



AUSTRALIAN TIMETABLE  
ASSOCIATION

# TABLE TALK

AUSTRALASIAN TIMETABLE NEWS

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## COMMENT FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the August edition of *Table Talk* sees Greater Sydney in lockdown as the city tries to stop the spread of the COVID-19 Delta virus. Not only does it appear to be more transmissible than previous strains, but we have also seen the virus take hold in south-west Sydney in late July, interesting considering the spread initially was initially concentrated in the eastern suburbs of the city, such as Bondi.

Towards the end of July, for the first time, the state government directed a mass reduction of public transport services, with up to five council areas experiencing increased restrictions, including the imposition of surveillance testing for any remaining essential workers who travel to other parts of the city.

Altogether we have four pages of Sydney lockdown content including an in-depth report on the train timetable between Monday, 19 July and Friday, 30 July. Now, as it is very much looking like Delta won't be giving up without a very arduous fight, it is expected that this will be with the city for longer than anticipated. *Maybe I should have called this the lockdown edition?*

## RAIL & TRAM NEWS

### QUEENSLAND



#### Cross River Rail

Much of Brisbane's rail network was closed on the weekend of 24-25 July due to Cross River Rail works affecting the CBD, Beenleigh, Cleveland, Gold Coast, Ipswich/Rosewood, and Springfield lines, with buses replacing trains between Bowen Hills and Albion to Corinda, Lindum and Yeerongpilly stations. The works directly affected 29 stations. **TRANSLINK**

### NEW SOUTH WALES



#### Lockdown

With a new COVID-19 outbreak, the state government instituted a lockdown affecting Greater Sydney region from 18:00 on Saturday, 26 June. Within days, Blue Mountains, Central Coast and Wollongong areas were added to the lockdown. The first week of lockdown delivered a 60 per cent drop in patronage across Sydney's public transport network.

Throughout the month of July, the government progressively added more restrictions to people movements in these areas. Whilst week one saw daily positive cases around 20-30, this grew to over 100 before the end of the month. The daily total for Friday, 23 July (24 hours to 8pm) registered 163 positive tests in the community.

From Sunday, 18 July, the Canterbury-Bankstown, Liverpool and Fairfield local government areas (LGAs) had additional restrictions on essential workers leaving their residential LGA until at least Friday, 30 July, with the bulk of the city's new infections now being found in these LGAs. Any "authorised workers" leaving their LGA for essential work are required to undergo "surveillance testing", which is a COVID-19 test at least every 72 hours. The government also announced the postponement of all non-essential construction works across Greater Sydney for the fortnight, and tightened what constituted "essential" business. Whilst initially, only healthcare and emergency services workers were included in this, it was loosed within days, following consultation with business stakeholders, to also include supermarket, chemist, newsagent, fuel station, school, specified manufacturing, warehouse, transport (operational), power/gas, telecommunications, and essential local maintenance workers, as well as parliamentary members. From Saturday, 24 July, the neighbouring Cumberland, as well as Blacktown, were added to this list effective from Saturday, 24 July.

With the stubbornness of the Delta strain amongst a 90 per cent unvaccinated population, the government finally bit the bullet on the afternoon of 18 July in announcing that from Monday, 19 July, there would be a reduction of services for all modes across the Sydney public transport network. This marks the first time that the state government has reduced regular timetabled services due to the pandemic. When Sydney was plunged into lockdown in mid-2020, the government maintained a normal timetable across the city, which was a different approach to that of the Victorian government for Melbourne. Sydney experienced the eerie sight of trains running every three minutes through the city with very few people on them.

Transport for NSW's Chief Operations Officer, Howard Collins, said to local media that all modes would have services reduced by between 30 and 50 per cent until at least 30 July. "We are encouraging people not to use services, therefore we are basing the timetable on those people who are absolutely essential", he said.

All **Sydney Trains** services, along with **NSW TrainLink** Intercity Central Coast, Blue Mountains and South Coast services were moved to a rolling Sunday timetable. However, NSW TrainLink Regional services, including Bathurst Bullet, Hunter and Southern Highlands services, continue with a weekday timetable. As the week unfolded, some additional peak services were selectively added onto the train network. - see the next article for additions to the Sunday rolling timetable.

On day one, **Metro** services operated every 20 minutes throughout the day (technically twice as worse as the normal Sunday timetable), although the peak-hour frequency was doubled to run every 10 minutes from Tuesday. Thus, on weekdays, the temporary weekday timetable is now:

Times departing Chatswood:

05:47-06:47 (every 20 minutes); 06:47-09:47 (10m); 09:47-15:47 (20m); 15:47-18:47 (10m); 18:47-23:47 (20m). Weekends – every 20 mins 05:47-23:47.

Times departing Tallawong:

05:05-06:05 (every 20 minutes); 06:05-09:05 (10m); 09:05-15:05 (20m); 15:05-18:05 (10m); 18:05-23:05 (20m). Weekends – every 20 mins 05:05-23:05.

Transport for NSW also reported that **light rail** services were operating to a reduced 20-minute frequency across all three lines. Additionally, from 06:00 Wednesday, 21 July, all services are skipping The Star light rail stop, due to the closure of the casino under COVID guidelines. There are no changes to Newcastle Light Rail. **TRANSPORT FOR NSW, SYDNEY TRAINS, GEOFF LAMBERT, SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, ABC NEWS, NSW HEALTH**

## Are they additional if the TT is reduced?

From Monday, July 19, Sydney Trains began operating a rolling Sunday/Public Holiday timetable on all of its lines, as part of the government's additional restrictions in its' efforts to stop the spread of COVID-19 Delta strain.

From Wednesday, 21 July to Friday, 23 July, the following changes were made for the **Intercity Central Coast Newcastle** line morning peak in an attempt to address crowding issues:

- Additional 06:13 Newcastle Interchange (NIC) all stations to Gosford.
- Additional 06:24 Wyong to Central via North Shore.
- Additional 06:49 Gosford all stations to NIC.
- Additional 07:18 NIC all stations to Gosford.
- 07:44 NIC to Central all stations to Morisset.
- Additional 07:50 Gosford all stations to NIC.
- Additional 08:00 to Gosford service.
- 08:53 NIC to Central all stations to Morisset.
- 13:18 Central to NIC all stations from Morisset.

From the same date, additional services were also added on the **T1 Western** line in the peak-running direction towards North Sydney, departing Penrith at 05:23, 05:53, 06:08, 06:23, and 06:38 (all stations to Parramatta, Lidcombe, Strathfield, Redfern, all to North Sydney). These trains were then returned to run as passenger service to Blacktown, departing North Sydney at 06:52, 07:22, 07:37, 08:15, and 08:30

(stopping all to Redfern, Strathfield, Parramatta, Westmead, Seven Hills and Blacktown).

