

## GUIDE TO NSW TRAINLINK JOURNEYS

**NOTE:** The times for NSW TrainLink services in *Train Times* provide both arrival and departure times. However, NSW TrainLink's own Public timetables only quote arrival times. Hence, NSW TrainLink trains often depart closer to the quoted arrival time. Be sure to be at the station by this time.

**NSW TrainLink** is the middle and long distance passenger train operating unit of Transport for New South Wales, a NSW State Government body.

The daylight and overnight XPTs are operated by NSW TrainLink. The XPTs (abbreviation for eXpress Passenger Trains) were introduced in 1982. The motive power portion is based on the British Rail 125 High Speed trains. XPTs only achieve their maximum speed over fairly short portions of lines, such as between Albury and Wagga Wagga. These trains have always been used very intensively. The set comprises Economy class saloon carriages, First class saloon carriages, a Buffet cum First class carriage in the middle of the train (usually carriage C), and a peculiar First class carriage, usually at the southern end. This comprises compartments which are converted to two sleeping berths for overnight travel or seating for three passengers for day travel. In 2015 the NSW state government announced that it will commence procedures for replacements of the XPTs and Explorers. More details of XPTs are at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New\\_South\\_Wales\\_XPT](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_South_Wales_XPT) or at [http://www.nswtrainlink.info/your\\_journey/fleet/xpt](http://www.nswtrainlink.info/your_journey/fleet/xpt)

The buffet on the XPTs and Explorer DMUs sell a fairly good range of food. For lunch and dinner, an alternative is offered described as a "hot meal" which is of slightly higher standard. Food is not eaten in the buffet but has to be taken back to passengers' seats.

Day accommodation on either the XPTs or the Explorer Diesel Multiple Units is either in First class or Economy class. In fact, there is very little difference between the classes – just a smidgen more legroom, a smidgen more reclining to the seat, and closer to the buffet in First. The real difference seems to be that in First class there is a higher proportion of grey hair.

NSW TrainLink is the replacement of the former NSW Countrylink and the outer suburban portion of the former NSW CityRail. More details at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NSW\\_TrainLink](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NSW_TrainLink)

In the greater Sydney area, NSW TrainLink operates over tracks which are controlled by Transport for NSW, a State government body. In rural areas, TrainLink operates over tracks controlled by the Australian Rail Track Corporation, a Federal government body, or by John Holland Rail NSW Country Regional Network. This follows massive reorganisation of railways in recent years. ARTC control almost all interstate mainlines, the very busy NSW Hunter Valley coal network and a few other lines in NSW and Victoria. More details at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian\\_Rail\\_Track\\_Corporation](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian_Rail_Track_Corporation) or at [www.artc.com.au](http://www.artc.com.au)

NSW TrainLink also has an extensive network of rural buses which connect with their trains. These offer a seamless journey with integrated ticketing and timetables (and even colour schemes).

The journeys through the electrified Greater Sydney area, ie, Macarthur-Sydney, Sydney-Broadmeadow, Sydney-Lithgow, and Sydney-Nowra are over tracks owned

by Transport for NSW. The journeys from Macarthur to Melbourne, Broadmeadow to Brisbane, Broadmeadow-Werris Creek-Moree and Parkes to Broken Hill are over track controlled by the Australian Rail Track Corporation. The journeys from Canberra to Joppa Junction (near Goulburn), Junee to Griffith, Lithgow to Dubbo/ Parkes and Werris Creek to Armidale are over track controlled by John Holland Rail NSW Country Regional Network.

These notes include some places additional to those at which the train stops. These are *in italics* and the non-stop times of these are in 10 point.

### MELBOURNE-ALBURY-YASS-SYDNEY

| Place                                | Day XPT times | Km. from Melb. | Notes  |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|--|
| Melbourne Southern Cross, platform 1 | 830           | 0              | This is a large and distinctive station. It was completely rebuilt from 2002 to 2006. There is one point near the main Spencer/Collins Streets entrance where, without moving, you can watch the regional diesel trains arriving and departing every few minutes, the electric suburban trains passing through every few minutes and the trams outside every few seconds. Alternatively, use the upstairs passage ways – one at each end – as vantage points for the trains. The curvy roof is not only for appearance, but also to disperse the diesel fumes. The portion of the station for regional trains (including platform 1) is controlled by V/Line. The portion for suburban trains is controlled by Metro Trains Melbourne. More details at <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_Cross_railway_station">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_Cross_railway_station</a> |
|                                      |               |                | The interstate standard gauge line is quite separate from the lines used by suburban and regional trains. Soon after departure it goes over the North Melbourne viaduct spanning all the other tracks. The Regional Rail Link (opened 21 June 2015) then junctions off. The line is controlled by Centralised Traffic Control (CTC) situated at Junee.   |
| <i>Dynon</i>                         |               | 4              | Dynon locomotive depot and Dynon freight yards. There are lots of nice areas in Melbourne, but you sure don't see them along this route. There is lots of light industry, rail yards and dreary suburbs.   |
| <i>West Dynon Junction</i>           | 838           | 7              | Bridge over Maribyrnong River, followed by short tunnel.   |
| <i>West Footscray Junction</i>       | 842           |                | Six running tracks – 2 (broad gauge electrified) belong to Metro Trains Melbourne, 2 (broad gauge) belong to   |

