



AUSTRALIAN TIMETABLE  
ASSOCIATION

# TABLE TALK

AUSTRALASIAN TIMETABLE NEWS

RRP \$4.95

No. 343, March 2021

Published by the Australian Timetable Association

## RAIL & TRAM NEWS

### NATIONAL



#### Inland Rail Project

The Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) has been appointed by the federal Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications, to progress the 1,700 kilometre standard gauge "Inland Rail" project to connect Melbourne, regional NSW and Brisbane with faster and more reliable rail freight movements. The project includes 600 kilometres of new track, and upgrades to pre-existing track to enable 1.8 kilometre dual-stacked container trains with 21-tonne axle load to operate at up to 115 km/h.

Three studies were completed into this concept across 2006, 2010 and 2015. All three studies are available at <https://inlandrail.artc.com.au/where-we-go/route-history/>.

The project has been divided into 13 sections of work spanning across the three states:

#### Tottenham-Albury (Victoria)

Contains upgrade to 305 km of rail across two stages:

- *Stage 1 – Beveridge to Albury*

Upgrade of rail, associated infrastructure, bridges and level crossings, and track slews. Freight travelling on this section (North East Rail Line) will share with passenger services including V/Line and the XPT.

- *Stage 2 – Metropolitan Melbourne*

Pending confirmation of Melbourne's new inter-modal terminal.

#### Albury-Illabo (New South Wales)

Upgrade of 185 km of rail, associated infrastructure, bridges and level crossings.

#### Illabo-Stockinbingal (NSW)

Contains the construction of 37 km of new track to bypass Cootamundra and the Bethungra Spiral.

#### Stockinbingal-Parkes (NSW)

Upgrade of 170 km of rail, associated infrastructure, bridges and a new passing loop north of Daroobalgie Road level crossing. Forbes station to also be upgraded.

#### Parkes-Narromine (NSW, completed)

5 km of new track near Parkes (called the North West Connection), and the upgrade of 98 km of existing track and associated infrastructure.

The North West Connection also benefits rail traffic on the trans-continental line towards Perth.

#### Narromine-Narrabri (NSW)

306 km of new track.

#### Narrabri-North Star (NSW)

Contains two stages:

- *Stage 1 – Narrabri North to North Star*

Upgrade of 171 km of track. \$693 million contract was awarded to Trans4m Rail (John Holland and SEE Civil) last November.

- *Stage 2 – Moree to Camurra*

Upgrade of 12 km of track across the Mehi-Gwydir floodplain, and 1,700 metres of new track at Camurra.

## North Star-Border (NSW)

Upgrade of 25 km of track, and construction of 14 km of new track across the Macintyre River to connect with Queensland Rail's network

## Border-Gowrie (Queensland)

Construction of 145 km of dual gauge track, and upgrade of another 71 km of track, associated infrastructure, and five passing loops. A draft Environmental Impact Statement is available from the Queensland Coordinator-General, with feedback open until 19 April. Visit

<https://haveyoursay.dsd.qld.gov.au/coordinatorgeneral/inlandrailb2g/>

## Gowrie-Helidon (QLD)

Contains the construction of 28 km of new track, including three crossing loops and a 6.2 km tunnel through the Toowoomba Range. To be funded through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP, see below).

## Helidon-Calvert (QLD)

Contains the construction of 47 km of new dual gauge track, including an 850-metre tunnel through Little Liverpool Range. To be funded through a PPP.

## Calvert-Kagaru (QLD)

Contains the construction of 53 km of new dual gauge track, including an 1,100 metre tunnel through Teviot Range and up to four crossing loops. To be funded through a PPP.

## Kagaru-Acacia Ridge/Bromelton (QLD)

Upgrade of 49 kilometres of existing track between Kagaru and Bromelton, and between Bromelton and Acacia Ridge.

The above list of projects are as presented on the ARTC website. According to the ARTC, most of these projects are in the "reference design" stage.

ARTC says that the technical complexity of the Gowrie-Helidon, Helidon-Calvert, and Calvert-Kagaru sections in Queensland means the use of an 'Availability PPP' model will provide "effective risk allocation", and the ability to "harness innovative engineering and construction solutions". There are three shortlisted consortia vying for the contract, expected to be awarded in 2022:

- Capstone (CPB, Ghella, UGL, DIF, Pacific Partnerships)
- G2Kconnect (Acciona, Ferrovial, Cintra, Macquarie)
- Regenerate Rail (GS Engineering & Construction, Webuild [formerly Salini

Impregilo], Clough Projects Australia, Lendlease, Plenary Group)

Transport for NSW advises that from Thursday, 1 April until 31 October, coaches will replace the Narrabri to Moree section of the daily NSW TrainLink Xplorer due to Stage 1 works on the Narrabri to North Star project. **ARTC, TRANSPORT FOR NSW**

## QUEENSLAND



### Additional COVID distancing services

Translink has been operating additional COVID-19 "trial" services since August 2020. A review was conducted late last year, with Translink now announcing that the below listed services have now been permanently added into the existing timetable.

*All morning times listed are from the first stop towards the city, while all afternoon/evening departure times are from Central going out of the city.*

**Beenleigh line:** 18:19 and 18:49.

**Caboolture line:** 08:53, 18:49 and 19:25.

**Cleveland line:** 08:54, 09:24, and 19:32.

**Ipswich/Rosewood line:** 08:25, 08:55, and 19:40.

**Redcliffe Peninsula line:** 09:04, 09:28, and 19:10.

**Shorncliffe line:** 09:24, 09:54, and 19:28.

**Springfield line:** 08:27, 08:57, 18:37 and 19:07.

**TRANSLINK**

## NEW SOUTH WALES



### NSW Budget 20/21

In November 2020, the state government delivered its budget address for the 2020/21 financial year. Usually released in June, the government said its response to the COVID-19 pandemic caused this year's address to be delayed.

NSW Transport cluster\* FY 20/21 recurrent expenses: \$16.2 billion.

NSW Transport cluster\* FY 20/21 capital expenditure: \$16.8 billion.

\* Transport cluster includes TfNSW and all operating agencies across all modes.

Key rail funding commitments for this fiscal year include:

- \$2.7 billion – Sydney Metro City and Southwest (includes \$120 million for Central Walk).
- \$2.1 billion – progressing Sydney Metro West.
- \$1.1 billion – More Trains, More Services program.
- \$810 million – planning and construction of Western Sydney Airport Metro.
- \$656.5 million – Parramatta Light Rail project (Stage 1).
- \$335 million – New Intercity Fleet project.
- \$243.1 million - Transport Access Program.
- \$230 million – Commuter Car Parking program (both state and federal funded).
- \$87.6 million – Fixing Country Rail program.
- \$76.7 million – Regional Seniors Travel Card program.
- \$75 million – Automatic Train Protection program.
- \$43.3 million – Regional Rail Fleet program.
- \$31.4 million – Fast Rail planning and pre-construction works.
- \$27.9 million – Main Western Rail Line Capacity Enhancements program (Lithgow-Dubbo/Parkes).