Meanwhile, on the **T4 Eastern Suburbs** line, additional services departed Waterfall for Bondi Junction at 06:51 and 07:11 (all stations to Bondi Junction [except St Peters and Erskineville]). The trains returned as passenger service to Hurstville, departing Bondi Junction at 08:18 and 08:52 (all stations to Redfern, Sydenham, Wollri Creek, Rockdale, Kogarah and Hurstville).

On the **T8 Airport** line, additional trains departed Campbelltown at 06:22 and 06:52 (all stations to Revesby, Wollri Creek, all to City Circle). They continued as passenger service out of the City to Sydenham.

On Friday, 23 July only, further additional services were added as follows:

- 07:17 Blacktown to North Sydney (stopping Seven Hills, Westmead, Parramatta, Granville, all to Lidcombe, Strathfield, Redfern, all to North Sydney)
- 08:36 North Sydney to Blacktown (stopping all to Redfern, Strathfield, Parramatta, Westmead, Seven Hills and Blacktown)
- 05:40, 05:57, 06:55 and 07:10 Mortdale to Bondi Junction (stopping Hurstville, all to Wollri Creek, Sydenham, Redfern, all to Bondi Jct).
- 06:28, 06:45, 07:43 and 07:58 Bondi Junction to Mortdale (stopping all to Redfern, Sydenham, Wollri Creek, Rockdale, Kogarah, Hurstville, Penshurst and Mortdale).

For the working week commencing from Monday, 26 July, the bulk of the changes to the base Sunday timetable again impact the morning (pre-9am) with additional services on selected lines.

the **Intercity Central Coast Newcastle** line plan was tweaked, with changes to the Sunday timetable as follows:

- Additional 05:26 NIC to Central (limited stops)
- Additional 06:20 NIC to Central (all stations to Morisset then limited stops to Central).
- Additional 06:50 Gosford all stations to NIC.
- Additional 06:53 Gosford to Central via North Shore.
- Additional 07:20 NIC to Gosford (all to Morisset, Wyong, Tuggerah, Gosford).
- Additional 07:50 Gosford all stations to NIC.
- Additional 07:54 NIC to Gosford (all to Morisset, Wyong, Tuggerah, Gosford).

- 08:42 NIC to Central all stations to Morisset (departs NIC earlier to maintain standard timetable into Sydney).
- 13:18 Central to NIC all stations from Morisset.
- Additional 16:30 Redfern to Gosford via North Shore.
- Additional 17:33 Central to NIC (limited stops)

On the **Intercity Blue Mountains** line, 05:48 Mount Victoria to Central, and 17:10 Central to Mount Victoria services have been added.

Meanwhile, on the **Intercity South Coast** line:

- Additional 05:11 and 06:26 Kiama to Bondi Junction (all to Thirroul, Helensburgh, Waterfall then limited stops to Bondi Jct).
- Additional 05:22 and 06:52 Wollongong to Bondi Junction (Nth W'gong, Thirroul, all to Waterfall then limited stops to Bondi Jct).
- Additional 16:43 and 17:43 Bondi Junction to Kiama.

With the **T1 Richmond** and **T5 Cumberland** lines, extra services depart North Sydney for Richmond from 04:42 and 04:05 from Richmond to North Sydney (every 30 minutes in both directions). Services normally operating between Richmond and Leppington until mid-morning instead run between Schofields and Liverpool only. These changes replicate the late-morning clockface timetable structure.

On the **T1 Western** line, additional trains depart Blacktown at 06:46, 07:16, 07:46 and 08:16 operating to Gordon (stopping all stations to Harris Park, Lidcombe, Strathfield, Redfern, all to Gordon). Additional services also depart Hornsby at 15:30, 16:00, 16:30 and 17:00 operating to Blacktown (stopping all stations to Redfern, Strathfield, Lidcombe, Granville, Parramatta, all to Blacktown).

On **T2 Leppington/Inner West** line, additional trains depart from Leppington at 03:53, 04:23, 04:53, 05:23, 05:53, and 06:23, while extra trains depart Circular Quay at 04:18, 04:48, 05:18, 05:48, 06:18 and 06:48 to Leppington. This provides a 15-minute service frequency matching the late-morning clockface timetable.

On the **T4 Eastern Suburbs** line, extra services depart:

- 04:32, 05:02, 05:32, 06:02, 06:32 and 07:02 Cronulla to Bondi Junction.
- 07:26 and 07:56 Waterfall to Bondi Junction.
- 04:39, 05:48, 06:18, 06:48, 07:18, 07:48 and 08:18 Bondi Junction to Cronulla.
- 08:51, 09:21, 16:53, 17:03, and 17:24 Bondi Junction to Hurstville.

In the early morning, normally timetabled services from Cronulla depart around seven minutes earlier with additional stops at Como and Oatley. The morning changes on this line replicate the late-morning clockface timetable.

On the **T8 Airport East Hills** line, additional all stops services have been added in the early morning between Revesby (every 15 minutes from 05:33) and City Circle which allows trains from Macarthur to operate express between Revesby and Wolli Creek thereby reducing travel time for customers from Glenfield/Campbelltown areas. The first all stations service departs Circular Quay for Revesby at 05:31. This again replicates the late-morning clockface timetable structure. **SYDNEY TRAINS**

## Thirlmere Loop Line

The Southern Highlands' NSW Rail Museum, located in Thirlmere, confirmed in June that it was successful in securing several lots of recycled rail from ARTC's Junee to Griffith rail line.

The NSW Rail Museum, which operates under the direction of Transport Heritage NSW, plans to repair part of the former Southern Highlands loop line, between Picton and Colo Vale in sections. The Museum hopes to complete this within two years.

The Museum says that it hopes to use the line for heritage rail services, which the local member of parliament believes could help to revitalise tourism in the area. Wollondilly MP Nathaniel Smith said, "Repairing the track will bring more people out to these towns and help to support their recovery [from 2019's bushfires]". **WOLLONDILLY ADVERTISER**

## AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



## Minor timetable revision

The timetables for bus routes 23, 30, 58, R6 and R7 were revised, effective from Saturday, 10 July, which according to Transport Canberra will "better align the timetable with actual running time". **TRANSPORT CANBERRA**

## VICTORIA



## V/Line: service disruption

On Monday, 12 July, V/Line reported that many services across all of its lines were affected by a power failure affecting communications at its Melbourne operations control centre. Track faults were also reported to be affecting the Bendigo and Traralgon lines.

