



TABLE TALK

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About *Table Talk*

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TOP TABLE TALK

Queensland government's grand transport vision

On 31 August Queensland Premier Anna Bligh announced a major 20 year plan entitled *Connecting SEQ 2031: An Integrated Regional Transport Plan for South East Queensland*. This is part of a pledge to triple rail use by 2031. Key components are:

- A new 15 km rail line in Brisbane's northern suburbs from Alderley to Strathpine using the predominantly government-owned North West Transport Corridor, hitherto reserved for a road.
- High-speed trains between the Gold Coast (Coolangatta) and Brisbane – 17 km of new railway. The government is investigating tilt train technology on existing tracks to connect the two centres in 60 minutes.
- High Speed trains between the Sunshine Coast (Maroochydore) and Brisbane - 38 km of new railway.
- New railways to Springfield (16.5 km), Moreton Bay (12.6 km) (see August *Table Talk*, page 2 and September *Table Talk*, page 3), Springfield (16.5 km – under construction now), Ripley (13.5 km) and Flagstone (31.5 km).
- An 8km subway from Toowong to West End, and then to Newstead or Bowen Hills.
- Extension of the Gold Coast Rapid Transit project to Coolangatta.
- The Cross River Rail project as the lynchpin of the Plan, to be completed in 2016, providing a second rail crossing for the Brisbane River (see August *Table Talk*, page 3 and next article). Other rail proposals are dependant on completion of this.
- Extending the Northern and Eastern Busways to Bracken Ridge and Capalaba.
- Major freight investment, including full development of Acacia Ridge freight terminal, a dedicated dual gauge freight line from Acacia Ridge to Port of Brisbane, dual gauging the existing track for freight Acacia Ridge-Bromelton, a fourth track Corinda-Darra (under construction now), resignalling Corinda Junction, a new crossing loop at Murarrie, and upgrade Yeerongpilly-Dutton Park line.
- New technology to better manage road and public transport movements.

The number of three car trains would increase from 200 to 400 by 2031. There will also be new bikeways, a ring road around Brisbane and a heavy investment in freight services.

The plan envisages:

- **UrbanLink** with more frequent services and higher capacity trains operating from Darra, Strathpine, Loganlea, Ferny Grove, Manly, Springfield, Shorncliffe and the Airport to the City.
- **ExpressLink** with high speed express services from Ipswich, Cleveland, Ormeau and Caboolture.
- **CoastLink** from Brisbane to the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast with high speed European style trains.

Premier Bligh said the government wanted trains and buses to arrive every 15 minutes making timetables redundant. She said new high-frequency, high-reliability services would operate along core rail and bus routes between 6am and 9pm seven days a week. "If you knew there would be a train or bus at least every 15 minutes, you could take a relaxed approach with the confidence you would reach your destination on time. The plan was a bold and visionary blueprint. [It] will no doubt be met with cynicism by some. Great plans often are. *Connecting SEQ 2031* is a clear statement of intent. The next 20 years will see a concentration on new railways and new services to manage growth in our region. This plan for a rail revolution in SEQ is the next stage of our journey towards an absolutely world class public transport system. When we published our first integrated plan in 1997 to build dedicated busways in SEQ there wasn't a single kilometre of dedicated busway in the State. Today we have 24 km of busway in Brisbane, more than any other city in Australia and more under construction right now. This new plan is visionary, but I believe our

experience with the busways shows that when you have a clear plan for the future you can make it happen." She added a fully loaded suburban train carried 700 people, taking 600 cars off the road.

"The Cross River Rail project, now undergoing a \$25 million feasibility study, is a vital lynchpin for the future of rail travel here," she said. "Cross River Rail will transform south east Queensland's rail network by providing essential capacity at the core of the network that could double the number of train services from the suburbs to the city. It will allow us to provide higher frequency and improved reliability on all lines, making it possible for the rail network to move up to 240,000 people into the inner city during the two-hour morning peak, compared to the current 54,000. And the subway system we flagged in November last year will support the overall rail revolution, helping move commuters and enabling the city centre to be a place for people."

Opposition Leader John-Paul Langbroek said the plan was a "high-speed distraction" and the projects were uncostered. Local media was supportive, but critical of the long timeframe.

Brisbane Cross River Rail Tunnel

Technical investigations and feedback from the community and key stakeholders has determined the preferred tunnel route and station locations. It will run from about Albion to south of the existing Dutton Park station. New underground stations would be located at:

Roma Street under the existing station, providing connections to other rail services and the Inner Northern Busway, as well as assisting the renewal of the area.