#### **NSW GOVERNMENT**

### **Sydney physical distancing services**

Sydney Trains continues to provide a number of additional passengers services in shoulder-peak periods to assist with physical distancing to help in the fight against COVID-19 across the T1, T2, T3, T4, and T8 lines.

The services were removed for a few weeks over the New Year but have since returned on a continued temporary basis.

#### Extra weekday services, week commencing 1 March:

##### **T1 – Western & North Shore lines:**

- 05:27 Blacktown to Hornsby
- 05:36 St Marys to Hornsby
- 05:46 Hornsby to Penrith
- 05:58 Hornsby to Schofields
- 13:30 Hornsby to Blacktown
- 14:27 Blacktown to Hornsby

##### **T2 – Inner West & Leppington lines:**

- 04:41 Leppington to City Circle
- 04:57 Leppington to City Circle
- 05:22 Leppington to City Circle
- 14:29 Circular Quay to Leppington
- 14:59 Circular Quay to Leppington

##### **T3 – Bankstown line:**

- 05:18 Liverpool to City Circle
- 06:25 Circular Quay to Bankstown

##### **T4 – Eastern Suburbs & Cronulla line:**

- 05:31 Hurstville to City Circle
- 05:59 Hurstville to City Circle
- 06:05 Circular Quay to Hurstville
- 06:30 Hurstville to City Circle
- 06:32 Circular Quay to Hurstville
- 07:01 Circular Quay to Hurstville
- 13:47 Hurstville to Martin Place (excl. Tue)
- 13:55 Hurstville to Martin Place (Tue only)
- 14:13 Hurstville to Martin Place
- 14:47 Martin Place to Hurstville
- 14:56 Martin Place to Hurstville

##### **T8 – Airport & South line:**

- 06:02 Circular Quay to Lepp'ton via Sydenham
- 06:20 Circular Quay to Lepp'ton via Sydenham
- 06:35 Circular Quay to C'town via Sydenham
- 13:46 Leppington to City Circle via Airport
- 14:42 Circular Quay to C'town via Sydenham
- 15:12 Circular Quay to C'town via Sydenham
- 15:58 C'town to City Circle via Sydenham
- 16:28 C'town to City Circle via Sydenham
- 16:29 Leppington to City Circle via Airport
- 16:45 Leppington to City Circle via Airport

#### **SYDNEY TRAINS**

## CSELR: real-time data now available

Transport for NSW has advised that as of late February, real-time data is now available for the CBD and South-East Light Rail (L2 and L3 lines). **GEOFF LAMBERT**

## VICTORIA



## Bankstown Line – archive filming

Sydney Trains operated an empty A Set in both directions in the intra-peak of Tuesday, 2 March for the purpose of archive filming along the Bankstown Line. The line will be due to close in 2023 for conversion to metro. **SYDNEY TRAINS**

## Newcastle to Sydney line

A February report has suggested that the COVID-19 pandemic's effects on work patterns has accelerated demand for rail services between Newcastle and Sydney.

A survey of 600 people undertaken by the Australasian Railway Association (ARA) found that 43 per cent of people across the eastern seaboard were working more from home, with a quarter expecting the changed work patterns to become permanent. Nearly half (45 per cent) of all respondents cited travel time and distance as the biggest barrier to moving from the city into the country.

Improving train speeds on existing lines, could improve end-to-end journey time by 20 per cent, according to the report (based on speeds between 160 and 200 km/h).

Comparing similar regional centres, Novocastrians are the most difficult to shift out of their cars onto trains, according to the survey. Only 60 per cent would consider the train if it was comparable or better than using the car, compared to the Sunshine Coast (68 per cent), Gold Coast (75 per cent) and Geelong (79 per cent). The report notes the Newcastle train line's poor competitiveness with road, with trains achieving a 60 km/h average compared to 85 km/h average by car.

The NSW government has allocated over \$31 million across the current financial year to fund planning and investigations into various Fast Rail proposals south, west and north from Sydney. This includes planning for a new alignment between Sydney and Woy Woy. The ARA however argues that the planning for new infrastructure, rather than enhancing existing infrastructure, will be more costly and less attainable in the shorter term.

The ARA's full report is available at <https://ara.net.au/key-issues/faster-rail>.

Source supplied by – **GEOFF HASSALL**

Source – **NEWCASTLE HERALD**

Other sources – **ARA, NSW GOVERNMENT**

## Metro new timetable

On 27 January, Metro Trains released a circular about their new suburban working timetable effective 31 January. See pages 7-8 for the line-by-line overview.

According to Metro, the 31 January timetable requires 206 trains to operate the morning peak, and 198 trains to operate the afternoon peak, including any standby trains.

Meanwhile, the state government has also launched a new real-time data feed for the Melbourne network called RideSpace. It gives colour-coded advice on the occupancy levels of train services and the stations themselves using a mix of historical data and live myki touch-on data. Regional trains and other modes are expected to be added to the initiative over the coming twelve months.

With the Melbourne train system currently carrying 40 per cent of pre-COVID patronage, Public Transport Minister Ben Carroll said the government was aiming for 75-80 per cent, which was being facilitated by the additional services introduced in the new timetable and the off-peak discount initiative. **LEN REGAN, METRO TRAINS NETWORK STRATEGY & PLANNING, ABC NEWS, THE AGE**

## Five-day lockdown

The state government initiated a “short, sharp circuit-breaker” in the form of a five-day lockdown across all of Victoria following the gradual increase in COVID-19 infections from what is known as the “Holiday Inn cluster” originating from Melbourne Airport. All 19 cases have derived from the hotel quarantine program being run by the state government, with ABC News reporting that all were believed to have had the newer UK strain of COVID.

The lockdown lasted from 23:59 Friday, 13 February until 23:59 Wednesday, 17 February. Like previous lockdowns, the only four acceptable reasons for leaving home were: essential work, essential shopping, exercise and medical appointments. Business leaders were sceptical about the latest lockdown, with the Australian Medical Association saying that Victoria “cannot be trusted” to deliver ongoing safe hotel quarantine. **ABC NEWS, TRANSPORT FOR NSW**

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA



### Australind mechanical issues

The Australind resumed normal timetable running, believed to be in early February, following significant mechanical issues with the train from late last year (see *Table Talk* January 2021 edition, pg. 6). However, due to “unrelated” wheel damage, the train was taken back out of service with replacement coaches back in operation from Monday, 8 February. TransWA said that a routine inspection found all four wheels on one side of the train had sustained damage.

The train resumed normal timetabled services once again on Friday, 19 February. Once again, the Mandurah express coach trial was suspended during this disruption as the coach was used for the Australind replacement service. **TRANSWA**

### Prospector disruption

Due to bushfires, from 4-8 February, Prospector services were cancelled, with replacement coaches operating in place of timetabled services. **TRANSWA**

## NEW ZEALAND



### Hamilton-Auckland: Third time's the charm

The new Hamilton to Auckland (Te Huia) service now has a new commencement date following several delays caused by COVID-19 impacts and Auckland's recent intensive track maintenance program (see *Table Talk* October 2020, p. 5, and February 2021, p. 4, editions). *Table Talk* reported on previous plans in its April 2020 (p. 9) and June 2020 (p. 7) editions.