From around 04:00 on Wednesday, 14 July, another failure occurred with power supply at V/Line's operations control centre. All V/Line train services across its regional network were cancelled, with limited coach replacement available by 07:00:

### Ararat/Ballarat/Maryborough

*No train services departing from/running to Ballarat/Ararat until further notice. Please defer non-essential travel.*

- 4 coaches dispatched to Deer Park station to run Deer Park – Ballarat, then shuttle Ballarat – Sunshine
- 4 coaches dispatched to Ballarat station to run Ballarat - Southern Cross
- 1 coach dispatched to Sunshine station to run shuttles between Sunshine – Ardeer – Deer Park
- 1 coach dispatched to Deer Park station to run Deer Park to Ballarat

### Bairnsdale/Traralgon

*No train services departing from/running to Traralgon/Bairnsdale until further notice. Please defer non-essential travel.*

- 5 coaches dispatched to Traralgon station to run Traralgon - Pakenham. Passengers can then catch a metropolitan service into Southern Cross
- 4 coaches dispatched to Warragul station to run Warragul - Pakenham. Passengers can then catch a metropolitan service into Southern Cross
- 3 coaches dispatched to Pakenham station to run Pakenham - Traralgon . Passengers can catch a metropolitan service from Southern Cross to Pakenham
- 2 coaches dispatched to Pakenham station to run Pakenham - Warragul. Passengers can then catch a metropolitan service into Southern Cross
- 1 coach dispatched to run Bairnsdale / Stratford / Sale / Rosedale then express to Southern Cross

### Bendigo/Echuca/Moama

*No train services departing from/running to Bendigo/Swan Hill/Echuca until further notice. Please defer non-essential travel.*

- 2 coaches dispatched to Kyneton station to run Kyneton - Southern Cross
- 1 coach dispatched to Castlemaine station to run Castlemaine - Southern Cross
- 1 coach dispatched to Bendigo station to run Bendigo - Southern Cross
- 1 coach dispatched to Gisborne station to run Gisborne - Southern Cross
- 1 coach dispatched to run Southern Cross - Bendigo

### **Geelong/Warrnambool**

No train services departing from/running to Geelong/Warrnambool until further notice. Please defer non-essential travel.

- 10 buses dispatched to Tarneit station to run Tarneit - Werribee shuttle. Passengers can then catch a metropolitan service into Southern Cross
- 10 buses dispatched to Wyndham Vale station to run Wyndham Vale - Werribee shuttle. Passengers can then catch a metropolitan service into Southern Cross
- 4 coaches dispatched to run Bacchus Marsh - Sunshine shuttle. Passengers can then catch a metropolitan service into Southern Cross
- 3 coaches dispatched to South Geelong station to run South Geelong - Southern Cross
- 1 coach dispatched to Waurn Ponds station to run Waurn Ponds - Southern Cross

### **Albury/Seymour/Shepparton**

No train services departing from/running to Seymour/Shepparton until further notice. Please defer non-essential travel.

- 2 coaches dispatched to run Broadmeadows - Seymour
- 1 coach dispatched to run Shepparton - Southern Cross
- 1 coach dispatched to run Seymour - Southern Cross
- 1 coach dispatched to run Donnybrook - Southern Cross

By 08:00, V/Line confirmed that some trains had resumed running in/out of Melbourne Southern Cross station. Particularly noted was the Albury line, which The Age reported experienced lesser impact because much of the route operates on different infrastructure. As a result, the 06:35 Albury to Southern Cross and 07:07 Southern Cross to Albury operated.

V/Line updated its advice by 10:30 to say the problem had been rectified, with train services operating again

across the network. However, due to trains being displaced from the earlier issue, many services later in the afternoon and night were either cancelled or stopped short. Passengers for most of these later cancelled services were advised to board the following service. The exception was circumstances where this was not practical, with V/Line arranging coach replacement.

According to V/Line, a coach shuttle operated between Caroline Springs and Melton between 15:00 and 16:00 hours, presumably to cover a significant gap in service.

*Supplied by – GEOFF LAMBERT, ROSS MORRISON*

*Sources – V/LINE, THE AGE*

### **V/Line: Albury line truncation**

Over the weekend of 3-4 July, V/Line terminated its Albury services short at Wodonga, after the state changed its traffic light COVID classification from Green to an Orange COVID zone. *The Border Mail* reported that this decision was reversed in time for services on Monday, 5 July, with services once again running through to Albury. [THE BORDER MAIL](#)

### **V/Line: cross-border COVID restrictions**

From Monday, 5 July until further notice, V/Line advises that its services departing Albury for Melbourne Southern Cross are expected to experience a delay of 20-30 minutes due to Victoria Police checking travel permits at Wodonga, caused by NSW's latest COVID outbreak (see "Lockdown" article in the NSW section).

See Bus News for V/Line coach impacts. [V/LINE](#)

### **Level crossing removal**

The state government announced on 1 July that it was 12 months ahead of schedule in its level crossing removal project for Melbourne.

The government says that by the end of the year, the following will join the list of 46 already delivered:

- Dandenong South (South Gippsland Highway)
- Williamstown (Ferguson Street)
- Mooroolbark (Manchester Road)
- Lilydale (Maroondah Highway)
- Edithvale (Edithvale Road)
- Edithvale (Lochiel Avenue)
- Bonbeach (Chelsea Road)
- Bonbeach (Swanpool Avenue)

- Bonbeach (Chelsea Road)
- Bonbeach (Bondi Road)

Three new railway stations will also be due at Edithvale, Chelsea, and Bonbeach, with existing stations closed between Sunday, 25 July and November. In the first week, buses replace trains between Mordialloc, Frankston and Stony Point, then from Monday, 2 August, trains operate without stopping at those locations. From mid-September, a two-month shutdown will occur to complete the works.

The government says its \$3 billion dollar expenditure will deliver faster and safer journeys with 18 level crossings removed along the Frankston line, and 12 new stations.

*Supplied by – ROSS MORRISON*

*Source – VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT*

## NEW ZEALAND



### Auckland: Closedowns

The large-scale work to upgrade Auckland's rail infrastructure continues:

- **Weekends of July 24-25, July 31-Aug 1 and 4-5 Sept** – Buses replace Southern Line trains between Penrose and Pukekohe; and Eastern Line trains between Britomart and Manukau to progress Wiri Junction, Westfield third line and Pukekohe electrification.
- **Mon, 26 to Thu, 29 July** – Southern Line trains operate to reduced frequency (every 20 minutes) "due to track fault".
- **Sun, August 8** – Buses replace Southern Line trains between Papakura and Pukekohe.
- **Fri, 13 Aug** – From 22:30, buses replace Western Line trains between New Lynn and Swanson.
- **Weekend of 14-15 Aug** – Buses replace Southern Line trains between Penrose and Pukekohe, Eastern Line trains between Panmure and Manukau, and Western Line trains between Britomart and Swanson.
- **Fri, 20 Aug** – From 21:00, buses replace Eastern Line trains between Britomart and Otahuhu. From 22:30, buses replace Southern, Western and Onehunga Line trains between Britomart and Newmarket.

A two-minute video is available at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ixF\\_uqmcb7E](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ixF_uqmcb7E).  
**AUCKLAND TRANSPORT**

ENDS

## BUS & COACH NEWS

### NATIONAL



#### Firefly COVID-19 changes

Service changes have occurred at an unknown date but presumably around 26-27 June 2021 for their **FE31** Melbourne – Sydney and **FE21** Sydney – Melbourne overnight services whereby Central station is omitted as the terminus. FE31 now operates only Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays and FE21 operates Mondays, Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays.