|                    |         |  |  |
|--------------------|---------|--|--|
|                    |         |  | V/Line for regional passenger trains, 2 (standard gauge) belong to the Australian Rail Track Corporation for interstate trains – these are the lines the XPT uses. Also the Tottenham Marshalling yard – main freight yard for Melbourne.  |
| <i>Sunshine</i>    | 845     |  | Parallel to electrified suburban / regional line   |
| <i>Albion</i>      |         |  | Double track dual gauge line, including two high bridges.  |
| Broadmeadows       | 854-856 | Ap.28 (the km. posts show different distances as they have a different route). | Pick up stop, or set down stop, only. Parallel to electrified suburban / regional line.  |
|                    |         |  | Parallel to regional line. This appears to be a three track mainline. It is not. The XPT is on the single track standard gauge (1.435metre, 4 ft 81/2 inches) line used for interstate trains. The two lines alongside are broad gauge (1.6 metre, 5 ft 3 inches) line used by Victorian intrastate trains. On the standard gauge there are crossing loops which have recently been extended to provide for running crosses. These are so long that the ARTC devised a new name for them – “Passing Lanes”. At these Passing Lanes, it appears to be a four track railway. (Railways built to different gauges in the different states is one of the great bugbears of Australian history. When the first railways were being built in the 1850s the various colonies did agree to build them to the same gauge. But then NSW reneged on the agreement - not once, but twice.) |
| <i>Craigieburn</i> | Ap. 900 | Ap.41  | The big ugly building to the east of the line is where Australian banknotes are printed, and banknotes of many other countries. The Australian invention of polymer banknotes has been a great export success. Craigieburn is the end of Melbourne electric suburban trains. To generalise: Most place names in the areas first settled by Europeans in Australia are British derived names. Place names in areas settled later are more usually the original  |

|                           |                      |  |   |
|---------------------------|----------------------|--|---|
|                           |                      |  | Aboriginal names.<br>Although it looks like you are traversing a plain, in fact the line is climbing  |
| <i>Heathcote Junction</i> | Ap.911               | Ap.63  | The major geographical feature all along the east coast of Australia is the Great Dividing Range, with a small coastal plain to the east and endless plains to the west. Here you cross the Great Dividing Range, but at a point where it is petering out and hardly noticeable.  |
|                           |                      |  | The country is now pleasantly hilly. After crossing the Goulburn River, you pass through -  |
| Kilmore East              | 922-932              |  | Not a passenger stop. The XPT is scheduled to stop here for ten minutes for a cross with a freight train, but usually this stop is not necessary in view of the lengthy "Passing Lane".   |
| Seymour                   | 948-950              | 110  | Pick up stop only.<br>The line now becomes a double track standard gauge line. The northbound XPT is usually routed via the West line, but both lines are signalled for two-way running. The countryside is now fairly flat, but very productive.   |
| Benalla                   | 1041-1043            | 206  | Junction station.   |
| <i>Glenrowan</i>          | 1057                 | 230  | The summit of a small range.  |
| Wangaratta                | 1106-1108            | 245  |   |
| <i>Wodonga</i>            | 1140                 | Ap. 298  | Wodonga is on a bypass line opened a few years ago. Across the Murray River, the border between Victoria and New South Wales. Bizarrely, the border is not in the middle of the river, but goes along the southern bank of the river.<br>The Murray River with its many tributaries is a major feature of Australia as they drain an enormous area of SE Australia. However, here the river is disappointingly small. |
|                           | <b>Day XPT times</b> | <b>Km. from Sydney</b><br>(Km. posts on eastern side of line). |   |
| Albury                    | 1149-                | 646  | Biggest city between Melbourne and  |

|                         |           |     |   |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----|---|
|                         | 1155      |     | Canberra.   |
|                         |           |     | The railway now traverses very flat but very productive country. The main product grown in this area is wheat. Wheat silos are at most stations. In December and January, these will all be very busy receiving the harvest. Along the flat, straight stretch, the train usually goes fast.<br>The railway is now single track, but with frequent and very lengthy "Passing Lanes". |
| Culcairn                | 1221      | 597 |   |
| Henty                   | 1232      | 580 |   |
| The Rock                | 1249      | 550 | The Rock is a massive feature suddenly rising out of the flat countryside to the west of the line.  |
| Wagga Wagga             | 1307-1311 | 521 | Now a long bridge over the Murrumbidgee River and its floodplain.   |
| Harefield               | 1329-1341 | 498 | Not a passenger stop. A stop to cross the southbound XPT on the single track line - if both trains are running to time.   |
| Junee                   | 1351-1354 | 486 | An important junction station.<br>Double track resumes.   |
|                         |           |     | From Junee, all the way to almost all the to Sydney the railway runs through hilly country. It basically runs against the grain of the country. Hence there are many gradients up and down.   |
| <i>Bethungra Spiral</i> | 1413      | 456 | Here the northbound line takes a very peculiar course to maintain moderate gradients. It does a complete spiral around a hill. The southbound line just goes straight down the hill.  |
| <i>Frampton</i>         |           |     | The northbound and southbound tracks separate for a short distance as the northbound line takes a longer route to climb up the hill.  |
| Cootamundra             | 1438-1442 | 430 | Here there is a big changeover of passengers. Many get out to take the bus to Canberra. They will be replaced by other passengers connecting from buses from all over southern NSW.<br>An important junction station.   |
|                         |           |     | In many places, there are remnants of the original railway alignment where the railway was first built as cheaply as possible in the early days of settlement.  |
| <i>Wallendbeen</i>      | 1459      | 408 | For a while here you are actually going south east.   |
| <i>Demondrille</i>      | 1509      | 392 | Once the junction for a cross-country line to   |