Lower Albert St: transforming the area with opportunities for new retail and commercial development.

Woolloongabba within the recently declared Woolloongabba Urban Development Area, and part of a key interchange with the South East and Eastern busways. It is expected the new station will be a catalyst for redevelopment of the area.

Boggo Road Urban Village providing connection to the University of Queensland and the Princess Alexandra Hospital, and linking with trains at Park Road station and buses at Boggo Road Busway station. There would be retail and commercial developments nearby.

In addition, possible upgrades to **Bowen Hills and Exhibition** stations would support the planned redevelopment of Bowen Hills and facilitate travel to the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

From Albion trains would travel along surface tracks past Exhibition to enter the tunnel at Victoria Park. Investigations are under way to determine how tracks north of the tunnel entrance could be modified to incorporate another two tracks on the Exhibition line. Technical investigations are continuing to determine the preferred location for the tunnel entrance in the south, and to determine how many additional tracks between Dutton Park and Salisbury are needed and how to provide these.

RAIL AND TRAM NEWS

Website timetables galore: 10 October 2010

With timetables changes occurring on 10 October, there is a cornucopia of new Public timetables available:

- CityRail Sydney at www.cityrail.info/timetables/2010/
- Countrylink NSW at www.countrylink.info/timetables
- V/Line at www.vline.com.au/timetables
- Metro Trains Melbourne at www.metrotrains.com.au/Timetables-Planning/Overview.html

QR National float

A sharemarket float worth \$4 billion of QR National will proceed this month after the Queensland Coal Industry Rail Group on 10 September withdrew its rival bid to buy the Queensland coal railway network as an integrated operation. The Group apparently concluded that they could not meet financial requirements.

Queensland Rail: additional services

From 4 October additional Monday-Friday trains depart Corinda at 0727 all stations to Brisbane Central and Bowen Hills (0756), and Bowen Hills at 1621, running express Milton to Darra, then all stations to Ipswich (1722).

From 10 October additional Sunday trains depart Ipswich at 0708 for Rosewood (0726) and from Rosewood at 0742 for Ipswich (0800).

Queensland Rail on-time running from *Courier-Mail* 7 September

Queensland Rail executives could have their pay slashed if the southeast CityTrain services do not run on time. State Transport Minister Rachel Nolan [has] asked the new QR board to ensure a section of executives' pay is linked to service delivery. This will mean a new pay structure for the executives, whereby a section of "at risk" pay could be lost if the number of delayed, or cancelled services does not improve. Under previous arrangements for QR executives, only their bonus pay was linked to performance of the network. It came as TransLink, the southeast's transport authority, confirmed QR would no longer be fined as a corporation for on-time performance failures which leave thousands of commuters stranded each year. But QR executives will be hit by substantial financial losses if a variety of key performance indicators such as on-time running, customer satisfaction, reliability and safety, are not met. The rail provider has missed performance targets for a number of late peak-hour services for the past four years, and was fined over \$7 million because of the problems. QR was contractually obliged to have 92.4% of

services in daily peak hours running within four minutes of their scheduled time. Under the new contracts, the peak-hour target will be 93.01% from July 1 – making it more difficult for the rail provider to meet the targets of on-time services.

As first reported in *The Courier-Mail*, QR copped its fourth fine in four years in February this year, after an average of 91.74% of rush-hour services met their scheduled time. But Ms Nolan said the fines imposed by the State Government were a "money merry-go-round", where one government organisation fined another.

In the year to June 2009, QR chief executive Paul Scurrah, then in his role of executive general manager for QR Passenger, earned a base salary of \$371,000. The chief executive officer for QR at the time, Lance Hockridge, earned \$854,000.

ARTC: Master Train Plan 10 October 2010

A new ARTC Master Train Plan (aka as Working Timetable) dated 10 October 2010 is available on their website. It still includes the yet-to-appear, so-called V/Line XPTs. There are no longer any schedules shown for the Maroona-Portland, Vic. line. There are no scheduled trains between Werris Creek and Binnaway. On the Griffith-Temora NSW line, there are only two trains a week scheduled (Tuesday and Saturday night) in the up direction only. As previously reported, a new RailCorp WTT will also apply from 10 October.