**FE80** Melbourne – Adelaide overnight currently operates Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays and Sundays and **FE81** Adelaide – Melbourne overnight operates Mondays, Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays. **STEVEN HABY, FIREFLY**

#### Greyhound COVID-19 changes

Following the latest COVID outbreak in Sydney and subsequent issuing of 'stay at home' orders for Greater Sydney, Central Coast, Shellharbour, Wollongong and the Blue Mountains, as well as the Darwin lockdown for 48 hours announced over the weekend of 26-27 June, the following changes occurred to Greyhound services:

- **GX882** (Darwin – Alice Springs) and **GX860** (Broome – Darwin) adjusted to terminate short of Palmerston and Darwin until at least Wednesday 30 June 2021.
- **GX233** only operating between Canberra and Melbourne until at least Friday, 9 July.
- **GX244** Sydney – Brisbane cancelled until at least Friday, 9 July, as has **GX422** Brisbane – Sydney.

Travel advice has been issued for any passengers crossing the border into ACT, Victoria or Queensland from NSW and into WA from NT. **STEVEN HABY, GREYHOUND**

### NEW SOUTH WALES



#### Balgowlah timetable revision

Transport for NSW initiated a revised local bus network affecting some timetables across Balgowlah Heights and North Balgowlah, effective from Monday, 12 July.

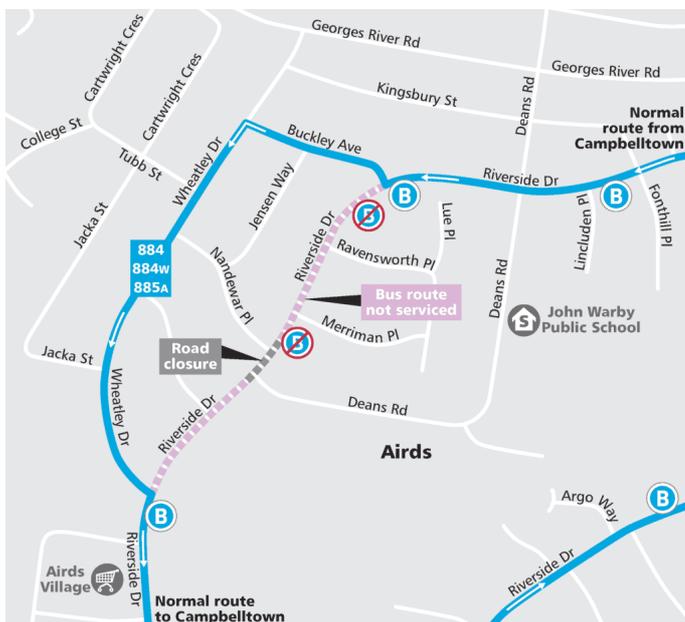
As part of the revision, routes **168X** (Wynyard-North Balgowlah) and **171X** (Wynyard-Balgowlah via Balgowlah Heights) were reinstated. The reinstated 168X North Balgowlah service allowed a reduction of buses on route 172X Wynyard-Warringah Mall via Seaforth & North Balgowlah passing through residential streets in the western area of North Balgowlah, which followed consistent community feedback on prior changes. Meanwhile, the reinstated 171X service restores a direct peak-period connection from the City to Clontarf and Balgowlah Heights.  
**HILAIRE FRASER, TRANSPORT FOR NSW**

## South-west Sydney timetable changes

**Busabout** advised that some minor changes were made for routes **890, 891, 892, 893** and **898**, as well as a number of school services. Changes were effective from Monday, 12 July. No further information was provided. **BUSABOUT**

## Temporary diversion – Airds

Busabout advised that from Monday, 28 June route 884, 884W and 885A buses were being diverted via Wheatley Drive in Airds due to local road works for a period of 4-5 weeks. Busabout provided a local map showing the diversion (see map below-left). With no notification provided on 25 July, it is assumed this diversion has now ceased. **BUSABOUT**



Airds local route diversion (source: Busabout)

## Lockdown

Due to a COVID-19 outbreak of the Delta strain, the state government instituted a lockdown affecting Greater Sydney from Saturday, 26 June, with Blue Mountains, Central Coast and Wollongong areas added just days later, with passenger numbers down 60 per cent across the bus network.

From Sunday, 18 July, Fairfield, Liverpool and Canterbury-Bankstown local government area (LGA) residents had additional lockdown restrictions put in place due to many of the cases of infection now coming from these areas. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the city's bus network suffered the greatest drop in patronage with just about all workers in these south-western Sydney areas required to stay home.

From Monday, 19 July, the state government implemented a Sunday/Public Holiday timetable across the Sydney bus network. An overview follows.

CDC NSW advised that **Forest** (region 14) services were operating to a Sunday timetable from 19 July. Effective from Monday, 26 July, this has been changed to a school holiday timetable, which is their weekday timetable minus any school services. Meanwhile, over in north-west Sydney, the **MetroConnect On Demand** service was also impacted with "increased wait times, while many school services are not operating.

**Hillsbus** (region 4) services have been operating to the Sunday timetable since 19 July. From Thursday, 22 July, to alleviate issues in early mornings with a lack of bus services for essential workers, the following additional services have been provided for weekdays:

- Route **600** ex Parramatta to Pennant Hills 06:05, 07:05.
- **600** ex Pennant Hills to Parramatta 05:09, 06:09, 07:09.
- **611** ex Blacktown 06:16, 06:36, 06:56, 07:36, 07:56.
- **611** ex Macquarie Park 07:05.
- **664** ex Parramatta to Norwest 07:50, 06:50.
- **665** ex Parramatta to Rouse Hill 06:00, 05:30.
- **665** ex Rouse Hill to Parramatta 05:50.
- **610X** ex BHJ to City 06:45, 07:15, 07:45, 08:15, 08:45.
- **610X** ex Town Hall (QVB) to Castle Hill 16:00, 16:30, 17:00, 17:30, 18:00.
- **607X** ex Bella Vista to Town Hall (QVB) 06:55, 07:15, 07:35, 07:55, 08:15.
- **607X** ex Town Hall (QVB) to Bella Vista 16:05, 16:45, 17:05, 17:45, 18:05.

Although Hillsbus said it hoped its services would also be moved to the school holiday timetable, the inclusion of Blacktown LGA with additional essential worker movement restrictions (from Saturday, 24 July) had dashed these hopes in its negotiations with Transport for NSW. As such, the enhanced Sunday timetable provided above continues until further notice.

Since Monday, 19 July, **Transdev** (regions 10, 12 and 13) services are running to a Sunday timetable. School services are not operating.