A one-off weekend charter run planned for January using the Te Huia rollingstock was also cancelled.

Waikato Regional Council has confirmed that the service will commence from Tuesday, 6 April. On weekdays, services will depart Frankton (Hamilton) at 05:46 and 06:28, stopping at Rotokauri, Huntly and, finally, Papakura. Passengers can interchange at Papakura for suburban train services towards central Auckland. The afternoon return services depart Papakura at 16:42 and 18:25. One return service will operate on 'some' Saturdays from 17 April until the completion of Auckland's rail works.

According to the Regional Transport Committee and Rail Governance Group chairperson, Hugh Vercoe, this service will transform how people in Waikato travel

to Auckland - “We are excited... to be able to confirm a start date, giving people the certainty”.

Along with funding until 2024, the new service has also been supported by the Huntly station upgrade, construction of a new station at The Base (Rotokauri), re-commissioning of the Te Rapa maintenance facility, and the purchase and refurbishment of twelve carriages undertaken by KiwiRail's Hutt workshop. The train will have capacity for 150 passengers and also have free wi-fi and a cafe.

Whilst the charter run was cancelled, an open weekend will now be held allowing people to check the train out on 27-28 March.

*Source supplied by – PETER WALHOUSE*

*Source – RADIO NEW ZEALAND*

*Other source - WAIKATO REGIONAL COUNCIL*

## INTERNATIONAL

### England: London train suspensions

England has once again been put into lockdown as it struggles to beat COVID-19. Transport for London advised that the Waterloo & City line services, Night Tube and Night Overground services are suspended until further notice. **TRANSPORT FOR LONDON**

### Scotland: Service reductions

Scotrail advises that a reduced timetable has officially started operating from Monday, 1 February, with 65 per cent of the pre-COVID timetabled services available. Many lines now have their last trains of the day finishing earlier than usual, as below (as trains operate in both directions, a range of times has been provided):

**Aberdeen-Inverness:** Last trains depart between 18:03 and 19:02.

**Aberdeen-Inverurie:** Peak services operating every 30 minutes, off-peak once an hour. Last trains depart between 18:36 and 20:49.

**Aberdeen-Stonehaven/Montrose:** Last trains depart around 19:30.

**Argyle:** Last trains depart between 19:30 and 21:17.

**Ayr-Stranraer via Kilmarnock & Girvan:** Last trains depart between 15:00 and 21:08. Some minor timing changes with some services now terminating/starting from Ayr. 06:21 Girvan to Ayr service is also cancelled.

**Balloch-Airdrie:** Daytime services operate every 30 minutes. Last trains depart between 19:08 and 19:45.

**Balloch-Springburn:** Hourly evening service with last dedicated trains departing around 20:15.

**Edinburgh-Dunbar:** Only three trains per day: 06:55 and 17:11 from Dunbar; 16:36 from Edinburgh.

**Edinburgh-Dunblane:** Last trains depart between 19:33 and 20:01.

**Edinburgh-Newcraighall/Tweedbank:** Last trains depart between 20:50 and 21:53.

**Edinburgh-North Berwick:** Last trains depart between 19:45 and 20:27.

**Edinburgh-Perth/Dundee/Arbroath:** Last trains depart between 18:17 and 21:06.

**Fife Circle:** Daytime off-peak services operate hourly, with last trains departing between 18:15 and 23:12.

**Glasgow Central-Ardrossan/Largs:** Last trains depart between 19:15 and 20:31.

**Glasgow Central-Ayr:** Last trains depart between 19:45 and 22:30.

**Glasgow Central-Barrhead:** Hourly daytime service between Glasgow and Kilmarnock, with direct Barrhead services only operating in the evening. Last services depart between 19:33 and 20:27 (from Glasgow and Kilmarnock respectively).

**Glasgow Central-East Kilbride:** 30-minute service during the day, last trains depart between 20:47 and 22:57.

**Glasgow Central-Edinburgh via Shotts:** Last trains depart around 19:00.

**Glasgow Central-Gourock/Wemyss Bay:** Daytime services operate every 30 minutes to Gourock, hourly to Wemyss Bay. Last trains depart between 19:36 and 22:06.

**Glasgow Central-Kilmarnock, Dumfries & Carlisle:** Last trains depart between 16:11 and 20:27.

**Glasgow Central-Lanark:** Peak services operating every 30 minutes, off-peak once an hour. Last trains depart between 20:51 and 21:35.

**Glasgow Central-Neilston:** An additional train is in service during the morning and afternoon peaks delivering a half-hourly service. Last trains depart between 19:35 and 20:28.

**Glasgow Central-Newton:** A half-hourly service operates throughout the day, with last trains departing between 19:45 and 20:19.

**Glasgow Central-Paisley Canal:** Peak services operating every 30 minutes, off-peak once an hour. Last trains depart around 19:30.

**Glasgow Queen Street-Alloa:** Last trains depart around 19:45.

**Glasgow Queen St-Annie'sland:** Peak services operating every 30 minutes, off-peak once an hour. Last trains depart between 19:02 and 19:33.

**Glasgow Queen St-Cumbernauld-Edinburgh:** Hourly service throughout the day, with some additional peak services. Last trains depart between 19:04 and 19:54.

**Glasgow Queen St-Dundee/Arbroath:** Last trains depart between 18:30 and 19:38.

**Glasgow Queen St-Edinburgh:** Falkirk High services operate every 30 minutes, with last services between 20:15 and 22:15. Aberdeen last trains depart between 17:34 and 21:18. Inverness last trains depart between 17:27 and 19:11.

**Glasgow Queen St-Oban/Fort William/Mallaig:** The following services are cancelled:

- 08:30 Fort William to Mallaig
- 10:10 Mallaig to Fort William
- 10:34 Glasgow to Oban
- 14:41 Oban to Glasgow (16:11 on Saturdays)
- 16:05 Mallaig to Glasgow
- 18:23 Glasgow to Mallaig and Oban will only run to Oban.

**Glasgow Queen St-Stirling/Dunblane:** Last trains depart between 19:33 and 20:06.

**Helensburgh Central-Edinburgh via Singer:** Daytime services operate every 30 minutes, with some additional peak services between Edinburgh and Bathgate. Last trains depart between 19:32 and 21:02.

**Inverness-Kyle/Wick/Thurso:** The 08:02 and 16:00 from Wick; 10:41, 18:33, and 21:06 from Inverness; and the 22:21 from Tain are cancelled.

**Milngavie-Springburn:** Daytime services operate every 30 minutes, with last trains departing around 19:45. **SCOTRAIL**

## Spain: New budget high-speed services

Spanish state operator RENFE has announced it plans to finally launch its new budget bullet service between Madrid and Barcelona from 23 June. Initial plans for April were pushed back due to COVID-19 impacts.

