective vaccines become widely available. Some commuters may end up working from home permanently; others may abandon public transit if cuts cause service to deteriorate.

"This is existential peril," said Ben Fried, a spokesman for TransitCenter, an advocacy group. "The economic rationale for cities is that people are in close proximity and can do a lot of things without spending a lot of time travelling from place to place," Mr. Fried said. "If the transit network is seriously diminished in a dozen or so cities that are a focal point for a large share of the nation's economic output, then that's going to have severe impacts on the national economy."

Since the pandemic swept across America in the (northern) Spring, bringing urban life to a standstill and ushering in new work-from-home norms, nearly all of the sources of money that public transit relies on have been pummeled. Ridership, and fare revenue along with it, vanished practically overnight after lockdown orders were enacted. As the economy slid into recession, the sales and income tax revenue used to finance many transit networks plunged. And cities and states sunk into their own financial crises, threatening government subsidies for public transit systems.

New York City's transit agency, Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which is grappling with the biggest losses of any system in the country, forecasts a \$6.1 billion deficit next year. Over in Boston, officials are dealing with a \$600 million budget hole, and Chicago's agency anticipates a \$500 million shortfall. By September, nationwide ridership on mass transit had crept back to nearly 40 per cent of its pre-pandemic levels from a low of 19 per cent in April, according to the American Public Transportation Association, a lobby group.

But the numbers have plateaued in recent weeks as the virus surges throughout the country, making this the longest and most severe period of suppressed ridership for any of the nation's public transit systems. In New York, ridership is at 30 per cent of pre-pandemic levels, while on rail lines in Washington and San Francisco, it is below 15 per cent of its usual levels. "The effect on ridership in each of our agencies — subway, buses, Metro-North, Long Island Railroad — is dramatically worse than even in the Great Depression," said Patrick J. Foye, chairman of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, which runs New York City's subway and buses, and two commuter railroads.

Many big city systems rely on fare revenue more heavily than their counterparts in smaller cities and rural areas and have tended to get a smaller share of federal support relative to their size. Fares contribute 70 per cent of the operating budget in San Francisco, 40 per cent in New York and Washington and about 33 per cent in Boston.

There is no legislative text yet for the bipartisan proposal that Republican and Democratic Senators are now negotiating, nor are there specifics for how the transit aid would be divided among agencies. “This is not limited to big, urban cities and states — lots of rural areas depend on buses that also get federal funding — so it has some degree of bipartisan support,” Senator Chuck Schumer of New York, the Democratic minority leader, said in an interview. “But there are some who have never wanted any federal help for mass transit and that’s who we are up against.” The stimulus package that is being negotiated is likely to face opposition from some liberal lawmakers who consider it insufficient and some conservatives who are unwilling to add to the national debt. “The real answer to the economic problems is to get rid of what causes the economic problems and they’re caused by economic dictates from governors that forbid commercial activity,” Senator Rand Paul, Republican of Kentucky, told reporters. “I’m not for borrowing any more money.”

When transit agencies have faced financial shortfalls in the past, they have typically turned to city and state governments or they have lobbied elected officials for new sources of revenue like dedicated taxes. But many municipal and state governments are grappling with their own financial problems, forcing transit agencies to look to Washington. “Unlike some other transit properties, we don’t have our own revenue source; we have two sources of revenue, it’s either the farebox or the subsidies from our local and state government,” said Paul J. Wiedefeld, the general manager of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. “They are both under tremendous financial distress right now, so where do we turn?”

Many urban transit systems have exhausted the money they got from an earlier federal stimulus bill and have also imposed service cuts. In New York, the overnight subway service has been suspended since May. In Los Angeles, bus service has been slashed nearly 30 per cent and rail service has also been cut. And the Bay Area Rapid Transit rail system in San Francisco has ended late night service and pushed wait times for trains from 15 to 30 minutes. The cuts have helped stabilise operations and allowed them to continue providing at least a limited service. But officials warn that the cutbacks could become permanent and that more could be added at the beginning of [the new year], a devastating prospect for the essential workers and low-wage riders who continue to rely on public transit.