**Busways** (region 1) said that its school services are not operating. In addition to the rolling Sunday timetable since 19 July, from Monday, 26 July, Busways said it had peak (05:00-08:00, 15:00-18:00) hourly services operating on routes **723** (both directions), **724** (ex Blacktown), and **779** (ex St Marys). Busways also said that it has buses “on standby at key interchanges across the network to support gaps in our service during peak periods where we can”. This came in handy on Thursday morning (22 July) where it said it used four standby buses in the Parramatta area because some timetabled buses were reaching social-distanced capacity.

**Busabout** (region 15) advised that its route services in far-southwest Sydney were running to the Sunday timetable, with no school services operating. Effective from Monday, 26 July, this has been changed to a “school holiday” timetable, with school services still cancelled. Busabout advised its customers to “check the explanation of definitions and symbols” on timetables when planning their trip.

Although no news has been directly provided by **State Transit** (regions 7, 8 and 9), Seven News Sydney reported that some additional peak services had been added for Northern Beaches and Eastern Suburbs areas from Tuesday, 20 July to alleviate congestion on some buses during the peak period.

**Interline** (region 2), **Punchbowl Bus Company** (region 5), **Transit Systems** (regions 3 and 6) – no additional information provided.

NightRide services are also operating to a rolling Sunday night timetable, meaning the **N61** route is effectively suspended, as the route is only timetabled to operate on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights.

Meanwhile, this situation has likely delivered some poorer multi-mode experiences for some passengers outside the Sydney metropolitan area. For example, on the Central Coast, although trains operate to a Sunday timetable. Both Busways Central Coast and Red Bus reported that they are still operating to their normal weekday timetable. **TRANSPORT FOR NSW, GEOFF LAMBERT, PAUL BROWN, SEVEN NEWS SYDNEY, CDC BUS, TRANSDEV, BUSWAYS**

## Additional COVID-19 services

Throughout much of the 2020/21 financial year, Hillsbus were operating a handful of additional services on routes **600**, **601**, and **700**. These additional services ceased to operate from Monday, 28 June, in line with the implementation of lockdown across Greater Sydney, with exception of a weekday 14:45 **700** services from Parramatta to Blacktown, which ran until Friday, 16 July. **CDC BUS**

## Grafton Report

Along with the introduction of digital timetable information and real-time updates for Grafton bus services, since Sunday, 1 June 2021, routes 375A Grafton-Westlawn (anti-clockwise) and 375C Grafton-Westlawn (clockwise) have been renumbered **381** and **382** respectively. **HILAIRE FRASER**

## Blue Mountains Explorer

Sightseeing bus operator Blue Mountains Explorer announced in early July that it had “indefinitely” shuttered its operations in light of the plunge in overseas tourism from COVID-19 impacts.

The operator's owner, Fantastic Aussie Tours' Jason Cronshaw, said that it cost \$3.50 per kilometre to operate on a 26km circuit around Leura and Katoomba's internationally renowned sights, which was untenable in light of the drop in sightseers to low single digits at the rise of Greater Sydney's recent COVID-19 lockdown.

*Australian Bus & Coach Magazine* reported the operator's financial issues had been building during the 2019/20 bushfire season. At that time, there was a 27-day break between runs immediately followed by a 60 per cent patronage drop from late January. In mid-March 2020, COVID-19 lockdown saw another halving of patronage with the operator forced to drop daily runs from 15 to seven, while paid driving hours across the week were slashed from 350 to just 78. More recently, the state government has provided some financial support to the operator, however Mr Cronshaw said that it has been insufficient to maintain the business as a going concern any further. **ABC MAGAZINE**

## VICTORIA



## V/Line: cross-border COVID restrictions

From Monday, 5 July until further notice, V/Line coaches are not operating into New South Wales, with exception of the Mildura-Bendigo and Mildura-Swan Hill services which once again do not stop at Euston in NSW. The Murraylink coach (Mildura-Albury) is also not stopping at Corowa and Mulwala in NSW.

The Canberra-Albury/Wodonga and Canberra-Bairnsdale services are cancelled outright. Coaches, including those run by NSW TrainLink, are not crossing the NSW/VIC border.

From Thursday, 15 July until further notice, V/Line coaches are not operating into South Australia. There is also no service to Murrayville as a result.

See Train News for V/Line train impacts. **V/LINE**

## NEW BUS ROUTE CATEGORIES

### Category 1 RAPID ROUTES

**Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)** routes will deliver faster, more frequent and more reliable journeys on busy public transport corridors. They will be characterised by extensive on-road priority, premium stop infrastructure and a rail-like experience for passengers. The Doncaster Busway will be Melbourne's first dedicated busway – providing separated lanes for buses along the Eastern Freeway.

**Shuttle Routes** will provide direct point-to-point service, connecting rail stations with universities and other high-demand destinations. They will be characterised by dedicated lanes and a limited number of stops with frequencies, operating hours and stop spacing carefully designed to respond to the market for which the service is being designed.

### Category 2 CONNECTOR ROUTES

**Trunk routes** will connect suburbs to key transport nodes and employment and shopping centres. Services are frequent and direct and will feature road priority measures, including bus lanes, where feasible. Trunk routes will normally operate in mixed traffic and provide greater integration with homes and destinations.

**Connector routes** are the basic building blocks of urban transit. They provide easy access to the rail network as well as local employment and shopping centres. These services balance route directness with the need to provide catchment coverage of residential suburbs. Diversions are minimised to ensure competitive travel times and to attract passengers away from private vehicle use.

**Neighbourhood routes** offer greater access while being as direct as possible and providing coverage. Services are low frequency and have a shorter span of hours but are often strongly patronised.

### Category 3: LOCAL ROUTES

**Local routes** provide local access for passengers. These services are targeted to provide a minimum level of service to enable access to nearby shops and services.

**Demand responsive transport** will be trialled initially in two primary contexts - areas of low demand where regular bus services might not be efficient and in growth areas where road networks are still developing and communities are in the process of settling.

### Category 4 SCHOOL ROUTES

**School routes** meet the demand spike created mostly by high school students travelling to and from school. School services can be unique routes that otherwise wouldn't generate demand.

## Werribee timetable changes

Further to this article from last month, several trips on new routes 152 and 182 in the afternoon are operated by two buses, called a "double header". Services on weekends also operate to a 40-minute frequency.