The Avlo train timetable will include four return trips daily at speeds of up to 330 km/h with a one-way trip lasting anywhere between 90 and 180 minutes.

RENFE reported that it sold over 100,000 tickets in the first day of availability, with a third of all tickets so far sold for travel in the first month of operation. Launch tickets for travel between 23 June and 11 December are being sold for just €5, with trips after that date to cost between €10 and €60. Intending passengers are required to arrive at least 30 minutes prior to departure time, carry photo ID and be registered.

Following the country's efforts to open its long-distance railways to competition, SNCF-backed Ouigo will commence their own budget service on the route from May with five daily trips timetabled – selling its first 10,000 tickets for €1, with regular one-way fares at €9.

Italian operator, ILSA, is reportedly also interested in entering the Spanish market from 2022. **CNN, RENFE, TELLER REPORT**

### **Clifton Hill group**

- Earlier operation of early weekday morning empty trip from Epping to Greensborough.
- Improvements to peak period platform occupancy at Flinders Street.

### **Mernda line**

- Additional weekday services at 05 57 from Mernda and 15 34 to Mernda.
- Reduction in weekday empty movements around Epping to reduce congestion. In the morning peak this includes altering three down Epping express services to run empty from Reservoir straight into the yard at Epping.
- Other alterations in peak and shoulder-peak times in connection with the altered and additional services on the Clifton Hill group.

### **Hurstbridge line**

- Additional weekday service at 09 13 from Heidelberg.
- Additional time allowed where required for crosses at Eltham (on weekdays) and Diamond Creek.
- Other alterations, mainly in peak and shoulder-peak times, in connection with the above changes.

### **Belgrave and Lilydale lines**

- Additional weekday services at 05 58 from Ringwood and 18 42 to Ringwood.
- Longer standovers of trains at Lilydale between 15 30 and 17 30 on weekdays.
- 3-carriage trips to Ringwood after the evening peak period built up to 6-carriage trains.
- Adjustment of some services account an earlier signalling change at Fern Tree Gully.
- Various other alterations in connection with those above.

### **Alamein line**

- 3-carriage trips to Flinders Street at the end of the weekday inter-peak period now terminate at Camberwell and connect with new services to Flinders Street.
- Evening shuttle services stand over longer at Camberwell to improve performance.

### **Glen Waverley line**

- Removal of platform conflicts at Glen Waverley in the morning peak period.
- Additional weekday services at 09 10 from Glen Waverley and 18 46 to Glen Waverley
- Other alterations in connection with the above additional trips.

### **Pakenham and Cranbourne lines**

- All loop services operate anti-clockwise from first train to last train seven days per week (to cater for full operation of HCMT trains on the Dandenong line).
  - As a consequence, the distinction between loop and direct Train Descriptor numbers has been abolished. See below for more detail.
- Minimal platform dwell times at Flinders Street in the evening peak period.
- All Dandenong-line services run express between South Yarra and Caulfield.
- Nine trains are stabled at Pakenham East and none at Pakenham.
- On weekdays, select passenger services operate between the Dandenong line and the Northern group post Northern loop reversal, and empty trips before the morning peak and after the evening peak, to facilitate Comeng maintenance. These inter-group operations will be phased out as the number of HCMT trains in operation reduces the number of Comeng trains on the line to a number that can be maintained within the group.
- On weekday mornings, up Cranbourne shuttles are extended to Flinders Street, creating a 10-minute frequency ex Dandenong from the first train.
- On weekday evenings, the 20-minute frequency on down services extends until midnight.

### **Frankston line**

- All trains operate direct to/from Flinders Street seven days a week, and most continue to/from the Newport line.
- Reinstatement of some trips originating and terminating at Cheltenham, following the rebuilding of the station.
- Apart from three trains that terminate at Cheltenham and Mordialloc early in the evening peak period, all trains in the evening peak period have been extended to Frankston.
- Services after the evening peak period and after the weekend daytime period operate to a 20-minute frequency until midnight.
- Night Network service runs on significantly-altered schedules to provide connections at Caulfield with Dandenong-line services that now run express between South Yarra and Caulfield.

## Sandringham line

- Services operate direct to/from Flinders Street seven days a week.
- Additional weekday service at 18 36 to Sandringham.
- All services revised, and evening services on weekdays and weekends aligned.

## Williamstown and Werribee lines

- All trains operate direct to/from Flinders Street seven days a week, and most continue to/from the Frankston line (inter-peak Werribee express services being an exception).
- Up Laverton services on weekdays commence earlier, with only the first two up Werribee trains running via Altona.
- The 22-minute pattern on the Laverton and Williamstown services in the morning peak has been improved to a 20-minute pattern.
- On weekday evenings, the 20-minute frequency extends until midnight.
- On weekends, both lines have a 20-minute service from the first train until the last train, excluding Night Network services.
- Daytime weekend services operate to a 10-minute frequency between Newport and Flinders Street, with the daytime Williamstown shuttles extended through to and from Flinders Street.
- Evening services on weekdays and weekends aligned.

## Northern Group

- Down trains on the Sunbury, Craigieburn, and Upfield lines in the morning peak dwell at North Melbourne for one minute to provide for changing drivers (changing drivers on down trains at North Melbourne will be done in both peak periods).
- Improvements to peak period platform occupancy at Flinders Street.

## Sunbury Line

- Weekday inter-peak and weekend daytime services aligned.

## Craigieburn line

- Closer alignment of weekday inter-peak with weekend daytime services, and weekday and weekend evening services.

## Upfield line

- An additional weekday train will operate from Upfield at 04 58.

*Metro Trains 31 January timetable change overview (source: Metro Train Planning and Network Strategy).*

## American Rescue Plan

*All monetary amounts in the following article are in American dollars.*

Following on from the discussion started in last month's *Talking In-Depth* article, *Public Transport facing huge cuts (US)*, the new federal administration, led by new President Joe Biden, has a \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 to expend taxpayer funds to accelerate the country's COVID recovery. At the time of publication, the bill was with the Senate.

Whilst including base funding of up to \$400 billion for vaccine testing, production and distribution, the Plan also included:

- \$1 trillion for increased \$1,400 cash stimulus payments for the majority of Americans (third economic impact payment)
- \$350 billion in aid for state and local governments to maintain funding of essential services
- extension of additional unemployment payments from March to 29 August. *Roughly*

*18 million Americans were receiving unemployment cheques as of January 2021.*

- \$30 billion for emergency rental and utility bills assistance
- \$10 billion for mortgage assistance
- \$5 billion to prevent COVID-19 outbreaks amongst homeless populations
- Extension of the eviction moratorium until end of September

More particularly, the fund includes \$30 billion for reimbursement of **transit agency** payroll expense and to cover losses in agency revenue due to COVID impacts. Most of these funds will be allocated directly to urban transit agencies (\$26 billion), with \$281 million for rural operators. New York Metropolitan Transportation Agency (MTA) chairman and chief executive officer, Patrick Foye, called the Plan a "strong start", also stating that "without a robust MTA powering New York's revival, there can be no national rebound".