Around 2.8 million American workers in essential industries like health care, grocery stores and pharmacies used public transit to get to work in 2018, according to an analysis of census data by the TransitCenter. That was 36 per cent of all transit commuters in the U.S. workforce that year, the group said. “We have been the ones that have kept the economy of this country afloat because we do not have the luxury to work from home,” said Mayra Romero, 43, a restaurant worker in Boston who travels by bus from her home in nearby Chelsea, Massachusetts. “We have been the ones who have been risking our lives and exposing ourselves.” Margaret Dunn, who lives in Clinton, Maryland, and works at a hotel in Washington, used to work until midnight before she was laid off in March. Now, as she waits for a call to return to her job, she worries that service cuts could leave her with few travel options once her shift ends. “We direly need some help,” she said, adding that she may have to rely on Uber or her husband to drive her.

In Washington, transit officials say that if the system receives sufficient federal assistance they will revive service as much as possible to help coax riders back as vaccines are distributed and the cadence of normal life begins to return. But in other cities, additional federal aid may not guarantee the return of service. In Boston, New York and San Francisco, transit officials have said they plan to re-calibrate service to match what they expect to be long-lasting, depressed levels of ridership.

“With the first tranche of money we got, we immediately put it in place to plug the budget gap because there was so much uncertainty, but as a consequence that money will run out this fiscal year,” said Steve Poflak, the general manager of the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority, which serves the Boston area. “We want to do as much as we can in this period of low ridership so we have a reserve in place that we can apply to fiscal year 2022. That’s been our approach, preserve our service now, but also keep an eye toward the future.”

Transit experts worry that with more cuts public transportation agencies could plunge into a “death spiral,” where increasingly unreliable service keeps riders away, pushing systems deeper into financial distress.

With public health officials expecting the distribution of vaccines to begin early next year [2021], agencies could wind up cutting service just as riders return to their commutes. “Transit is not going to be there for people at the exact moment they are ready for transit again,” said Nick Sifuentes, executive director of the Tri-State Transportation Campaign, an advocacy group. “We are looking at millions of people getting ready to head back to their workplaces and the thing they relied on to get there won’t be reliable anymore.”

THE NEW YORK TIMES

ODD SPOT 1

Manly bus stop – route 144

Reader Geoff Lambert asks, “no need for a timetable?”

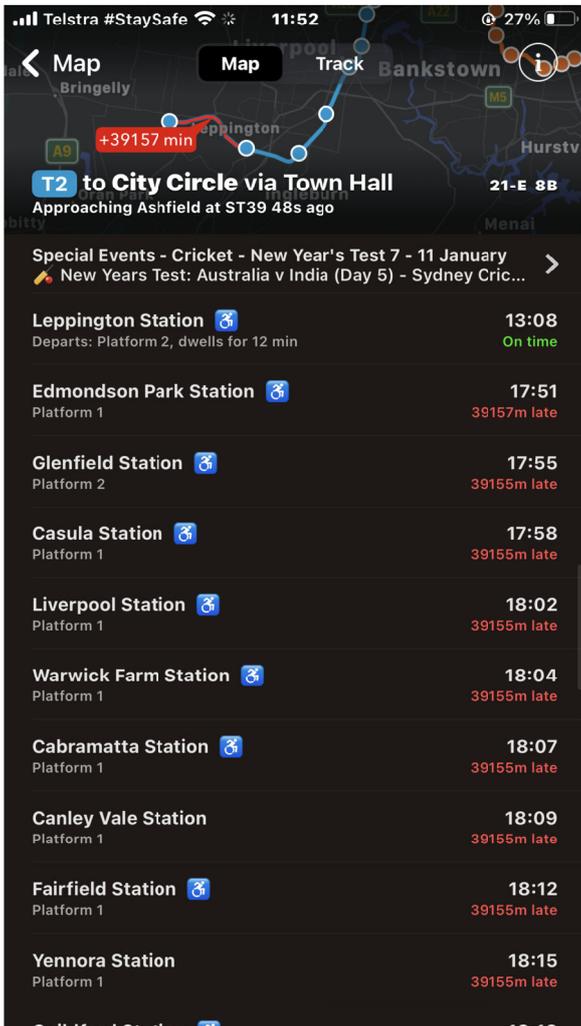
As seen in the photo (right), route 144 services are excluded from the timetable listing at the bus stop – this is because Transport for NSW calls route 144 an “All-Day Frequent Route”, which effectively means the agency believes it should not include route 144 services in the timetable listing (see the magnified section within the photo).