The new routes connect residents in Tarneit, Truganina and Tarneit West with V/Line train services at Tarneit station and Metro train services at Williams Landing and Werribee stations. **STEVEN HABY**

## Night Bus network expansion

Further on this article from last month, longer term a major overhaul of routes is planned, as set out *above*, which no doubt will be somewhat contentious with some operators and their 'legacy routes'. Details of the bus plan have been released and can be found here at [https://transport.vic.gov.au/getting-around/public-transport/buses?fbclid=IwAR21jCq7iRuO2mqoixElsfYosF7iIBK01\\_-tbbQnTxThqVFmiuPVkbD4-s#busplan](https://transport.vic.gov.au/getting-around/public-transport/buses?fbclid=IwAR21jCq7iRuO2mqoixElsfYosF7iIBK01_-tbbQnTxThqVFmiuPVkbD4-s#busplan) **STEVEN HABY, VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT**

## Snow Coach resumes

From Friday, 18 June until Sunday, 3 October, V/Line's Snow Coach service operates with the following services:

- Melbourne – Mansfield (V/Line)
- Mansfield – Mt Buller Village (Mansfield Mt Buller Bus Lines)
- Mt Buller Village to customer's accommodation (Mt Buller 'Ride Share' service)

Ticket reservations are essential. **V/LINE**

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA



### COVID service changes

From Wednesday, 21 July, Adelaide's After Midnight, City Connector, and route 823 services were all cancelled until further notice. This was due to a COVID-19 lockdown called by the state government.  
**ADELAIDE METRO**

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA



### Minor timetable changes

Effective from Sunday, 18 July, route **425** has had a timetable update, including minor timing changes, and the withdrawal of some short-workings between Stirling station and Karrinyup bus station on both weekdays and Saturdays.

From Monday, 19 July, route **28** changes:

- trips operating between Perth Busport and Trinity College are renumbered as **School Special 790** (all stops). The route 28 bus departing Claremont station at 07:12 now changes to the new School Special 790 at Perth Busport. The 15:17 School Special 790 bus turns into route 28 at Perth Busport, running back to Claremont.
- **School Special 791** will operate express Perth Busport-Forrest Place/Perth station-Trinity College.
- School Special 792 is withdrawn due to poor patronage.

- **School Special 793** now does all stops.

Meanwhile, from the same date, route **586**'s 15:09 trip from John Tonkin College to Mandurah station has been withdrawn due to poor patronage.

From Sunday, 1 August, route **448** has some minor timing changes between Warwick station and Kingsway shopping centre which Transperth says will better reflect actual running times. **TRANSPERTH**

## NEW ZEALAND



### Auckland: Puhinui timetable alterations

In conjunction with the opening of the new Puhinui Station and Bus Interchange, alterations to bus services occurred, effective from Sunday, July 25 as follows:

- **AirportLink** Manukau to Airport route operates via Puhinui in lieu of Papatoetoe.
- **38** Onehunga to Airport route proceeds directly along Coronation Rd in lieu of Mountain Rd and serves Thomas Rd in lieu of Idlewild Av.
- New route **36** Onehunga to Manukau serves Idlewild Av and Mountain Rd in lieu of 38 and serves Papatoetoe in lieu of AirportLink.

Meanwhile, other changes from the same date include:

- **172** New Lynn to Glen Eden has daytime off-peak service frequency increased from 60 minutes to 30 mins.
- **171** New Lynn-Laingholm has daytime off-peak service frequency increased from 120 mins to 60 mins.
- **170** New Lynn-South Titirangi has an adjusted timetable to fit increased services on both 171 and 172.
- Old route 398 Pukekohe to Tuakau is discontinued, with the route replaced by **44** Pukekohe to Pokeno. 44 is operated by Waikato Regional Council.

**HILAIRE FRASER**

### Wellington: timetable alterations

In light of the continuing driver shortage (as variously reported in previous issues of *Table Talk*), Metro has instituted a revised bus timetable, with peak-period service reductions on routes **7, 17, 26, and 32x**. In the

meantime, other changes, also effective from Sunday, 25 July, include:

- Daytime off-peak service frequency increased from every 60 minutes to 30 mins on routes **17** Wellington-Kowhai Park, **23** Wellington-Houghton Bay and **29** Wellington-Owhiro Bay via Southgate.
- New peak-period route service **HX** Wellington-Wellington Hospital Express.

*HILAIRE FRASER*

ENDS

## FERRY & SHIP NEWS

### NEW SOUTH WALES



#### Lockdown

In light of Sydney's new COVID-19 outbreak, the state government instituted a lockdown affecting Greater Sydney from Saturday, 26 June, with a consequent 80 per cent drop in patronage – the hardest hit of the city's transport modes.

From Monday, 19 July, the state government has also implemented a reduced timetable for ferry services across the city for the first time. Here is the route-by-route impact on Harbour City Ferries services (all times are for Circular Quay departures):

#### **F1 – Manly:**

Weekdays – hourly 06:00-23:00

Saturdays – hourly 07:00-23:00, then 00:20

Sundays – hourly 08:00-23:00

#### **F2 – Taronga Zoo:**

Weekdays – hourly 06:20-19:20 (all trips direct to Taronga Zoo like weekends)

Weekends – hourly 09:20-18:20

#### **F3 – Parramatta River:**

Daily – hourly 07:07-18:07 (effectively the weekend timetable with all short-workings and express trips cancelled)

#### **F4 – Pyrmont Bay:**

Weekdays – hourly 06:47-23:47

Weekends – hourly 08:47-23:47

#### **F5 – Neutral Bay:**

Weekdays – 06:25 then see Sunday timetable

Saturdays – hourly 06:25-23:25 (normal timetable)

Sundays – hourly 08:25-20:25 (normal timetable)

#### **F6 – Mosman Bay:**

Weekdays – hourly 06:00-21:00, then 00:00 (all stops)

Saturdays – hourly 07:00-00:00 (normal timetable)

Sundays – hourly 09:00-21:00 (normal timetable)

#### **F7 – Double Bay:**

Weekdays – hourly 06:57-20:57

Saturdays – hourly 08:57-22:57 (normal timetable)

Sundays – hourly 08:57-20:57 (normal timetable)

#### **F8 – Cockatoo Island:**

Cancelled until further notice.

#### **F9 – Watsons Bay:**

Weekdays – 06:15 and 23:45, every 30 mins peak, every 60 mins at other times.

Weekends – hourly 07:45-23:45.

**Manly Fast Ferry** has a new timetable online effective from Sunday, 18 July, with a significantly reduced timetable, as follows (times from Circular Quay):

Weekdays – hourly 07:40-18:40

Weekends – hourly 09:40-18:40

However, **Cronulla Bundeena Ferry**, **Brooklyn Ferry** and Captain Cook Cruises' **Lane Cove Ferry** appear to continue operating to their regular timetable.  
**TRANSPORT FOR NSW, MANLY FAST FERRY**

## IPART reviewing private fares

The state's Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) is seeking submissions on its review of maximum fares to be charged on privately operated ferries for the period 1 January 2022 until 31 December 2025.

Since last year, Transport for NSW has also been providing an additional subsidy (known as 'viability payments') to ensure the continuation of some services that experienced hardship from COVID-19's impacts on tourism. As a result, the Tribunal is also reviewing those payments and any necessary reform.

Additionally, the Tribunal seeks comment on its plan to estimate cost-reflective fares for these operators to consider how the variance between it and the proposed 'maximum fares' should be funded.