|                       |           |                                 |   |
|-----------------------|-----------|---------------------------------|---|
|                       |           |                                 | Western NSW.<br>In steam days, there was huge coaling stage here, and locomotives were refuelled without uncoupling from their passenger trains.  |
| Harden                | 1514-1515 | 386                             | Harden is typical of many inland Australian country towns, in that it has lost a high proportion of its population in recent years. Australians now love living on the coast.   |
| <i>Bowning</i>        |           | 329                             |   |
| Yass Junction         | 1605-1607 | 318                             | Junction for the former tiny branchline into Yass Town, which ran along the street there. The planned railway from Yass to Canberra was never built.  |
| <i>Gunning</i>        | 1637      | 279                             |   |
| <i>Cullerin</i>       |           |                                 | This is the worst section of the line from the engineering point of view. The line twists and turns with tight curves as it crosses the Great Dividing Range.<br>This section is immediately followed by a section of straightness and high speed, as the line crosses the Breadalbane Plain.   |
| <i>Joppa Junction</i> | 1708      | 231                             | Junction for the line to Canberra.  |
| Goulburn              | 1715-1718 | 225                             |   |
| <i>Bundanoon</i>      | 1753      | 162                             |   |
| Moss Vale             | 1804-1806 | 146                             | These are the Southern Highland towns – very nice.  |
| <i>Bowral</i>         | 1811      | 136                             |   |
| <i>Mittagong</i>      | 1815      | 132                             | Now through a rugged mountainous area.  |
| <i>Picton</i>         | 1848      | 85                              | You have now descended to the coastal plain.  |
|                       |           |                                 | To get over a ridge, the two tracks are on different levels.  |
| <i>Macarthur</i>      | 1907      | 57                              | The start of the huge Sydney suburban area, and the start of suburban electric trains   |
| Campbelltown          | 1909-1911 | 55<br>(46 via East Hills line). | A set down only stop.<br>Now endless dreary suburbs.<br>Immediately to the west of the double track electrified passenger line (owned by Transport for NSW) is the single track South Sydney Freight Line owned by the Australian Rail Track Corporation. This provides interstate freight trains with an independent line into Sydney, clear of the suburban trains. |
| <i>Glenfield</i>      | 1922      | 33                              | A four way junction - immediately south of the station is a flyover for suburban trains, immediately north of the station is another flyover for suburban train, so conflicting   |

|                                  |      |    |  |
|----------------------------------|------|----|--|
|                                  |      |    | moves are never made. Then there is yet another flyover to bring the ARTC freight line from the east to the west of the suburban line.   |
| <i>East Hills</i>                |      | 24 | Bridge over Georges River  |
| <i>Revesby</i>                   | 1933 | 21 | Four tracks from here.   |
| <i>Wolli Creek Junction</i>      |      | 7  | Junction for Illawarra (South Coast) line. Very, very busy line from here.   |
| <i>Illawarra Junction</i>        |      | 2  | The six-track mainline from the west and north joins in. There are now ten tracks (plus two more underground).   |
|                                  |      |    | The attractive stone station to the west (left hand side) was the Mortuary Station, where Funeral trains departed until the 1930s.   |
| Sydney, usually platform 1 or 2. | 1953 | 0  | Sydney Central station is at the southern edge of the central business district. It is a magnificent structure – both architecturally and for railway operating. It is huge – 25 platforms (2 underground). Most are terminating platforms for long distance and middle distance trains. But there are also through platforms used by suburban trains. More details at <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_railway_station,_Sydney">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_railway_station,_Sydney</a><br>Suburban trains continue by underground lines to the centre of the city. A double track line continues over the Sydney Harbour Bridge. |

Occasionally long distance trains from the South are diverted via an earlier built line via Strathfield. The description of this is:

|                              |    |   |
|------------------------------|----|---|
| <i>Campbelltown</i>          | 55 | Now endless dreary suburbs.<br>The construction you will see alongside the line is for a new line to provide freight trains with an independent line into Sydney, clear of the suburban trains.   |
| <i>Glenfield</i>             |    | A four way junction - immediately south of the station is a flyover for suburban trains, immediately north of the station is another flyover for suburban train, so conflicting moves are ever made. Then there is yet another flyover to bring the ARTC freight line from the east to the west of the suburban line. |
| <i>Liverpool</i>             | 36 |   |
| <i>Sefton Park Junctions</i> | 21 | A suburban line and the ARTC freight line goes off to the east.   |
| <i>Lidcombe</i>              | 17 | Olympic Park (for the 2000 Olympics) is very close to the north (but you can't see it). Four tracks now.  |
| <i>Strathfield</i>           | 12 | Major junction station of western and northern lines.<br>Very, very busy line now, with six tracks.<br>Dense inner suburbs.   |