Another \$1.5 billion has been allocated to **Amtrak**, available until 30 September 2024, with Amtrak to

reinstate and maintain suspended services on long-distance routes to the level provided on or before 1 July 2020, within three months of the enactment of the Bill, and also recall employees furloughed on or after 1 October 2020 as a result of COVID impacts.

Another \$14 billion has been allocated in payroll support grants for **airline carriers**, with an additional \$1 billion for airline contractors such as caterers or those who otherwise have direct dealings with the air transportation business at airports as an airline employee or subcontractor. The Bill includes a number of financial restrictions that airlines have to follow to be eligible. The airline carrier grants came as a “surprise” to Height Capital Market analyst Hunter Hammond.

Another \$8 billion is allocated for direct assistance for **airports**, including \$6.5 billion for “primary” airports, \$608 million for airport development projects, and \$100 million for “non-primary” airports, available until 30 September 2024, provided they employ at least 90 per cent of the employees employed as of 27 March 2020.

Another \$3 billion is allocated in payroll support grants for **airline manufacturers**, made available until 30 September 2023. *ITS INTERNATIONAL, FAST COMPANY, CNBC, MASS TRANSIT MAGAZINE, MARKETWATCH, US CONGRESS*

## India: Mumbai's busy trains resume

BBC News reports that trains resumed running in Mumbai in February after an unprecedented 10-month suspension due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The ministry has made face masks and temperature checks mandatory on trains. *BBC NEWS*

## Brazil: Transdev to operate new metro

Along with its Colombian bus expansion (see page 13), Transdev has also secured an eight-year “technical assistance” contract for the Sao Paulo Line 6 metro line from an Acciona-led construction consortium. Included in the contract is design, preparation and the operation of the line for its first three years. *TRANSDEV*

ENDS

# BUS & COACH NEWS

## QUEENSLAND



### Logan bus changes

From Monday, 25 January, Translink implemented changes to timetables in the Logan area. Minor adjustments were made to timings. Impacted routes were 550-555, N555, 560-568, P569, 570-579, P581, 582 and 586. Additionally, there were bus stop pick-up changes at Springwood and Loganholme stations.

*TRANSLINK*

### Additional physical distancing services

Additional COVID-19 commuter route “trial” services have operated since August 2020. A review was conducted late last year, with Translink advising that the additional services continue to operate from 11 December 2020 until 25 June.

Additional **weekday morning** services on routes 100 (3 extra services), 140 (8), 261 (1), 281 (1), 340 (7), 444 (6), P546 (1), 555 (2), and P569 (1). Also, one early morning service on route 550 is extended to start from Browns Plains.

Additional **weekday afternoon** services on routes 140 (2 extra services), 227 (1) and 261 (1). *TRANSLINK*

## Greyhound Resources

Contracts have been signed for Kinetic to acquire Greyhound Resources from Greyhound Australia – the largest provider of mining bus services in Queensland. Greyhound Resources operates 179 contracted routes across 29 mining sites. The acquisition needs regulatory approval. *AUSTRALIAN BUS & COACH MAGAZINE*

## NEW SOUTH WALES



### North Shore – March adjustments

Some adjustments have been made to selected State Transit North Shore bus services, effective from Monday, 1 March. They have come as a result of feedback following the implementation of changes to the network in December, as follows:

- **154X** – The 07:04 trip from Dee Why to Milsons Point has been withdrawn to

accommodate the reinstatement of school buses 766n and 767n. From Mondays to Thursdays, the 06:58 trip from Dee Why now operates one minute later at 06:59. Friday times remain unchanged.

- **162** – The 08:17 trip from Balgowlah Shops now departs two minutes earlier at 08:15 to accommodate school bus **723n** (see below). This trip also now deviates via Maretimo Street and Sydney Road, instead of via Ethel Street.
- **172X** – An additional trip now departs North Balgowlah Shops at 07:36 to St Luke's Grammar School in Dee Why. The 07:40 trip from Seaforth Shops to Wynyard has been withdrawn to accommodate the additional trip in the opposite direction.
- **173X** – On school days, the 07:25 trip from Wynyard now extends through to St Luke's Grammar School, Dee Why.
- **182** – an additional trip operates on school days only departing Mater Maria at 15:26 towards Narrabeen Shops.
- School buses **689n**, **766n** and **767n** have resumed operating. The 766n and 767n buses turn into a **154X** regular route service from Dee Why.
- School bus **707n** has a morning trip added, departing North Balgowlah Shops at 07:10 for Milsons Point. The new trip complements the pre-existing afternoon trip in the opposing direction.
- School bus **723n** has one trip withdrawn in the morning, with another service operating two minutes later. This other service now begins at Balgowlah Shops as a **162** service then becomes **723n** (school students only) at Seaforth Shops.

**TRANSPORT FOR NSW**

## Future North Shore changes

Transport for NSW teases that further changes will be made later in the year to Northern Beaches and lower North Shore services. No firm start date was provided at the time of publication. The changes are slated to include:

- A 24/7 B-Line timetable.
- A 10-minute daily "all-day frequency" corridor between Chatswood and Dee Why.
- Rationalisation of local school bus services:
  - Altered routes for 597n, 687n, 709n and 723n.
  - 655n renumbered to 792n.
  - 660n renumbered to 793n.
  - 661W renumbered to 794n.

- Timing changes to trip(s) on 579n, 589n, 601n, 611n, 637n, 660n, 661n, 668n, 673n, 675n, 677n, 684n, 693n, 695n, 696n, 702n, 712n, 720n, 725n, 730n, 732n, 746n, 747n, 776n and 785n.

School routes 575n, 576n, 577n, 599n, 623n, 654n, 689n, 694n, 697n, 703n, 765n, 767n, 773n and 788n will be withdrawn, replaced by additional commuter route services or deviations to existing commuter route services. **TRANSPORT FOR NSW**

## Route number changes: South-west NSW

Regional towns Wagga Wagga and Junee had its commuter route numbers changed, effective from Monday, 1 March. These services are variously operated by Allan's Coaches and Junee Buses.

Additionally, school route numbers across Wagga Wagga, Junee and Queanbeyan also had their route numbers changed to bring them into line with Transport for NSW's new numbering system. Outside these superficial changes, there will be no changes to services.