Xstrata Rail: New operator

Anglo-Swiss coal mining company Xstrata has formed Xstrata Rail which commenced operation of trains in the NSW Hunter Valley on 21 September. It has three train sets, with a total of ten locomotives and 300 wagons. Each train is 1.5 km long and carries almost 10,000 tonnes of coal. British company Freightliner will operate the trains. If Xstrata's application to exploit coal deposits at Wandoan, Queensland is approved, Xstrata Rail will also operate there.

RailCorp: Freight WTT 4 Sept 2010

RailCorp NSW has issued a Freight WTT dated 4 September, version 3.24. It is only valid until the new WTT of 10 October 2010 takes effect.

RailCorp: Trackwork 14/15 August

On the weekend of 14 and 15 August 2010, track works at Strathfield disrupted a number of intercity and intracity services. Trains to/from Canberra and Melbourne, which normally use the Strathfield line, were diverted via the East Hills line, without any change to schedules. Meanwhile trains to/from Brisbane, Armidale and Moree were unable to use the northeast arm of the junction triangle at Strathfield, so instead proceeded slowly past Strathfield, turned around using the Olympic Park loop line, and returned towards Strathfield to take the northwest arm of the triangle to get on to the Northern line Services departed 20 minutes ahead of schedule to allow for this extra distance and the reduced speeds.

Countrylink train & bus alterations 10 October 2010

The following minor changes were made to Countrylink NSW services from 10 October 2010:

- The 1135 Grafton XPT which formerly arrived Grafton at 2210 now arrives at 2155 except on Thursday and Saturday when it still arrives at 2210.
- The 0850 ex Armidale Explorer now arrives Hornsby at 1622 Monday to Friday -1 minute earlier than formerly
- The Explorer departing Sydney at 1205 daily which formerly arrived into Canberra at 1625, except on Mondays and Fridays when it arrived at 1632, now arrives Canberra at 1625 every day.
- The former 0645 bus from Wollongong to Moss Vale now departs 10 minutes earlier at 0635 and runs 10 minutes earlier to Moss Vale, arriving at 0805 instead of 0815.
- The Monday Broken Hill Explorer now departs Sydney one minute earlier at 0620 and runs one minute earlier to Lithgow.
- The evening Lithgow-Orange bus now connects with the CityRail train departing Sydney at 1737. The bus now departs Lithgow 10 minutes later at 2045 and runs 10 minutes later to Orange arriving at 2300 instead of 2250.

CityRail: Guardian services

"Guardian" protective services are being introduced on Friday and Saturday night services from 15 October:

- Friday night - depart Circular Quay 2329, arrive Campbelltown 0045
- Saturday night - depart Circular Quay 2314, arrive Campbelltown 0031
- Friday night - depart Circular Quay 2209, arrive Campbelltown 2340
- Saturday night - depart Circular Quay 2319, arrive Campbelltown 0047
- Friday night - depart Central 2244, arrive Penrith 2358
- Saturday night - depart Central 2251, arrive Penrith 0002
- Friday night - depart Bondi Junction 2313, arrive Kiama 0157
- Saturday night - depart Bondi Junction 2313, arrive Kiama 0157
- Friday night - depart Central 2215, arrive Newcastle 0118
- Friday night - depart Central 0015, arrive Wyong 0205
- Saturday night - depart Central 2215, arrive Newcastle 0116
- Saturday night - depart Central 0015, arrive Wyong 0205.

CityRail: Singleton trains

The Two More Trains for Singleton group is pushing for additional trains between Newcastle and Singleton. It says the NSW government is investigating this in conjunction with the forthcoming completion of the Lower Hunter Regional Transport Strategy.

NSW: Coonamble line upgrade

The Dubbo-Coonamble line will be upgraded. The NSW Country Rail Infrastructure Authority will spend \$18.5m on resleepering and renewal of the Coolbaggie Creek rail bridge at Eumungerie, to commence later this year, and \$14.5m on re-railing the line in 2013-14.

CityRail: Blacktown line closedown 27 Sept – 8 Oct

Trains were replaced by buses on the Richmond branch from 27 September to 8 October for work to duplicate the line between Quakers Hill and Schofields and build a new station at Schofields. CityRail also undertook some routine maintenance work and used the opportunity to test the new Waratah trains on the line.