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <i>Illawarra Junction</i>               | 2 | The Illawarra line comes in. There are now ten tracks (plus two more underground).   |
|   |   | The attractive stone station to the west (left hand side) was the Mortuary Station, where Funeral trains departed until the 1930s.   |
| Sydney Central, usually platform 1 or 2 | 0 | Sydney Central station is at the southern edge of the central business district. It is a magnificent structure – both architecturally and for railway operating. It is huge – 25 platforms (2 underground). Most are terminating platforms for long distance and middle distance trains. But there are through platforms used by suburban trains.<br>More details at <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_railway_station,_Sydney">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_railway_station,_Sydney</a><br>Suburban trains continue by underground lines to the centre of the city. A double track line continues over the Sydney Harbour Bridge. |

### CANBERRA – SYDNEY

The track from Canberra to Joppa Junction is controlled by John Holland Rail NSW Country Regional Network.

| <b>Place</b>               | <b>Km from Sydney</b> | <b>Notes</b>  |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Canberra                   | 330                   | The railway station of the capital city of this vast country is just a tiny one platform place.   |
| Queanbeyan                 | 322                   | From this station until the third tunnel the railway forms the border. The railway itself and land on the eastern side (on your right) are in New South Wales, whereas land on the western side (your left) is in the Australian Capital Territory.<br>Just over the State border is this very higgledy-piggledy town, to be a counterpoint to the over-planned Canberra.   |
|                            |                       | The scenic highlight of this trip: The railway goes through the spectacular Molonglo River Gorge. This is on the western side of the train. If necessary shift seats to look at this. But there may a minor problem. At about this time, the conductor usually comes through the train checking tickets. When trains are full, they get very grumpy at passengers not in their designated seats. If the train is not full, they are tolerant. |
| Bungendore                 | 294                   |   |
|                            |                       | The line now cross the Great Dividing Range, but at this point, it is not very prominent. In fact, the countryside is a bit bleak.  |
| <i>Crisps Creek Siding</i> | 264                   | Six mornings a week two large trains arrive here full of Sydney garbage, which is gradually filling up a nearby, former open-cut mine.  |
| Tarago                     | 263                   |   |
| <i>Joppa Junction</i>      | 231                   | The Canberra line now joins the main Melbourne-Sydney double track line.  |

From here see the description in the Melbourne-Sydney table above.

### JUNEE – GRIFFITH

| Place      | Km  | Notes  |
|------------|-----|--|
| Junee      | 486 | NSW TrainLink operates a train to Griffith merely twice a week – a political decision. However, there are also many TrainLink buses to Griffith.   |
| Coolamon   | 523 | One of many towns serving this fertile, wheat-growing area. Along this line, there are many wheat silos served by the railway.   |
| Narrandera | 584 | Formerly an important junction station.  |
| Leeton     | 613 | The country is now very flat, but, irrigated with water from Burrunjuck Dam, is very fertile. Many food crops are grown.   |
| Griffith   | 640 | This town is the important centre of this rich agricultural district. Griffith is particularly ethnically diverse, even by Australian standards. A large proportion of the population is of Italian background. There are also many Indians and Pacific Islanders. |

## SYDNEY – BRISBANE

| Place                                   | Km from Sydney | Notes  |
|---|----------------|--|
| Sydney Central, usually platform 1 or 2 | 0              | Sydney Central station is at the southern edge of the central business district. It is a magnificent structure – both architecturally and for railway operating. It is huge – 25 platforms (2 underground). Most are terminating platforms for long distance and middle distance trains. But there are through platforms used by suburban trains.<br>More details at <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_railway_station,_Sydney">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_railway_station,_Sydney</a><br>Suburban trains continue by underground lines to the centre of the city. A double track line continues over the Sydney Harbour Bridge. |
|   |                | The attractive stone station to the west (right hand side) was the Mortuary Station, where Funeral trains departed until the 1930s   |
|   |                | Very, very busy suburban line. Six tracks.<br>Dense inner suburbs.   |
| Strathfield                             | 12             | Major junction for western and northern lines.   |
|   | 17             | Bridge over Parramatta River. Mixture of 2, 3 or 4 tracks.<br>Leafy, upmarket suburbs.   |
| Hornsby                                 | 34             | Junction for the line to Sydney via the North Shore.   |
| <i>Cowan</i>                            | 49             | The top of the ridge. The line now descends very steeply to the Hawkesbury River. There are great views (interrupted by a number of short tunnels).  |
| <i>Hawkesbury River</i>                 | 57             | Big bridge. The pylons of the original bridge, replaced in 1946, remain alongside.   |
|   |                | Very beautiful along the Mullet Creek, although marred by an electricity transmission line.<br>On the other side of the Creek note the houses. These are accessible only by boats from the tiny stations.<br>Then through one of Australia's longest tunnels.  |
| Gosford                                 | 81             |  |
| Wyong                                   | 101            |  |
| Fassifern                               | 142            |  |
| Broadmeadow                             | 162            | This is the main station for the big industrial city of Newcastle. Newcastle has been through some hard times in recent years as heavy industry has restructured. This is the end of the electrified railway - no more local electric trains.  |
|   |                | A very, very busy section of railway with local diesel passenger trains, general freight trains, and especially, lots of huge trains conveying coal to port for export. This is claimed to be the busiest coal railway in the world. Four tracks, two for passenger and general freight trains and two for coal trains.  |
| Maitland                                | 193            | This is perhaps the best train-watching and train-photographing location in Australia – for both variety of trains   |