### Wagga Wagga/Junee

- 1 renumbered to **931** (Wagga Wagga to Coolamon)
- 2 renumbered to **930** (Wagga Wagga to Ganmain via Coolamon)
- 21 renumbered to **921** (Wagga Wagga to Junee via Wallacetown & Harefield)
- 22 renumbered to **922** (Wagga Wagga to Junee via Wallacetown & Yathella)
- 23 renumbered to **923** (Wagga Wagga to Junee via Byrnes Road)
- 24 renumbered to **924** (Wagga Wagga to Junee via Hampden Avenue & Wallacetown)
- 25 renumbered to **925** (Wagga Wagga to Junee via Riverina Anglican)

In their route timetable, Allen's Coaches previously called route 1 a "passenger and school service". Yet, all of their timetables were listed on their website as "School Services Route Timetables". Transport for NSW appears to have made a determination with both routes 1 and 2 now regular route services (as 931 and 930 respectively). Meanwhile, Junee Buses had in their route 24 and 25 timetables "School Service Public Welcome". Once again, Transport for NSW appears to have determined these routes to now be a regular route service (as routes 924 and 925).

### Wagga Wagga/Junee (school routes)

- 3 renumbered as S211
- 4 renumbered as S210

- 5 renumbered as S206
- 6 renumbered as S209
- 7 renumbered as S208
- 8 renumbered as S215
- 9 renumbered as S216
- 10 renumbered as S217
- 11 renumbered as S212
- N1177 renumbered as S255
- N1142 renumbered as S226
- N1541 renumbered as S222
- N1542 renumbered as S221
- N2426 renumbered as S225
- N2427 renumbered as S224
- N2428 renumbered as S223
- N0121 renumbered as S241
- N0480 renumbered as S246
- N0483 renumbered as S247
- N0954 renumbered as S244
- N1898 renumbered as S245
- N2466 renumbered as S242
- N2500 renumbered as S243
- N3114 renumbered as S248
- N4034 renumbered as S249
- N2490 renumbered as S251
- N2493 renumbered as S250
- N1490 renumbered as S257

- N1714 renumbered to S577
- N0397 renumbered to S570
- N0760 renumbered to S572

#### TRANSPORT FOR NSW

### NSW Budget 20/21

In November 2020, the state government delivered its budget address for the 2020/21 financial year. Usually released in June, the government said its response to the COVID-19 pandemic caused this year's address to be delayed.

Key bus funding commitments for this fiscal year include \$194.8 million for new buses to replace life-expired vehicles, and \$20.9 million to continue the Bus Priority Infrastructure Program (BPIP). Transport for NSW will also continue its work in transitioning State Transit's commuter bus operating contracts to private operation.

See our page 9 article for an updated overview of BPIP. **NSW GOVERNMENT**

### Bus Priority Improvement Program (BPIP)

Originating from the government's Future Transport Strategy 2056, Transport for NSW (TfNSW) says that BPIP aims to deliver infrastructure to make bus services faster and more reliable through strategic bus stop placement, bus lanes and bus priority at key intersections across Sydney.

From 17 **August 2020**, TfNSW implemented changes on Woniara Road & King Georges Road (South Hurstville) and Princes Highway (Sylvania), impacting Transdev routes 970 and 971. A total of six stops were removed, with another nine stops upgraded to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (DDA). Additionally, one stop was removed with another three upgraded at the Kingsway (Miranda), a new stop installed at Princes Highway (Kirrawee), and one bus stop removed with another two upgraded on Menai Road (Menai), and four stops removed, with two upgraded across Gibson Avenue and Ryan Roads (Padstow) variously affecting Transdev routes 962 and M92.

In **December 2020**, TfNSW completed works at the intersection of Parramatta and Croydon Roads (Croydon) including removal of four bus stops, with two new stops constructed between these, and nearby road works. The works impacted Transit Systems routes 490 and 492, which both operate to a mostly 30-minute frequency between Drummoyne and Hurstville/Rockdale respectively.

#### Queanbeyan (school routes)

- N0390 renumbered to S560
- N1002 renumbered to S561
- N2332 renumbered to S562
- N2816 renumbered to S564
- N2721 renumbered to S563
- N0176 renumbered to S550
- N0963 renumbered to S551
- N1031 renumbered to S552
- N1386 renumbered to S553
- N1431 renumbered to S554
- N2875 renumbered to S555
- N1013 renumbered to S556
- N3106 renumbered to S557
- N1030 renumbered to S574



Croydon – before and after images (source: TfNSW).

In **January 2021**, TfNSW released for community consultation its proposal for stop rationalisation and road works in Kingsway (Miranda), Taren Point Road (Taren Point) and Rocky Point Road (Ramsgate) impacting Transit Systems routes 477 and 478. This proposal includes removal of numerous bus stops which were on average 200 metres apart, with the remaining stops receiving an upgrade to comply with DDA.

Also by the **end of February**, works are to be completed on the Pacific Highway near Edgeworth David Avenue (Hornsby) to relocate a bus stop and extend the bus-only lane. Commuter routes 587, 588, 589 (all Transdev) and 600 (Hillsbus) use this stop.

In removing bus stops deemed too close together, TfNSW says that it aims to achieve an average 400 metres distance or five minutes' walk between stops, which TfNSW says improves bus travel times and helps to deliver the government's 95 per cent on-time running target.

Visit <https://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/projects/easing-sydneys-congestion/bus-priority-program.html> to keep up-to-date.  
**TRANSPORT FOR NSW**

## AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



### Woden Bus Interchange

After many years of plans, the ACT government has released a new batch of development applications (DAs) for the upgrade of the Woden Bus Interchange. The works form part of the revitalisation of Woden's town centre as well as the government's plan to stimulate the local economy in response to COVID-19's impacts.

As well as general environmental enhancements for passengers, the latest design takes into consideration the proposed light rail extension (stage 2B) and the potential for increased bus services in the future. The bus layover bays will be moved adjacent to Phillip Oval and on Easy Street with a combined capacity of 35 buses. The section of Callam Street between Matilda and Bradley Streets will also be closed to cars.

To review the DAs, and submit feedback, visit <https://www.planning.act.gov.au/development-applications/pubnote>, scroll to "Phillip". The closing date for submissions is 22 March.

Works are due to commence later in the year. **WIN NEWS CANBERRA, ACT GOVERNMENT**

## TASMANIA



### Launceston: Tamar school bus changes

From the beginning of school Term One, school route **813AM** had its route deviated to serve Tamar Valley Steiner School's new campus. The deviation adds several minutes of journey time to St Leonards Primary and Larmenier Catholic students. Meanwhile, in the afternoon, the school route **816PM** service now commences from Tamar Valley Steiner School at 14:55. **METRO TASMANIA**

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA



### Transperth changes: February & March

Effective from Monday, 22 February, route 249 has been renumbered as **219**. Route **284** has also been extended to serve Wright Street at Belmont Forum, which Transperth says is to improve connections with other bus services.

Between 22 February and 12 March, an additional route **205** trip operates departing Canning Vale College at 15:18 weekdays terminating at Warton Road & Spencer Road at 15:33.

From Monday, 8 March, there will be timing and route changes to a route **565** service. The previous 07:11 weekday service from Baldivis will now depart at the later time of 07:28. The service will no longer deviate via Baldivis Secondary College. **TRANSPERTH**

## NEW ZEALAND



### Wellington: AirportFlyer hiatus extended

The proposed re-commencement of the AirportFlyer service in March by Tranzit has been abruptly cancelled after control of the service suddenly moved from Wellington Airport to Greater Wellington Regional Council.