ARTC: South Sydney freight Line work resumes

Construction work on the 36 km Southern Sydney Freight Line from Macarthur to Sefton recommenced in mid-September. ARTC says it has used the temporary suspension of construction to prepare the rail corridor for a more speedy and efficient delivery of the project. The first section of track, between Leightonfield and Sefton, is scheduled to be laid between March and July 2011. ARTC will complete construction of six Easy Access lifts at CityRail stations between February and October as well as relocating utility services within the rail corridor. The rest of the line between Macarthur and Leightonfield will be constructed in two stages. ARTC will also relocate services along the corridor as well as working with RailCorp on relocating some signal services. By staging the construction and working in close cooperation with RailCorp on signal work and moving services such as high voltage power lines, ARTC expects that the effect on passenger services will be minimised.

From April to July 2011, between Chullora Jctn and Sefton Park Jctn, single line working will apply, to allow work to continue in that area for the new Freight Line. This working will be introduced before Easter. From April 2011 through 2012, Down Freight Trains will use the Southern Sydney Freight Line between Sefton and Leightonfield. Up Freight Trains will continue to use the existing RailCorp Up Main South Line. From 2013, the Southern Sydney Freight Line should be in full operation.

Victorian NE SG limited opening

The Victorian North East Standard Gauge conversion project was finally commissioned from 13 September – but only to a limited extent. Four freight or XPT trains will for eight to ten weeks operate on the Western line, ie, the converted former Broad Gauge line.

The ARTC CEO said that, "This is not the opening of the line but it is an opportunity for us to run trains on the new track and give us some space during the day to continue our expedited maintenance of the original standard gauge track. We'll still be running trains on the original standard gauge track so for this short period of time there will be trains on both tracks. It's also important to note that due to the western line being newly renovated it may take a relatively short time to 'settle' and could require further minor maintenance. ARTC maintenance crews will be carefully monitoring the track and rectifying any minor issues immediately." ARTC will also be continuing the commissioning of the new standard gauge converted track and the installation of signals. Until February 2011 ARTC will be replacing ballast on the East line.

Countrylink services to Melbourne resumed, starting with the southbound XPT on Monday 13 September.

V/Line: Maryborough trains

The August *Table Talk* indicated that in the up direction, Maryborough trains connect at Ballarat with trains from Ararat. The September *Table Talk* corrected that by saying the new trains run through to Melbourne. We now find that both statements were partially true and partially untrue. The explanation lies in a weird Victorian ritual which is carried out each morning. The trains from Maryborough and from Ararat combine at Ballarat. But while this is taking place, all passengers are forced to detrain and wait on the platform, because this is apparently regarded as a highly dangerous practice threatening their safety!

V/Line patronage growth

A record 12.56 million trips were made on V/Line trains in 2009-10, an increase of 4.2% in the past year and an 89% increase over five years. The biggest increase was on the Gippsland line up 7.7% to 1.91 million trips, followed by Ballarat with a 5.1% increase (2.82 million trips), Seymour at 4.8% (1.22 million), Bendigo with 3% (3.15 million), and Geelong 2.7% growth (3.47 million). Bus patronage rose 2.2% to 1.14 million trips, up almost 25,000 on last financial year. The combined V/Line train and bus patronage growth was 4.4% to a record 13.71 million trips (13.12 million in 2008-09).

Metro Trains Melbourne: 10 October 2010 timetable

Metro Train Melbourne's new timetable of 10 October 2010 includes 285 additional services per week. Premier Brumby and Public Transport Minister Pakula claim this is the result of infrastructure improvements and eleven new X'Trapolis trains now delivered.

The \$93 million Laverton Rail upgrade (a third platform and an extra kilometre of track) will come into operation, enabling new services on the Werribee line. Two new morning peak services will commence from Laverton, allowing

two existing Werribee trains to run express. In the evening peak, two new services will run from Flinders St to Laverton, allowing two Werribee-bound services to run express.

There will be two new morning peak services on the Sydenham line and one new service in the evening peak. There is a new after school service from Flinders St to St Albans. There is one additional morning peak service on the Craigieburn line and one extra evening peak service from Flinders St to Broadmeadows.

On the Frankston line, off-peak services will be upgraded to a frequency of every 10 minutes from 0845 to 1615, an improvement on the existing 15 minute service. There will now be a 20 minute frequency in the evening from 1900 until 2200 on weekdays - an improvement on the former 30 minute frequency.

The 10 minute Frankston frequency with alternate trains direct to Flinders St results in reduced frequency around the loop - through down Frankston trains depart every 20 minutes from loop stations on alternating 18 and 2 minute intervals from Flinders St. The evening services to intermediate stations before Caulfield now have 20 minute gaps instead of 15 minute frequencies.