|                                      |     |  |
|--------------------------------------|-----|--|
|                                      |     | and frequency of trains.<br>You turn off the line to the inland onto the North Coast line. In fact you never see the coast, except briefly near Coffs Harbour. This important railway was originally a series of unimportant local lines which were connected together. And it usually still seems like that, as it continually twists and turns. It has been upgraded with some curves removed. It is single track controlled by Centralised Traffic Control (CTC) situated at Broadmeadow. |
|                                      |     | Across the Hunter River.   |
| Dungog                               | 245 | Rich dairying country.   |
| Gloucester                           | 309 |  |
| <i>Bundook</i>                       | 335 | Crossing loop where passenger trains often cross.  |
| Wingham                              | 367 |  |
| Taree                                | 379 | Town on the Manning River.   |
| Kendall                              | 418 | Town on the Camden Haven River.  |
| Wauchope<br>(pronounced<br>War Hope) | 455 | The station for nearby historic town of Port Macquarie.  |
|                                      |     | Over the Hastings River.<br>Over the Macleay River.  |
| Kempsey                              | 504 |  |
| Eungai                               | 535 |  |
| Macksville                           | 552 |  |
| Nambucca<br>Heads                    | 565 | Over the Nambucca River.   |
| Urunga                               | 581 |  |
|                                      |     | Over the Bellinger River.  |
| Sawtell                              | 601 |  |
|                                      |     | In daylight, you get glimpses of the sea.  |
| Coffs Harbour                        | 608 |  |
| Grafton                              | 696 | Over the Clarence River. This bridge is very large and double deck – road on the upper deck, rail on the lower deck.<br>The scenery in the next section is scrubby and uninteresting.  |
| Casino                               | 806 |  |
| Kyogle                               | 834 | Climbing.  |
|                                      |     | There is a spiral to ease the gradient for northbound trains. Then the Border Tunnel under the Macpherson Ranges. The NSW/Queensland state border is halfway through the tunnel. Then the line descends.   |
| <i>Kagaru</i>                        |     | The Melbourne to Brisbane Inland Freight Railway, if built, will come in here.   |
| <i>Acacia Ridge</i>                  | 974 | Freight yard. The interstate line from this point is dual gauge – standard and narrow gauges.<br>Brisbane suburbs start.   |
| <i>Salisbury</i>                     | 976 | Queensland Rail’s line from the Gold Coast comes in. It is a mainly double track, electrified, narrow gauge line. The dual gauged interstate line alongside is now also used by northbound electric trains from the Gold Coast.  |

|  |     |   |
|--|-----|---|
| <i>Park Road</i>   | 984 | Major junction for suburban trains and for freight trains to the Port of Brisbane (the latter via a large flyover.)                           |
|  |     | The Brisbane Convention Centre complex is alongside and partially built over the railway. The Southbank Parklands are nearby.                 |
| <i>South Brisbane</i>  | 987 | Until 1978 when the bridge over the Brisbane River was built, the interstate line terminated here.  |
|  |     | Merivale Bridge over the wide Brisbane River – impressive views. Two dual-gauge tracks over the bridge.                                       |
| Brisbane Roma Street, also known as Brisbane Transit Centre. | 989 | Terminus for interstate and Queensland long-distance passenger trains, and a through station for the busy electrified suburban train network. |

## SYDNEY – DUBBO & BROKEN HILL

All along the East Coast of Australia, there is a narrow coastal plain, usually heavily populated, then a steep ascent of a mountain range parallel to the coast known as the Great Dividing Range. The descent on the western side of this Range is usually easier. This is followed by rolling hills gradually giving up to the seemingly endless western plains. The NSW Western line is great example of all this.