Council has now cancelled the contract in order to integrate the service into the Metlink bus network. The move will see the hiatus of the service extended by up to 18 months. Council says it hopes for the service to resume in mid-2022.

Meanwhile, any hopes for Hutt Valley to be re-included in the Metlink-operated AirportFlyer appear dashed

with Council chairperson Daran Ponter saying Council would instead look to tighten up connections between commuter routes and the Airport service. Local Hutt MPs said they would continue their fight for Hutt Valley to be reinstated on the AirportFlyer route. [NZ HERALD](#)

## Auckland Transport hits tech hurdle

The \$20 cap on daily travel using AT HOP cards has been delayed due to a technical issue. [Stuff.co.nz](#) understands the workaround relates to removing travel to/from Waiheke Island from the cap coverage, in the same way that it is excluded from the daily and city-wide monthly passes.

In the interim, the One Day pass continues to be sold, with the price also reduced by a dollar to \$18.

Auckland Transport has said it could take up to a year for Thales to make the plan workable. [STUFF.CO.NZ](#)



TransMilenio BRT bus (source: Transdev)

ENDS

## INTERNATIONAL

### Russia: 'On Demand' trial

An 'On Demand' service will soon commence in Moscow's outskirts, operating as a 12-month trial. It will be operated by Mosgortrans. The local transit authority said a goal was to improve public transport accessibility in the more remote areas near the capital. The results of the trial will also inform the authority's future 'On Demand' services.

Deputy Mayor, Maxim Liksutov said "These are not outdated fixed-route buses with a fixed cash payment, but up-to-date comfortable buses – a door-to-door transport with pre-paid tickets only available via the [Moscow Transport] mobile app, no bus drivers are engaged in the [ticketing] process" (*some translation has been fixed for flow*).

Meanwhile, in December, Moscow transferred operation of its light rail network, the fourth-biggest in the world, to its metro train business, Moscow Metro, which it said had the highest operational and safety standards in the world. [MOSGORTANS](#), [INTELLIGENT TRANSPORT](#)

### Colombia: Transdev snags contract

Transdev announced on 26 January that it had secured a €874 million contract to operate buses in Bogota, the Colombian capital.

The 15-year agreement, which will start in November, will include the operation and maintenance of 406 Colombian-bodied electric buses along 15 routes with annual patronage of 35 million passengers.

Transdev has had a two-decade presence in Bogota from its joint-venture with Fanalca, where it operates "red" buses as part of the TransMilenio Bus Rapid Transit system. It currently operates 660 buses across two contracts. [TRANSDEV](#)

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## FERRY & SHIP NEWS

### NEW SOUTH WALES



### NSW Budget 20/21

In November 2020, the state government delivered its budget address for the 2020/21 financial year. Usually released in June, the government said its response to the COVID-19 pandemic caused this year's address to be delayed.

Key ferry funding commitments for this fiscal year included \$205 million for various maritime infrastructure upgrades and construction (including the new Kamay wharves for the proposed La Perouse-Kurnell ferry, named from the nearby Kamay Botany Bay National Park), and \$17.5 million for commuter wharf upgrades under the Transport Access Program. [NSW GOVERNMENT](#)

### Freshwater retirement

In an update to the *Table Talk* article from January 2021 (page 21), a second Freshwater-class ferry will now be retained for use on weekend Manly services over the next two years. [NSW GOVERNMENT](#)

ENDS

## AIR NEWS

### DOMESTIC



#### Rex calls Qantas predatory behaviour

Regional Express (Rex) has threatened to cull some routes it operates in regional Australia in light of QantasLink making a move to operate flights on those routes.

Rex deputy chairperson John Sharp said Qantas' strategy was deliberate to weaken it in the lead-up to Rex's launch of its Sydney-Melbourne flights in early March.

Qantas rebuffed claims it was using its market power and resources to destabilise Rex, saying its new regional routes would be profitable, calling Mr Sharp's claims "a classic Rex tantrum".

The routes QantasLink has or will launch services on eight previous Rex monopoly corridors:

- Sydney-Orange
- Sydney-Merimbula
- Sydney-Griffith
- Melbourne-Merimbula
- Melbourne-Albury
- Melbourne-Wagga Wagga
- Melbourne-Mount Gambier
- Adelaide-Mount Gambier

In turn, Mr Sharp said Rex would stand its ground, despite "inevitably both carriers will be making significant losses". However, Rex would instead cut flights on other routes, including:

- Sydney-Bathurst
- Sydney-Cooma
- Sydney-Grafton
- Sydney-Lismore
- Adelaide-Kangaroo Island

The cuts will take effect in March at the conclusion of the federal government's COVID-induced Regional Airline Network Support initiative. *THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD*

#### Rex amends SYD-MEL launch schedule

Rex has amended its expected flight schedule in the first week of operations on the Sydney-Melbourne route.

While it is delivering \$49 launch fares, called the "Rex And The Cities Sale", a play on words on the '00s television series Sex And The City, the number of flights will be reduced until it is able to deliver the full schedule originally advertised within weeks. On Monday, 1 March, Rex will operate two return flights, then three return services daily for the remainder of the week. During the week commencing 8 March, Rex has scheduled four return daily flights

Virgin simultaneously matched Rex's launch price on the route, with what appears to be a new price war on what was one of the world's busiest routes pre-COVID. *THE SUNDAY TELEGRAPH, REGIONAL EXPRESS*

#### Virgin launches extra Easter-period routes

Virgin announced in February that it would operate flights between Melbourne and Ballina Byron "up to" six times a week, and between Adelaide and the Sunshine Coast four times a week, between 29 March to 25 April only. Other existing routes will also have capacity increased across much of Virgin's domestic network citing improved sentiment around the gradual roll-out of the various COVID-19 vaccines across the country. *TRAVELLER.CO.MAU*

### INTERNATIONAL



#### Project Sunrise

Qantas chief executive Alan Joyce assures that the airline's Project Sunrise is not dead, despite a global

pandemic that has all but wiped out international air travel, and nearly sunk many of the world's top airlines.

The project was a commitment to "ultra-long-haul" travel, consisting of non-stop flights of up to 21 hours from Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane to global cities including London, Paris, New York, Rio de Janeiro and Cape Town.

Initially set down for a 2022 commencement, Mr Joyce says the airline currently plans for the service to commence as early as 2024, dependent on the airline's receipt of the Airbus A350-1000, which itself is dependent on the continuing impacts of COVID-19 on international air travel.

*Samchui.com* reports that the Perth-London non-stop route was Qantas' most profitable international route pre-COVID. [SAMCHUI.COM](#)

## Cathay Pacific axes long-haul routes

International carrier Cathay Pacific axed many of their long-haul flights from Saturday, 20 February due to Hong Kong's Special Administrative Government mandating that all returning flight crews have to go through 14 days of hotel quarantine.