On the Epping, Hurstbridge, Belgrave, Lilydale and Glen Waverley lines, most evening services have been increased from three to six-carriage trains.

New public timetable booklets will be issued for:

- Werribee, Williamstown & Sydenham
- Craigieburn & Upfield
- Pakenham & Cranbourne
- Frankston & Stony Point
- Sandringham
- Glen Waverley

Two features of the new timetable are the increasing tendency to run trains only to/from Flinders St, and the recent trend to introduce new Melbourne timetables on the same date as new Sydney and ARTC timetables.

V/Line timetables for all lines except North East were also altered from 10 October, with mainly minor adjustments to accommodate the new metropolitan services.

V/Line: September floods

Due to the floods in Victoria, there was significant re-routing of V/Line buses in early September.

Yarra Trams route 8 timetable July 2010

A new printed timetable for Yarra Tram route 8 Moreland-City-Toorak is dated July 2010. A new website version is dated 14 October 2010.

SA Budget

The South Australian Budget presented on 16 September contained large spending cuts. But public transport infrastructure projects were spared with \$1.4 billion over four years allocated for rail upgrades, including electrification of the Gawler, Noarlunga and Outer Harbor lines as well as the Seaford to Noarlunga extension.

Adelaide Metro: Tramway

SA Premier Mike Rann says the tram service to the Adelaide Entertainment Centre has been a "terrific success" since it opened in March. The government had planned to offer free travel for just six months on the \$100 million extension, but has now decided to keep free travel permanently in place. In July this year compared to July 2009, patronage on the entire tram line grew by 55%, and it is estimated 2000 people a day board this tram to and from the Entertainment Centre. Mr Rann said the next step was a \$520 million extension of the tramline to Semaphore, Port Adelaide and West Lakes. Construction is scheduled to take place from 2015/16 to 2018/19.

The Holdfast Bay Council has decided to stop funding the tourist service which ran last December to April. The quote from Transport SA rose from \$40,000 for the initial 6 month trial period to \$300,000 for a full year which was regarded as being beyond the reach of the Council and the Jetty Road Mainstreet Management Committee which had jointly funded the previous trial. It was also considered by TransAdelaide that the operation of such a tourist service was beyond its core business.

The Coast to Coast light rail extension to Port Adelaide, Semaphore and West Lakes is planned to cost \$482 million and be completed by 2018 at the earliest according to a release by the Department of Transport, Energy and Infrastructure's Executive Director Rod Hook.

The Lord Mayor of Adelaide, Michael Harbison, will lobby the State and Federal Governments to help fund a western tram loop along West Terrace, Morphett or Gray Streets to return to Victoria Square via Grote Street. The State Minister for Transport, Patrick Conlon, stated that the western loop was a likely goer at some point in the future. However, the Government was currently busy with the next extension to Port Adelaide and Semaphore.

Adelaide Metro: Gawler line reopens

The Gawler line between Adelaide and Mawson Interchange reopened on Monday 4 October after a four month shutdown, during which it was completely rebuilt. Bus substitution will remain on each weekend during October between Salisbury Interchange and Adelaide to complete testing and commissioning of the complex signalling associated with the new Dry Creek Railcar Depot and to upgrade the track through Mawson Interchange.

Adelaide Metro: Royal Adelaide Show

Services to the Show, 3 to 11 September, were as in previous years with a 15 minute train from Adelaide station express to Showground Central – a temporary platform on the western boundary of the Showground. The service was operated by two 2000 class Jumbo sets. The method of operation was the same as in recent years.

End of TransAdelaide

TransAdelaide, the operator of tram and train services in metropolitan Adelaide, is being abolished with functions and staff being transferred to the new Office of the Rail Commissioner. Established as a corporate body, TransAdelaide also operated the suburban bus services from 4 July 1994 until 22 April 2000 when, as a result of placing the operation of bus services out to tender, TransAdelaide lost all services to private operators. However, it retained the rail and tram services to April 2010. Rail and Tram services have now reverted to the direct control of the Government.

Specialised Bulk Rail commences operation

Specialised Bulk Rail will commence iron ore rail haulage for IMX Resources in SA in mid October. Services to the Cairn Hill mine, 55 km south-east of Coober Pedy, will see two 8,000 tonne trains operate 900 km to Outer Harbor, Port Adelaide. SBR has the capability of moving up to 2 million tonnes of iron ore per annum. SBR has connections with SCT Logistics, a private rail company which has successfully operated on the east – west rail corridor for 35 years.