| Place          | Km | Notes  |
|----------------|----|--|
| Sydney Central | 0  | Sydney Central station is at the southern edge of the central business district. It is a magnificent structure – both architecturally and for railway operating. It is huge – 25 platforms (2 underground). Most are terminating platforms for long distance and middle distance trains. But there are through platforms used by suburban trains.<br>More details at <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_railway_station,_Sydney">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_railway_station,_Sydney</a><br>Suburban trains continue by underground lines to the centre of the city. A double track line continues over the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Ten tracks a short distance to Illawarra Junction, then six tracks. |
|                |    | The attractive stone station to the west (right hand side) was the Mortuary Station, where Funeral trains departed until the 1930s   |
|                |    | Very, very busy suburban line. Dense inner suburbs.  |
| Strathfield    | 12 | Major junction for western and northern lines.   |
| Homebush       |    | Four tracks from here.   |
| Lidcombe       | 17 | Olympic Park (for the 2000 Olympics) is very close to the north (but you can't see it).  |
| Auburn         | 19 |  |
| Granville      | 21 | Junction for the original mainline to the south. Following is the direct triangle connection from west to south.   |
| Parramatta     | 23 | An area of settlement from the earliest days of European settlement in Australia. Now generally regarded as the second most important business centre of Sydney.   |
| Westmead       | 25 | A flyunder converts tracks from up, down, up, down configuration to down, down, up, up.  |
| Seven Hills    | 32 | A flyover takes down Richmond branchline and terminating trains over the mainline.   |
| Blacktown      | 35 | Large six platform station. Junction for the Richmond branch. Continues through the seemingly endless western suburbs.   |
| St Marys       | 47 | Four tracks reduce to two.   |
| Penrith        | 55 | Bridge over the Nepean River. The road bridge alongside was the original railway bridge.   |
| Emu Plains     | 57 | The steep ascent of the Blue Mountains begins.<br>A very pretty section of railway through the wild country of the Glenbrook Gorge replaced the line through a tunnel, which itself was a replacement for the original line which ascended via a zig zag.  |
| Glenbrook      | 67 | This railway is very busy with local electric passenger trains, coal trains and some long distance passenger and freight trains.   |

|                       |     |  |
|-----------------------|-----|--|
| Valley Heights        | 77  | Now the ascent of the Blue Mountains becomes really fearsome – a gradient of 1 in 33, or 3%.   |
| Springwood            | 80  | Urban development in the Blue Mountains is in a thin strip following the railway. There are brief glimpses of the valleys below.   |
| Lawson                | 96  | Part of the series of pretty Blue Mountain villages.   |
| Wentworth Falls       | 103 |  |
| Katoomba              | 110 | The major centre of tourism in the Blue Mountains. Stunning scenic attractions and views nearby.   |
| Blackheath            | 121 | At 1065 metres, the highest station crossing the Mountains.  |
| Mt Victoria           | 127 | Attractive old stone station building.   |
| Newnes Jnc            | 142 | There is now a major deviation, dating from 1910. This comprises a series of ten tunnels in quick succession in very rugged country. The deviation replaced the Great Zig Zag, the original – impressive but inefficient way the railway descended the western side of the Great Dividing Range. Between the ten tunnels are magnificent, but brief, glimpses into the valley below. |
| Zig Zag               | 151 | Alongside the tiny platform is the depot of the Zig Zag Railway which is attempting to run heritage trains on the original alignment of the zig zag.   |
| Lithgow               | 156 | Locomotive depot. The end of railway electrification. The site of Australia's first steelworks.  |
| Hermitage             | 157 | The point where control of the railway infrastructure changes from Transport for New South Wales, a NSW state government body, to the lessee, John Holland Rail NSW Country Regional Network.  |
| Wallerawang           | 171 | Attractive old stone station building. From here, to Tarana, the line has been reduced to one track.   |
| Rydal                 | 181 | Through attractive hilly country, with heavy earthworks.   |
| Tarana                | 198 | Double track resumes. The alignment of a former branchline to Oberon can be seen climbing steeply up the hill to the south.  |
| Kelso                 | 237 | Single track now. Bridge over the Macquarie River.   |
| Bathurst              | 239 | Significant city. One of the first inland settlements in Australia.  |
| Newbridge             | 274 | Double track resumes for a few km.   |
| Murrobo               | 287 | Double to single track.  |
| Blayney               | 290 | Was a junction for a cross-country line to the south.  |
| Spring Hill           | 309 | Double track resumes for a few km.   |
| Orange Fork Junction. | 321 | Single track now.  |
| Orange                | 323 | Significant city.  |
| Stuart Town           | 398 | The hills are getting smaller as the western plains get closer.  |
| Dubbo                 | 462 | Significant city. Major interchange point from train to connecting buses.  |

## ORANGE – BROKEN HILL

|             |      |   |
|-------------|------|---|
| Molong      | 360  | The hills are getting smaller as the western plains get closer.   |
| Parkes      | 446  | A significant railway junction. East-west freight trains, having travelled from Sydney via the more easily graded line via Cootamundra, now join this line. This will also be the future junction of the Melbourne-Brisbane Inland Freight Railway. At this point, control of the railway infrastructure changes from John Holland Rail NSW Country Regional Network to the Australian Rail Track Corporation, a Federal Government body. |
| Condobolin  | 546  | The country is now flat and uninteresting.  |
| Menindee    | 1007 | Bridge over the Darling River. Site of the Menindee Lakes, which fill after good rains and are empty in drought years.  |
| Broken Hill | 1125 | A very isolated city. Was once the site of a very rich mineral field – lead, zinc, copper – but now largely worked out. This mineral wealth was the basis of the Broken Hill Billiton Company, now the biggest mineral company in the world. Broken Hill is now largely dependent on tourism.   |

## SYDNEY – WOLLONGONG – KIAMA – NOWRA

Service on the South Coast line is by comfortable, double-deck Electric Multiple Unit trains as far as Kiama. Choose the upper deck for better views. If joining a train starting at Central station, walk to the front of the train, as this will be less crowded. From Kiama, there are connecting Diesel Multiple Unit trains.