State Transit operates route **144** from Manly Wharf to Chatswood. On weekdays, services are timetabled to operate every 20 minutes 05:00-06:20, every 8-12 minutes 06:20-09:02, every 10 minutes 09:02-20:22, then every 15 minutes until around midnight. After 00:30, route **144N** services runs to North Sydney hourly (except Friday and Saturday nights where it is timetabled to operate every 30 minutes).



OBVERSE

REVERSE



ODD SPOT 2

39,000 minutes late?

The screenshot on the right-hand side shows a bug in the data system in the NextThere mobile application. The error cleared after around 15 seconds – then showing each stop as 'on time'.

Valid from: 29 Jan 2021

Creation date: 29 Jan 2021

NOTE: Information is correct on date of download.

Monday to Friday	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Cronulla Station	05:45	06:15	06:45	-	07:45	-	07:52	08:30	09:15
Elouera Rd at Hume Rd, Cronulla	05:48	06:19	06:49	-	07:49	-	07:56	08:34	09:19
Cronulla High School, Bate Bay Rd, Cronulla	-	-	-	-	-	-	08:01	08:40	-
Captain Cook Dr opp Trinity St, Kurnell	05:51	06:22	06:52	-	07:52	-	08:02	08:42	09:22
Bridges St opp Bridges St Shops, Kurnell	05:56	06:28	06:58	07:28	07:58	08:05	08:08	08:48	09:28
Torres St opp Kurnell Public School, Kurnell	05:58	06:30	07:00	07:30	08:00	08:07	-	08:50	09:30
Kamay Botany Bay National Park, Captain Cook Dr, Kurnell	06:02	06:34	07:04	07:34	08:04	08:11	08:11	08:54	09:34
Kurnell Horse Arena, Captain Cook Dr, Kurnell	06:03	06:35	07:05	07:36	08:05	08:12	08:12	08:55	09:35
Captain Cook Dr before Trinity St, Kurnell	06:07	06:39	07:10	07:40	08:10	08:17	08:17	09:00	09:40
Cronulla High School, Bate Bay Rd, Cronulla	-	-	-	-	08:14	08:20	-	-	-
Elouera Rd after Hume Rd, Cronulla	06:11	06:43	07:14	07:44	08:15	08:21	08:21	09:04	09:44
Cronulla Station	06:16	06:48	07:20	07:50	08:23	08:25	08:27	09:10	09:50
Monday to Friday	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Day Restrictions							TuTh	MWF	
Cronulla Station	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	14:45	15:30	15:30	16:15
Elouera Rd at Hume Rd, Cronulla	10:04	11:04	12:04	13:04	14:04	14:49	15:34	15:34	16:19
Cronulla High School, Bate Bay Rd, Cronulla	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	15:35	-
Captain Cook Dr opp Trinity St, Kurnell	10:07	11:07	12:07	13:07	14:07	14:52	15:37	15:37	16:22
Bridges St opp Bridges St Shops, Kurnell	10:13	11:13	12:13	13:13	14:13	14:58	15:43	15:43	16:28
Torres St opp Kurnell Public School, Kurnell	10:15	11:15	12:15	13:15	14:15	15:00	15:45	15:45	16:30
Kamay Botany Bay National Park, Captain Cook Dr, Kurnell	10:19	11:19	12:19	13:19	14:19	15:04	15:49	15:49	16:34
Kurnell Horse Arena, Captain Cook Dr, Kurnell	10:20	11:20	12:20	13:20	14:20	15:05	15:50	15:50	16:35
Captain Cook Dr before Trinity St, Kurnell	10:25	11:25	12:25	13:25	14:25	15:10	15:55	15:55	16:39
Elouera Rd after Hume Rd, Cronulla	10:29	11:29	12:29	13:29	14:29	15:14	15:59	15:59	16:43
Cronulla Station	10:35	11:35	12:35	13:35	14:35	15:20	16:08	16:08	16:48
Monday to Friday	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Cronulla Station	16:45	17:15	17:45	18:15	18:45	19:15	19:45	20:30	
Elouera Rd at Hume Rd, Cronulla	16:49	17:19	17:49	18:19	18:48	19:18	19:48	20:33	
Captain Cook Dr opp Trinity St, Kurnell	16:52	17:22	17:52	18:22	18:51	19:21	19:51	20:36	
Bridges St opp Bridges St Shops, Kurnell	16:58	17:28	17:58	18:28	18:56	19:26	19:56	20:41	
Torres St opp Kurnell Public School, Kurnell	17:00	17:30	18:00	18:30	18:58	19:28	19:58	20:43	
Kamay Botany Bay National Park, Captain Cook Dr, Kurnell	17:04	17:34	18:04	18:34	19:02	19:32	20:02	20:47	
Kurnell Horse Arena, Captain Cook Dr, Kurnell	17:05	17:35	18:05	18:35	19:03	19:33	20:03	20:48	
Captain Cook Dr before Trinity St, Kurnell	17:09	17:39	18:09	18:39	19:07	19:37	20:07	20:52	
Elouera Rd after Hume Rd, Cronulla	17:13	17:43	18:13	18:43	19:11	19:41	20:11	20:56	
Cronulla Station	17:18	17:48	18:18	18:48	19:16	19:46	20:16	21:01	