Tiers of railway lines in WA *by Geoffrey Higham. Reprinted with permission, from The Westland, the magazine of Rail Heritage WA*

The recent phenomenon of referring to railways in WA as “Tier 3” or “Tier 1” has come from a report for the Freight and Logistics Council of WA on behalf of the Strategic Grains Network Committee in December 2009 by consultants Strategic Design & Development.

In this report, the grain line network is divided into three “Tiers”:

Tier 1 – the core line sections that form the basic structure of the network, mostly carrying heavy volumes and providing locations for the capture of grain to rail from the outer grain production areas.

Tier 2 – branchlines where rail services are viable based on current access rates and above-rail costs, but where an investment choice is required between periodic rail re-sleepering and the upgrade of the road network.

Tier 3 – branchlines mainly with light track, inefficient loading arrangements and low volumes, and/or where rail services are already non-competitive with road transport and are not candidates for reinvestment. In the new deregulated export grain market environment, these lines will cease to be used.

Lines carrying interstate freight and/or mineral traffic such as Kwinana-Merredin, Midland-Geraldton and Perenjori-Geraldton are not included in this classification, but can be considered to be Tier 1.

Tier 1: Kwinana-Geraldton via Moora
Geraldton-Mullewa-Perenjori
Kwinana- Southern Cross
Avon-Kalannie
Avon-Koorda
Avon-Albany
Wagin-Hyden
Lake Grace-Hyden

Tier 2: Toodyay West-Miling
Goomalling-McLevie
Koorda-Mukinbudin
Burakin-Beacon

Tier 3: West Merredin-Trayning
Perenjori-Maya
York-Quairading
Narrogin-Corrigin-West Merredin
Yilliminning-Kulin
West Merredin-Kondinin
Katanning-Nyabing
Tambellup-Gnowangerup.

GSR: Southern Spirit

Great Southern Railway's premium train “Southern Spirit” will operate as follows:

- Adelaide/Melbourne – Brisbane 29 January 2011
- Brisbane – Melbourne/Adelaide 4 February 2011
- Adelaide/Melbourne – Brisbane 12 February 2011
- Brisbane – Melbourne/Adelaide 18 February 2011
- Adelaide/Melbourne – Brisbane 26 February 2011
- Brisbane – Melbourne/Adelaide 4 March 2011

Veolia Auckland: Onehunga line opens 19 September 2010

The newly rebuilt Penrose-Onehunga branch, 3.3 km, re-opened (after 38 years) for commuter passenger trains from Sunday 19 September. A fairly generous service is provided. Trains operate every 30 minutes in peaks, and hourly in the middle of the day, evenings, Saturdays and Sundays. When services last operated in 1974 there was only a meagre peak service. Opening festivities on 18 September included shuttle steam train trips. Te Papapa is the intermediate station. New timetables were issued for all Auckland lines from 19 September. There are more trains and longer trains on other lines. Sunday services are extended two further hours into the evening.

On 24 September the new New Lynn station on the Western line opened.

Some or all Auckland suburban lines will be closed almost every weekend, as well as between Christmas and New Year, as electrification works are carried out.

TranzScenic: Patronage increase

The "Overlander" Auckland-Wellington & v.v. has had a 24% patronage increase in the last 12 months. There were 340,000 passenger journeys on the "TranzAlpine", "TranzCoastal" and "Overlander" in the past financial year, up from 306,000. Of those the "TranzAlpine", from Christchurch to Greymouth, was the most popular, with 193,000 – an 11% increase.

KiwiRail: Christchurch off line

Following the Christchurch earthquake of 4 September, rail services were suspended. There was damage to 5km of track near Kaiapoi and minor damage near Belfast and Rolleston. The Lyttleton Tunnel was undamaged. None of the 15 trains operating on South Island lines derailed when the earthquake struck, but the entire South network was closed while staff checked tracks and bridges. Extensive damage was repaired quickly. The ChCh-Greymouth & v.v. "TranzScenic" resumed service on 10 Sept and the ChCh-Picton & v.v. "TranzCoastal" on 9 Sept.

New Zealand Railway timetables

For easy links to all current NZ railway timetables go to www.aucklandtrains.co.nz/timetables/ This is a privately run website with news about NZ transport infrastructure.

