



TABLE TALK

March 2007, Number 176

RRP \$2.95

ISSN 1038-3697

Table Talk is published monthly by the Australian Association of Timetable Collectors Inc. [Registration No: A0043673H] as a journal of record covering recent news items. The AATTC also publishes *The Times* covering historic and general items.

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News



New V/Line timetable

V/Line timetables commencing Sunday 4 March 2007 have been released. The main rail changes are summarized below and generally affect weekday services.

Northern Region:

The morning Down Swan Hill is altered from 08:10 to 07:54 and slowed by 12 minutes. The afternoon return service departs Swan Hill 20 minutes earlier. The 17:37 Down now terminates at Bendigo and is accelerated by 20 minutes (now VLocity in lieu of loco-hauled?) and the 1817 is now extended to Swan Hill with an additional 20 minutes running time. The 1835 Sunbury is extended to Kyneton. The new Echuca rail services are incorporated into the timetable. Most Bendigo trains have been slowed (by 2 to 10 minutes).

Western Region:

The morning Up Ararat is altered from a 07:15 to 07:40 departure whilst the evening Down is altered by extending the 18:25 Ballarat. The 17:49 now terminates at Ballarat.

The former 09:08 Up ex Bacchus Marsh is advanced to 08:37 and there are other changes to Bacchus Marsh locals. Almost every Ballarat train has been slowed by up to 5 minutes.

South Western Region:

Geelong services: Some trains have been slowed and three are extended from South Geelong to Marshall.

Warrnambool services: The new Sherwood Park station now has 2 trains every day in lieu of 2 per week. Running times are extended.

North East Region:

All Albury trains have been slowed by a few minutes at the outer end of the line. Whilst existing train paths remain, evening destinations have radically changed. The 17:10 Albury is now Seymour semi-express, the 18:15 Shepparton is now Albury and the 18:33 Seymour is now Shepparton (stopping all stations from Craigieburn). The arrival time at Shepparton is not shown in the public timetable. The evening Up Albury M-F leaves 40 minutes earlier at 17:00 saving a cross at Riggs Creek loop. Sunday Up Albury and Shepparton services are also altered.

Eastern Region:

Very few changes with some trains slightly slower or faster.

Coach Services:

There has been a number of alterations noted including the reversion to Murchison East (instead of Shepparton) as the connection point for Echuca via Kyabram services. The Appollo Bay – Warrnambool tourist service has been expanded from Fridays only to thrice a week (MWF). There does not appear to be any mention of the recently introduced service between Warrnambool and Ararat.

General:

No changes to timings of the ‘flagship’ services were noted.

The new timetables indicate that reservations are compulsory on all long distance services, including the new Echuca services. Considering that many of these trains take short distance passengers, it will be interesting to see how this works in practice. A note regarding peak/off peak travelling hours states that Melbourne is defined as Southern Cross Station, Flinders Street Station, North Melbourne Station and Richmond Station.

Comment:

There is a major failure in presentation within some of the long distance timetables as there is no train arrival time shown where there is a coach connection (Shepparton and Bairnsdale). For example the only time shown at Bairnsdale is the coach departure time; the train arrival time is considerably earlier.

Again, long distance services have become slower following many slowings in the previous timetable. Coincidentally, the Travellers’ Check column in the Melbourne Age newspaper of 24/2 commented adversely on the rail travel journey times.

Geoff Mann/Victor Isaacs



Victoria

Skybus

The timetable for coach services to Melbourne Airport, which previously indicated 10 minute frequencies in peak periods appears to be now defined as applying from 0800 to 1700 on Mon, Thu & Fri and from 0800 to 1300 on Tue, Wed and Sat. The 15 minute frequency continues at other periods as previously.

The timetable shown on the Metlink website is now out of date. It shows arrival times at the airport but not departure times from the city.

Cranbourne – Pearcedale (Route 794)

Discontinued as of 4 February 2007. This route had been recently introduced on a trial basis. The Metlink website had also advised that Route 795 (Warneet and coastal villages) had also been discontinued but this has now been corrected as the route continues to operate as previously.

City – North Ringwood via Eastern Freeway (Route 306)

From 12 February 2007, this route services Doncaster Park & Ride adding 6 inbound morning trips and 6 evening outbound journeys.

Nightrider service

Patronage on Melbourne’s Nightrider bus service during January this year was Ms Kosky said that more than 7,000 people jumped on board the late night bus service during January this year, close to 50 per cent more than the same time last year according to Minister of Public Transport Ms Lynne Kosky. The Government in partnership with Telstra provided free transport on Nightrider services during January. Fares will accord with normal Met prices as from March

“All services experienced increased demand with patronage on one route increasing by more than 150 per cent. The massive increase in patronage figures shows there is a real demand for a safe, reliable and affordable late night public transport service.”

The patronage figures for each of the Nightrider services in January 2006 and 2007 are below:

Route	January 2006	January 2007	Increase %
Bayswater	638	885	38.7%
Craigieburn	171	252	47.4%
Croydon	736	1,058	43.8%
Dandenong	890	972	9.2%
Eltham	310	788	154.2%
Epping	407	645	58.5%
Frankston	915	1,446	58.0%
St. Albans	516	864	67.4%
Werribee	314	333	6.1%

Yarrowonga Town Service

New town services, operated by Thomson’s Bus Lines commenced on 5 February 2007. The South and East routes are provided with 10 trips Mon – Sat on an hourly frequency whilst the third route to Mulwala has 5 trips on a two hourly frequency.

A Short Note...

Table Talk for this month had to be prepared at short notice without any contributions which may have been sent to the Editor. Apologies to those contributors concerned. It is hoped the matter will be rectified by next month.