Most trains on this line commence/terminate their journeys at Bondi Junction, an eastern suburb. They start their journeys traversing the Eastern Suburbs suburban line, performing suburban train duties. Other trains commence/terminate their journeys at Sydney Central station, the main station of this vast metropolis.

| Place          | Km | Notes   |
|----------------|----|---|
| Bondi Junction | 7  | This is a two-platform, underground station, with a bus interchange above. Bondi is a very densely populated suburb – probably the most densely inhabited part of Australia. The “Junction” in the suburb name refers to a former tramway junction. |
|                |    | The railway is mainly in tunnel, but with one, short open-air section.  |
| Edgecliff      | 5  | This is a two-platform, underground station, with a bus interchange above. Edgecliff is a densely populated suburb.   |
|                |    | This section is mainly on viaduct.  |
| Kings Cross    | 3  | This is a two-platform, underground station. Kings Cross is a very densely populated suburb and entertainment centre.   |
|                |    | This section is mainly on viaduct, giving great views of the city skyline.  |
| Martin Place   | 2  | This is a two-platform, spacious, underground station in the centre of Sydney’s financial and business district.  |
| Town Hall      | 1  | This is a six-platform, underground station. As well as the Eastern Suburbs line, there is the City Circle line (underground at this point) and the City to North Shore via Sydney Harbour Bridge line (underground at this point).                 |

|                       |   |  |
|-----------------------|---|--|
|                       |   | This is the busiest station in the Sydney suburban train network.  |
|                       |   | The City Circle and North Shore lines leave their tunnels and continue to Central on a viaduct. However, the Eastern Suburbs line – our line – continues at a lower level in tunnel.   |
| Sydney Central        | 0 | <p>Sydney Central station is at the southern edge of the central business district. It is a magnificent structure – both architecturally and for railway operating. It is huge – 25 platforms (2 underground). Most are terminating platforms for long distance and middle distance trains. But there are through platforms used by suburban trains.</p> <p>More details at <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_railway_station,_Sydney">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Central_railway_station,_Sydney</a></p> <p>Suburban trains continue by underground lines to the centre of the city. Ten tracks a short distance to Illawarra Junction, then four tracks</p> <p>Our line – the Eastern Suburbs/Illawarra line – uses the two underground platforms. Other trains for the Wollongong/Kiama line – the South Coast line - start/terminate at the above ground platforms of Central station.</p> |
|                       |   | If you are on the surface lines (not on the underground lines) you will see an attractive stone station to the west (right hand side). This was the Mortuary Station, where Funeral trains departed until the 1930s.   |
| Redfern               | 1 | Extremely busy suburban station. There are twelve platforms and running lines – ten on the surface and two underground.  |
| Illawarra Junction    | 2 | Six surface lines diverge here and go to the western, northern and south-west suburbs.   |
| Erskineville Junction | 3 | The underground lines now come to the surface and join the surface lines.  |
|                       |   | Very, very busy suburban line. Four tracks. Dense inner suburbs. In the 1950s, work commenced to increase this section of line to six tracks, but plans changed and the project was not completed. Much of this work can still be seen.  |
| Sydenham              | 5 | <p>Six platforms.</p> <p>The Bankstown line diverges here. It is proposed that the Sydney Metro line, currently under construction, will, after passing from the North Shore under Sydney Harbour and the City centre will come to the surface here. Then it will take over the Bankstown line, which will be converted from suburban train operation to automatic, metro-style operation.</p> <p>The freight line to Botany passes overhead.</p>  |
| Tempe                 | 7 | Four tracks continue   |
|                       |   | <p>NSW TrainLink’s XPT and Explorer DMU maintenance depot to the west.</p> <p>Direct connection from the south to the Metropolitan Goods lines to the west for freight (mainly coal) trains.</p>   |
| Wolli Creek           | 7 | Some trains diverge just before here to the East Hills line. The Airport line (which from the City via the Airport has been underground) passes underneath here, and connects to the East Hills line.  |

|             |    |  |
|-------------|----|--|
| Rockdale    | 10 | Most stations on this stretch of line are four platforms – two island platforms. Rockdale fits this pattern, but, in addition, has a busy shopping centre built above it.  |
| Hurstville  | 15 | Most stations on this stretch of line are four platforms – two island platforms. Hurstville fits this pattern, but, in addition, has a busy shopping centre built above it.<br>Four tracks reduce to two tracks.   |
| Mortdale    | 17 | Station followed by suburban electric train depot.   |
| Oatley      | 18 |  |
|             |    | Significant bridge over the Georges River – great views both ways.   |
| Como        | 21 |  |
| Sutherland  | 25 | Junction for the suburban Cronulla line.   |
| Loftus      | 26 | The Sydney Tramway Museum is immediately to the east.  |
|             |    | The Royal National Park is to the east, suburbs to the west.   |
| Waterfall   | 39 | End of suburban train operations.  |
|             |    | The line now twists and turns through the very rugged country of the coastal escarpment. There is continuous curvature through dense bush, and bridges and tunnels.<br>The coastal escarpment is unstable. Consequently, the Stanwell Park viaduct has had to be reinforced, and there are proposals to substantially rebuild the line in a lengthy tunnel. However, this is unlikely for a long time. |
| Helensburgh | 46 | Occasional suburban trains are extended to this isolated station.  |
| Coal Cliff  | 59 | The pristine nature of the countryside is marred by coal mines. Soon after Coal Cliff, there is the Coal Cliff tunnel. This is on a short 2 km single track section.<br>Leaving the tunnel, there is a great view of the coastline.  |
| Autinmer    | 69 | We are now on the coastal plain. But the steep, coastal escarpment is very close and continuous parallel to the west.<br>This is coal mining area. We are in the northern suburbs of the major city of Wollongong.   |
| Thirroul    | 70 | Local Wollongong electric, suburban trains commence/terminate here.  |
| Wollongong  | 83 | A surprisingly small and unpretentious station for a major city (just two platforms, plus a down bay platform).  |
| Coniston    | 84 | Junction for the double track, freight line to Port Kembla Inner Harbour and junction for the double track, electrified, passenger and freight line to Port Kembla. The local suburban trains ex Thirroul go along the branch to Port Kembla.<br>Port Kembla is very important for the export of coal and of wheat. Steelworks can be seen to the east.  |
|             |    | A short, 1 km, section of single line occurs, before the loop line from Port Kembla joins this line.   |
| Unanderra   | 88 | Junction for the cross-country line to join the main Southern line at Moss Vale. This line climbs very, very, steeply up the coastal escarpment. It carries heavy freight traffic from (steel) and to (wheat) Port Kembla going to southern NSW and to interstate  |