Thai railway timetable

For a very comprehensive and very well-presented English timetable of the State Railway of Thailand, produced by David Bernstein, send an email to aggiebob@aol.com

Swedish opening

Services on Sweden's new 190 km Botnia railway commenced on 30 August, providing a significantly shorter route to the north.

High speed Finnish-Russian trains

High-speed Allegro electric multiple units trains between Helsinki and St. Petersburg start on 12 December cutting travel time by two hours to three and a half hours. At first two return services will be operated departing Helsinki at 1000 and 1500 and St. Petersburg at 0640 and 1525. Travel time is cut due to more modern trains, faster border formalities and upgraded line. The top speed of the Allegro is 220 km/h. By summer 2011 the number of daily return services should increase from two to four thus doubling the current service frequency. The Allegro is a joint venture by VR and RZD, Finnish and Russian Railways.

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BUS NEWS

New South Wales – Sydney

Hillsbus has reprinted a limited number of timetables for some Region 4 routes. The timetables are all dated 28 June 2010, incorporating additional trips introduced on that date or prior.

600, 603, version 3 (passport)

610, 610X, 619, version 7 (DL)

611, 630, version 3 (passport)

620, 621, 622, 642 (and 620X, 642X), version 3 (DL). T63, version 3 (passport).

Veolia Caringbah area (Region 11) Routes 967, 968, 969, 973-974, 975-976, 987, 992, 993 and 996. Effective 11 October 2010, services are being adjusted to take account of CityRail's new train timetable. Minor amendments have also been made to Routes 947, 948, 958, 961, 962, 963, 965, 971 although these routes are not being reprinted.

The changes to bus times include:

- Some AM peak services slightly earlier.
- Some PM peak services slightly earlier.
- Off-peak 978 services 4 minutes earlier.
- All Saturday services 10 - 15 minutes earlier.
- All Sunday services 15 - 20 minutes later.

Veolia Liverpool area (Region 13) Routes 901 902 903 904 S1. Effective 13 September 2010, most trips on Routes 901 and 902 from Liverpool to Holsworthy will run 5 – 7 minutes earlier, in order to improve train connections at Holsworthy. Consequently most trips on Routes 903, 904 and S1 will also run 5 – 7 minutes earlier. Route 901 and 902 buses from Holsworthy to Liverpool are mostly unchanged.

New South Wales – Regional

Newcastle Buses. A brochure setting out changes to Nightowl Services called Hassle Free Nights in Newcastle as from 3rd September 2010 has been sighted on the Newcastle Buses website but has so far not been seen in paper form.

Busways Coffs Harbour: New timetable for their routes 359, 360, 361, 365, 366 and 367. Some 360's which run from Park Beach Plaza and Park Ave now extend from Lime Tree Village to Coffs Harbour Base Hospital, likewise most full length 360's (Coffs to Macksville and return) now enter the Hospital.

Busways Port Macquarie: Due to demand two services incorporating Port Macquarie Airport commenced from Monday 13 September 2010. Route 341 offers five services on weekdays, four on Saturday and two on Sunday from Port Macquarie Town Centre. Three services per school day are available on Route 340 which connects Kempsey to Port Macquarie Airport.

Queensland - South East

Translink: A brochure for the 'CityGlider' service has been published. It has a route map, and a frequency guide which simply says 'Operating every 5 minutes in peak times and every 10-15 minutes at other times, with 24 hour service on Friday and Saturday nights'. It is also undated.

A 'Prince Charles Hospital public transport guide' dated January 2010 includes a timetable and route map for the Chermerside FlexiLink. The service is operated by 'Black & White Cabs' on behalf of Translink and accepts Translink paper tickets but not Go Cards; passengers without paper tickets must pay \$3.40.

Veolia Transport has changed the name of its Brisbane operations from Veolia Transport Brisbane Pty Ltd to Veolia Transport Queensland Pty Ltd from 17 March 2010 as part of an expansion of services in South East Queensland. This was followed by the introduction of scheduled express services operating Capalaba 0730, Brisbane 0825, Byron Bay 1025-1040, Gold Coast Airport 1130, Surfers Paradise 1200-1300, Byron Bay 1410-1450, Brisbane 1650, Capalaba 1750 and Brisbane 1000, Noosa 1200-1215, Brisbane 1400-1445, Noosa 1610-1630, Brisbane 1830. The Brisbane-Noosa service is dated 12th April, 2010. Veolia has also commenced airport shuttles between Brisbane's south east suburbs and Brisbane Airport.