The full 'Issues Paper' is available through IPART's website. Submissions can be made to the Tribunal until Tuesday, 6 August 2021. [IPART NSW](#)

## NEW ZEALAND



### Auckland: Downtown pier changes

The departure points for timetabled ferry services at Downtown Auckland changed, effective from Monday, 5 July, with new pier numbers affecting all routes (see bottom-left of page). Auckland Transport advised that there have been some alterations to ferry times.

**AUCKLAND TRANSPORT**

SERVICE	CURRENT PIER	NEW PIERS
Bayswater and Birkenhead	1A	1
Devonport	1B	2
Pine Harbour	1C	3
Half Moon Bay (from 7:30am to 8:30am and from 4:10pm to 5:50pm)	1C	5
Half Moon Bay (Off Peak service) and West Harbour	4W	6
Hobsonville Point and Beach Haven	4E	7
Gulf Harbour	4E	8
Waiheke	2B and 2C	11 and 12
Coromandel, Tiri-Tiri Matangi and Rangitoto	4E	13
Rakino	4W	14

*Auckland ferry pier changes (source: Auckland Transport)*

ENDS

## AIR NEWS

### INTERNATIONAL



### Travel bubble suspended

Australia's travel bubble with New Zealand was fully suspended from Saturday, 24 July for at least two months. This follows Greater Sydney, Victoria, parts of Queensland and South Australia experiencing differing stages of COVID-19 containment (i.e. lockdown).

New Zealand said they would allow some managed flights until 31 July to enable New Zealand citizens to return. New Zealand's Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, encouraged any citizen not wishing to stay in Australia long-term to "come home".

According to SBS News, over 300,000 people had taken advantage of the travel bubble since its opening in April this year. [SBS NEWS](#)

### Qatar Airways increasing flights

Qatar Airways has confirmed it will start operating over 100 weekly flights in/out of the United States, as the country's air travel market rebounds. Flight schedule changes include:

- Doha-Chicago – doubled daily flights 21 July to 26 Sept,
- Doha-Los Angeles – doubled daily flights 16 July to 26 Sept,
- Doha-New York – doubled daily flights from 29 June,
- Doha-Washington DC – doubled daily flights 22 July to 26 Sept,
- Doha-Dallas-Fort Worth – increase to 12 weekly flights 11 July to 26 Sept,
- Doha-Houston – no change,
- Doha-Boston – daily flights from 3 July,
- Doha-Miami – daily flights from 4 July,
- Doha-San Francisco – daily flights from 29 June,
- Doha-Seattle – daily flights from 28 June,
- Doha-Philadelphia – five weekly flights from 6 July, then daily flights from 21 July, and
- Doha-Atlanta – five weekly flights from 15 July.

SAMCHUI.COM

## United expands fleet

US carrier United Airlines announced in June it has ordered 270 new aircraft, including 150 737 MAX 10s, 50 737 MAX 8s, and 70 A321neos. This adds to the airlines existing order for 180 737 MAXs, and 50 A321 neos. The aircraft will be used to replace older aircraft including 757-200s, A319s and A320s. [SAMCHUI.COM](http://SAMCHUI.COM)

## Global airlines take planes out of storage

Emirates has confirmed it will be re-activating 30 of its A380s out of long-term storage, as it looks to take advantage of decreased social restrictions from

increased COVID vaccination rates and the appearance of vaccination passports. The airline will fly to Cairo, Jeddah (Saudi Arabia), Amman (Jordan), Guangzhou, Heathrow in London, Manchester, Frankfurt, Vienna, Paris, Munich, Moscow, John F Kennedy in New York, Washington DC, Los Angeles, and Toronto using these aircraft. Emirates has also re-affirmed its belief in air travel across the United States, with over 70 weekly flights into the country.

German carrier **Lufthansa** also confirmed it will resume operating five A340-600 aircraft which have been held in storage in Spain for the past year. [SAMCHUI.COM](http://SAMCHUI.COM) (2)

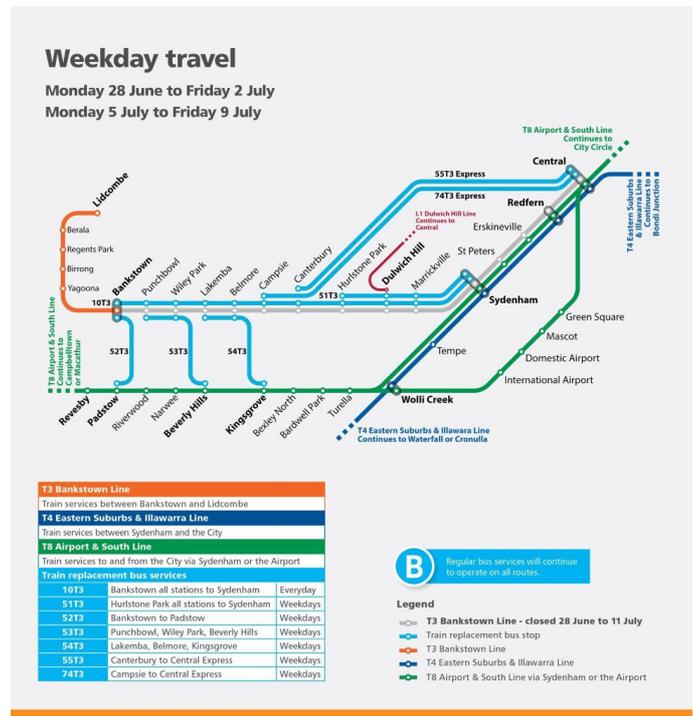
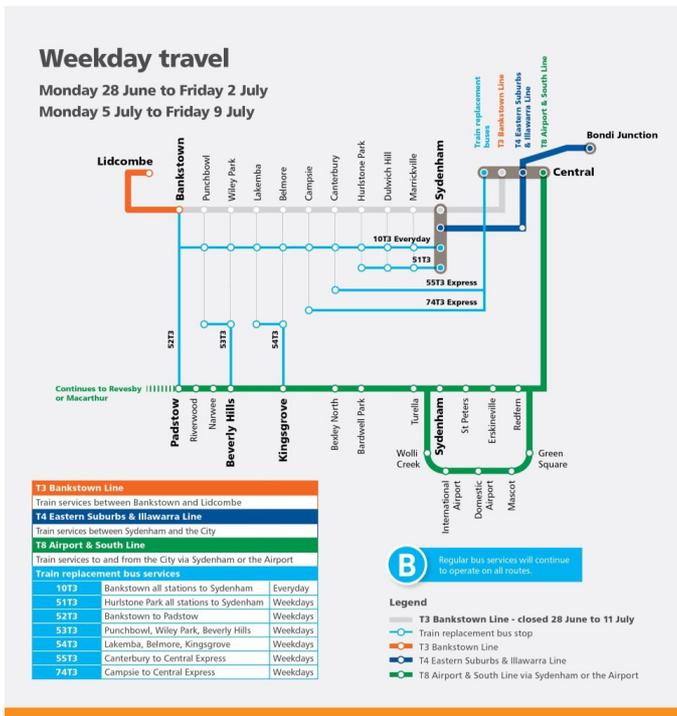
ENDS

# COMMENT TO THE EDITOR

Hi,

As important as timetables are the maps that go with them.