|                  |     |  |
|------------------|-----|--|
|                  |     | <p>destinations. The first section of this line is duplicated. You can also see masts for proposed electrification. However, due to a change of plans, this was not completed.</p> <p>There are occasional tourist trains on this extremely scenic cross-country line.</p> <p>The South Coast line - described here – continues as a single-track, electrified line.</p>   |
| Dapto            | 95  | The line continues through a mixture of suburbs and countryside. It is fairly flat.  |
| Kiama            | 119 | <p>Kiama is an attractive town.</p> <p>Kiama is the terminus of the frequent, electric trains from Bondi/Sydney. To continue, it is necessary to change to Diesel Multiple Unit trains (called Endeavours). The change is via cross-platform interchange. The DMU service is much less frequent.</p>   |
|                  |     | Omega Tunnels – four short tunnels in quick succession.  |
|                  |     | The Kiama-Nowra section of line is the only non-electrified line controlled by Transport for NSW. The line is through gentle, rolling hills, with occasional views of the sea.   |
| Berry            | 141 | An attractive, little, country town.   |
| Nowra-Bomaderry. | 153 | <p>The railway to the important town of Nowra does not get to the town but terminates on the northern bank of the Shoalhaven River opposite Nowra. In fact, the station is officially called Nowra-Bomaderry, after the suburb it is situated in.</p> <p>The railway was never extended beyond this point, although the further South Coast area of NSW is well populated. This is because, until the 1930s, this area was served by coastal shipping.</p> |

## NSW NORTH WESTERN LINE

For the description from Sydney to Maitland, see the first portion of the description of the journey from Sydney to Brisbane above.

| Place                  | Km    | Notes   |
|------------------------|-------|---|
| Maitland               | 192.5 | This is perhaps the best train-watching and train-photographing location in Australia for both frequency of trains and variety of trains – local passenger trains, long-distance passenger trains, enormous coal trains, long-distance freight trains.            |
| East Greta Junction    | 193   | The mainline to Brisbane turns off to the north. The privately-owned South Maitland Railway (coal trains) turns off the south.<br>Four tracks reduce to two tracks.<br>The very heavy coal trains continue on this line, as well as passenger and freight trains. |
| Farley                 | 197   | Two tracks expand to three tracks. The second track for up (towards the coast) is more easily graded for heavy coal trains.<br>There are many coal mines in this area. Despite this, it is also a very rich agricultural area.                                    |
| Greta                  | 210   | Three tracks to two. Pacific National train support facility alongside.   |
| Branxton               | 216   | Two tracks to three. The second track for up (towards the coast) is more easily graded for heavy coal trains.   |
| Whittingham            | 234   | Three tracks to two.  |
| Singleton              | 239   | At frequent intervals, there are junctions to lines to coal mines.  |
| Muswellbrook           | 289   | Junction for the line to Ulan which carries significant coal traffic. But much coal traffic also remains on this line.<br>Two tracks to one.  |
| Scone                  | 315   | Furthest point of local passenger trains from Newcastle.  |
| Murrurundi             | 353   | Ascent of Liverpool Range begins.   |
| Ardglen                | 363   | Top of the Range.   |
| Werris Creek           | 411   | The large station at this important station once housed a railway hotel.<br>Alongside this station is the Australian Railway Workers Memorial.  |
|                        |       | <b>NEW ENGLAND LINE</b>   |
| Tamworth               | 455   | Important city. On the original – inland – Sydney to Brisbane mainline.   |
|                        |       | Rugged, mountainous country.  |
| Armidale               | 579   | University city.  |
|                        |       | <b>NW LINE</b>  |
| Gunnedah               | 476   |   |
| Narrabri Coal Junction | 540   | The final of many coal mines along this line.   |
| Narrabri               | 569   | Junction station. The country is now flat and uninteresting, but fertile with much wheat grown.   |
| Moree                  | 666   | Spa centre.   |