Impacted are routes into Australasia (including Melbourne, Brisbane and Perth), North America (San Francisco and Vancouver), Asia (Seoul, Ho Chi Minh City, Kuala Lumpur, Cebu and Taiwan's Kaohsiung), and Tel Aviv in Israel. Flights to other cities continue to operate.

Manoeuvring their crews with their remaining international routes (including to/from Sydney), it has been reported that Cathay Pacific will roster their crews for three weeks straight of flying, with hotel quarantine provided by the company in Hong Kong upon their return. [SAMCHUI.COM](#)

## COVID claims scalps

Argentinian airline **LATAM Argentina** has folded. The airline was put in hibernation back in June 2020 as a way to ride out the pandemic, however this has not been enough. While most of its routes were within Argentina, it also used its 21 aircraft to operate four

routes out of the country to Sao Paulo, Santiago, Lima and the southern US city of Miami.

LATAM Argentina's parent, **LATAM Airlines Group** operates a number of subsidiaries in numerous Latin American countries. LATAM AG continues to operate, while undergoing bankruptcy negotiations through the US Bankruptcy Court. Its next deadline will be 30 June to lodge a restructuring plan. Acceptances for that plan will then be required by 23 August.

Meanwhile, African airline **Air Namibia** ceased operating on 11 February after the Namibian government placed the airline in liquidation. It has left 600 people out of a job and a fleet of 10 aircraft on the tarmac. *Samchui.com* reports that the airline was reliant on state funds to continue as a going concern, with the state having made \$AU725 million in various cash injections over the past decade. [SAMCHUI.COM](#), [CH-AVIATION](#)

## South Africa: Airport holding sold

Airports Company South Africa (ACSA) has been forced to sell "non-core" assets, following ongoing damage to its normal business by COVID-19. COVID-19's demolition of international travel along with the country's own particular struggle with containing the virus has seen ACSA's revenue decimated. On 8 February, ACSA announced it had sold its minority (10 per cent) stake in Mumbai International Airport, which operates Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj International Airport, for \$AU109 million.

ACSA operates nine airports across South Africa (41 million passengers travelled through them in 2017). ACSA is 25 per cent owned by private interests, with the remainder owned by the state, although it is operated as a fully commercial entity. [AFRICAN INTELLIGENCE](#), [ACSA](#), [ENGINEERING NEWS](#)

## American Rescue Plan

See our article on page 9 for funds to be made available by the Biden administration to assist US airlines, airports and manufacturers due to COVID-19 impacts.

ENDS

## ODD SPOT

Reader Jim Wells has provided what could possibly be the world's shortest and quickest bus route. Sydney's route 160 has a grand total of one service every weekday on its books with a total journey time of three minutes from start to finish. One would hope that CDC Forest is able to achieve 100 per cent on-time running.

160

Forestway Shopping Centre to Blackbutts Rd before Malbara Cr

B

Valid from: 29 Jan 2021

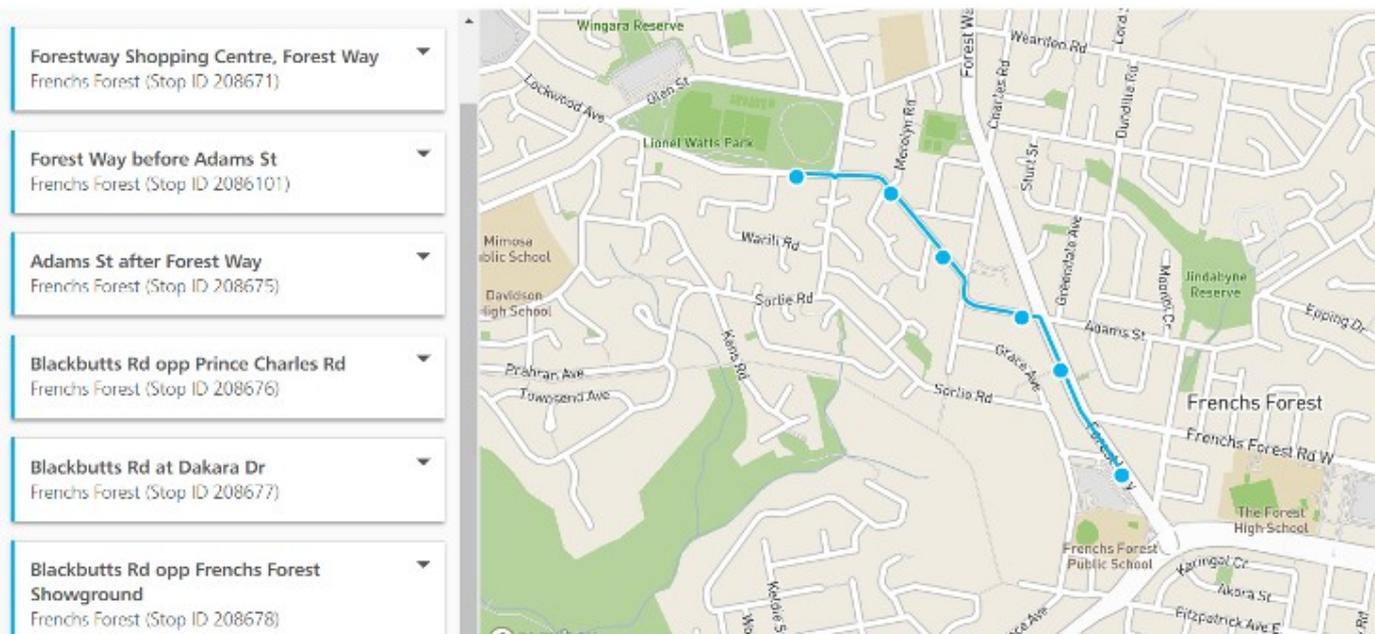
Creation date: 05 Feb 2021

NOTE: Information is correct on date of download.

Monday to Friday

Forestway Shopping Centre, Forest Way, Frenchs Forest	06:57
Blackbutts Rd opp Prince Charles Rd, Frenchs Forest	06:58
Blackbutts Rd opp Frenchs Forest Showground, Frenchs Forest	07:00

The bus logo on the timetable denotes a school bus service, however the service ends three stops short of Davidson High School, so it is unclear why it finishes where it does.



## About *Table Talk*

Print ISSN 1038-3697, Online ISSN 2209-718X.

**Table Talk** is a monthly publication produced by the Australian Timetable Association Inc. (ATA) (Registration No. A0043673H) as a journal of record covering timetable and other transport-related news. The ATA also publishes **The Times** covering timetable history and analysis. **Table Talk Newswire** is an advanced and concise monthly email of Rail News. To obtain this, contact the Rail Editor. ABN 74248483468.

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Back issues of *Table Talk* are available on our website, [www.timetable.org.au](http://www.timetable.org.au), after two months from print publication.

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*Table Talk* is a production of the **Australian Timetable Association**