For the recent Bankstown closure (Table Talk, July 2021), TfNSW prepared the map attached [see below, left]. The blog *Transit Maps* (transitmap.org) noticed this and prepared a better one, created by @ROAMINGZephyr on Twitter, also attached [see below, right].



The blogger, Cameron Both, an ex-Sydney resident now living in Portland, Oregon, USA, commented:

*"While I understand that producing this type of map often involves a rapid turnaround with very little budget, this effort just doesn't convey the required information quickly and coherently. The biggest problem is that the diagram bears very little resemblance to the official map – going so far as to split Sydenham and Redfern stations into two separate parts! – so there's nothing visually familiar for users to relate the changes to. The starkly angled type is hard to read, and the affected stations of the Bankstown Line take up far too much vertical space to be read coherently. The depiction of the Airport branch of the T8 line is almost embarrassingly bad, as is the jaunty angle the Eastern Suburbs line takes out to Bondi Junction."*

His comments on this were:

*"It fits into the same shell as the original map, so there's no cheating here – just a far more unified design that's easier to read and understand. Note that it takes far more design cues from the full system map, so it's much more immediately familiar to users. The grouping of the bus routes – to Central and Sydenham above the closed line, and to stations on the T8 line below it – is immediately intuitive and works really well. The inclusion of the L1 light rail line is nice for the sake of completeness, although I doubt that it would be a valid alternative to the buses for getting to the city in a timely manner. Great work that's a definite improvement over the original in my book!"*

A viewer commented, quite reasonably:

*'I also wish in general there was some consistency in the numbering of the replacement bus names (10T3/51T3-55T3/74T3), I find it very hard to read and the consecutive number grouping 51-55 makes little sense to me.'*

It makes little sense to me either!

*Duncan McAuslan*

## TALKING IN-DEPTH

### Munglinup school bus route closure will leave students isolated, parents say

*ABC News reports on the likely impact of a school bus route closure in south-west Western Australia, by Emily JB Smith. The article has been edited for space and language considerations, a link to the original is available at the end of the article.*

Kendall Wickstein may be forced to quit her job, move to town and separate her family because there is no seat on the local school bus for her four-year-old son, one of 14 students at Munglinup Primary School, 100 kilometres west of Esperance on the state's south coast, where the Public Transport Authority (PTA) may cut the school bus service from two routes to one next year.

A PTA spokesperson said this was due to low numbers, with one route forecast to carry only one eligible student in 2022. But the state's Transport Minister, Rita Saffioti, said a decision about the bus route had not yet been made and the PTA was consulting with local families.

The school's P&C president Amy Howell said if it was axed, it could force some children to ride the bus for 200 kilometres each day, extending the average bus ride from 25–40 minutes to more than an hour.

It would also leave some students, like Mrs Wickstein's son, without any bus service at all. Mrs Wickstein said the PTA had based its forecasts on the number of students it deemed eligible for the bus service — not the number of students who actually wanted to use it. "The bus service and the route allocation need to reflect the local needs and circumstances more closely and be less formula driven," Mrs Wickstein said. "These formulas don't work."

Mrs Wickstein said the PTA had told her that her son should be attending Jerdacuttup Primary School as it was three kilometres closer to her family home than Munglinup, in spite of their close community connections to Munglinup – her husband is a volunteer firefighter, while she is the treasurer for the school's P&C, it is where her other son attends pre-kindergarten, and it is the place they see as "their community".

While Mrs Wickstein's son has been able to get a "complimentary" seat on the Munglinup bus this year, by driving him to a place where an "eligible" student catches the bus, she has been told that this will not be possible next year. But she has also discovered that even if her son attended school at Jerdacuttup, he would still be unable to get a seat on the bus because it is full.

Mrs Wickstein said this put her family in a terrible position, saying "If I don't have a bus service to the school and I'm driving my children two hours a day to get to school, I'd have to quit my part-time job as a nurse. I'd probably lose my nursing registration because I wouldn't be able to keep up the hours, or do I have to make the hard decision to potentially break up my family, move to Esperance so that my son can access a school closer and so that I can work? But then my husband is back out here on the farm and my children don't see their father."

Even if her son were able to secure a spot on the Munglinup bus, Mrs Wickstein said with only one service running this would mean he would have to travel 200 kilometres a day on an unsealed road to get to school and back.

She believes the PTA needs to reassess the situation, saying "It is just ridiculous".

Raelean Kirchner, a local farmer, believed a closure of the bus route would be felt across the entire community. She and her husband depended on farm workers to run their 7,000-hectare property and she "guaranteed" that many workers would not take jobs if they could not access a school bus. "If you take away our school bus services, you close our school," Ms Kirchner said. "You're leaving us with basically a shell of a community."

Simeon Roberts, a farmer at nearby Cascade, said schools were shrinking across regional Australia, but he said the schools needed to be sustained as a base population was always required in the bush. "The new normal is less numbers," Mr Roberts said. "The government needs to assess how we're going to manage the social fabric in the bush with the reducing numbers in all communities. We've got to develop [a school system] that suits communities that might only have 10 students at a school, maybe 15, for quite some period of time, and not just [expect] they're going to close down. Because otherwise, we're just going to have no families left in the bush."

Member for Roe and opposition education spokesperson Peter Rundle said Munglinup attendance numbers were in fact forecast to grow in coming years, and the region should have access to both bus services. He believed each service cost the government about \$90,000 a year but did not have exact figures.

A spokesperson for the PTA declined to say how much the service cost, nor did they say how many school bus routes would be axed statewide. "Our School Bus Services (SBS) division has a responsibility to ensure taxpayer dollars are directed to areas of most need," the spokesperson said. "We have a team of experienced bus route planners who — using sophisticated mapping technology, advice from our bus contractors and other stakeholders like parents, schools and local government authorities — do their best to ensure all routes are as effective as possible."

Transport Minister Rita Saffioti said consideration would be given to amalgamating services next year – "however we will ensure all eligible students currently registered will continue to have access to the service. While this may mean a longer bus trip for some students, I can reassure the community that no eligible student will be left behind," she said.

**ABC NEWS** (<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2021-06-01/munglinup-school-bus-route-closure-could-destroy-small-town/100179580>)

## About *Table Talk*

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**Editor for Rail, Tram, Air and Ferry & Ship:** Chris Pandilovski, [tabletalk@timetable.org.au](mailto:tabletalk@timetable.org.au).

**Editor for Bus:** Steven Haby, [busnews@timetable.org.au](mailto:busnews@timetable.org.au).

**Production and Mailout:** Geoff and Judy Lambert.

**Proofreaders:** Agnes Boskovitz, David Cranney and Geoff Hassall.