About Table Talk

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AUSTRALIAN TIMETABLE
ASSOCIATION

Members' News

February 2021

Changing Networks

With only a few weeks between the deadlines for the January and February mailouts, there is no more ATA news to report for the February Members' News. Thus, I will do some commentary for this Members' News. I hope this is of interest.

Looking at Metropolitan Transport Trust Perth, Bus and Ferry Guides dated September 1971 and September 1972 you can see changes to Perth to Morley via William St services. In 1971, the William St corridor was served by routes 60 (Morley), 61, 62 & 63 (North of Morley) and 56 (Lockridge). In September 1972, the Morley Bus Station opened, and the network was reconfigured with 60 Perth-Morley (High Frequency All Stops) and new 66 Perth-Morley (Peak Hour Express), whilst 56, 61, 62 and 63 became feeder services. This has been a continuing pattern in Australia and New Zealand over the last fifty years.

As Canberra developed transport hubs were developed in the CBD, Woden, Belconnen and Tuggeranong. Prior to 1999, the high frequency route 333 required passengers to change at an interchange. Since 1999, network refinements meant buses continued through interchanges into outer suburbs to provide a one-seat journey from the CBD. This continues in the current Canberra network.

This principle of high frequency services with accompanying hub and spoke bus networks has been promoted by American transit consultant Jarrett Walker. We see this in Sydney's new Lower North Shore and Northern Beaches network, effective 20 December 2020, with 244 City-Chowder Bay, 245 City-Balmoral, 247 City-Mosman Junction and 430 City-Taronga Zoo being combined into high frequency 100 QVB-Taronga Zoo. Chowder Bay is served by new 111 from South Mosman Wharf via Mosman Junction. Balmoral is served by new 114 from Royal North Shore Hospital.

From 2016 to 2018, network reviews across Auckland progressively introduced a high frequency network. This implementation was successful with local buses feeding high frequency trains and buses. Many lengthy bus routes were replaced by a faster train connecting with a short local bus journey. In 2018, a frequent bus network was implemented in Central Wellington, New Zealand. This resulted in passengers travelling on what was previously a relatively short route having to change to reach the CBD. In 2020, these changes were reversed with passengers preferring an hourly frequency with no need to change, to a half-hourly frequency with a change.

Hilaire Fraser, president@timetable.org.au

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Brisbane: Meetings are held at the usual venue of Brian Webber's residence at 61/22 Towns Street, Mitchelton starting at 2pm on Saturdays Please contact Brian for dates. (07) 3354 2140

Canberra: David Cranney. innamincka2002@gmail.com 0421 174 951

Melbourne: Subject to any new COVID-19 restrictions, the next meeting will be at 8.00pm on Wednesday 3 March at David Hennell's place, 3/29 Croydon Rd Surrey Hills. (03) 9830 1802. The discussion topic is the 1949 Trans Australia Railway Working Timetable.

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