AirAsia X has introduced an airport shuttle bus service between Brisbane and Gold Coast Airport to meet with their regular flights. Operating under the name AA Express the service operates Toowong 0500, Roma St 0510, Sunnybank 0530, Garden City 0545 Gold Coast Airport 0640 (connecting with 0840 departure) - 0830 (connecting from 0725 arrival), Garden City 0930, Sunnybank 0945, Roma St 1015, Toowong 1030 from 28/03/2010 to 30/10/2010

South Australia - Adelaide

Diversion of Services W90 and W91: The Adelaide Metro website advises that services W90 and W91 have been diverted from Leah St Forestville from the first service on 3 September until further notice due to the imposition of heavy load restrictions on Leah St. This results in the diversion of the services between the City and St Marys or Marion Shopping Centre from Leader St, Leah St and East Terrace and the temporary closure of all stops along those streets. Buses will operate instead along Goodwood Road and Cross Road and then rejoining the normal route in Winston Ave. Notices were attached to the relevant bus stops.

Tasmania - Hobart

Metro Hobart: The demand for commuter bus transport from Kingston to Hobart has been growing quickly this year and Metro responded by adding ten extra services in the morning and afternoon peak periods as from 2 August. More buses may be needed when the park 'n ride site at Kingston is completed (see also September *Table Talk*).

The cessation of the last industrial bus service in Hobart

While the commuter traffic from the Kingborough area is booming, the cessation of an industrial service in Hobart's north provides a graphic contrast in the public transport world. It is believed that the last industrial bus service in Hobart operated on 30 July. A variation of Route 16, the 7.20am 16Z service from City to Glenorchy via Lutana and Goodwood, diverted to the Zinc Works upon request. According to Metro only one or two passengers requested the 3.2km detour, leading to the decision to discontinue the service variation.

In the process of publicising the cessation of the 16Z (Z for Zinc Works) a little piece of economic/corporate history was uncovered. The Notice to Passengers, dated 28 July, referred to "7.20am Route 16Z Cancellation of Nyrstar (on request detour)"

Nyrstar is the name of the current owner of the zinc refinery – one of the largest in the world. Metro's route map identified the refinery site at Risdon as EZ Company (Electrolytic Zinc – the long time operator of the refinery) while the footnote to the map refers to Pasmenco EZ – the operator prior to Nyrstar.

As is the case with most industrial services in urban areas, passenger numbers have been falling, quite dramatically, over the past 50 years. For example in 1955, the Tasmanian Government Railways provided six trains on Monday to Friday from Hobart to Risdon, with eight-car locomotive hauled trains at the change of shifts in both the morning and afternoon. Rail motors of various combinations provided other services on weekdays and at weekends. It is

interesting to note that the 7.20am 16Z bus was apparently the replacement for the TGR train which had departed Hobart at 7.10am for Risdon.

More changes on the Eastern Shore: Changes to Eastern Shore bus services in 2009 brought Metro considerable criticism from some commuters due to longer journey times from outlying suburbs to Hobart. Metro introduced, as from 16 August 2010, changes to ten services in order to provide quicker services to the City from Camelot Park, Clarendon Vale, Lauderdale and Opossum Bay. Five services on Routes 630, 632, 638 and 642 now travel to the City from the last pick up at Shoreline Central at Howrah via the South Arm and Tasman Highways instead of via Clarence Street, Bellerive. Four other services on Routes 613, 615 and 630 now travel via Rosny Hill Road in lieu of a Rosny Park diversion.

Other changes: From 6 August, Route 29 which operates from Springfield Interchange to Tolosa Street Glenorchy, has been simplified with the diversions via Oxford Crescent and Sixth Avenue deleted.

Tasmania - Regional

Tassielink Transit: Previously unreported, Tassielink discontinued the trial Saturday services on the Campania/Richmond and Cressy/Longford routes, as from 3 April. The last services ran on 31 March, a date which was publicised on 19 December 2009 when the services commenced. However, the two return trips on Saturday from Geeveston and Huonville to Hobart, also dating from 19 December, remain in the timetable as do the two return weekday trips from Cygnet to Hobart via Huonville, which started on 1 February 2010.

Metro Regional: From 23 August the Bothwell to Hobart Route 140E service in the morning operates set down only between the Glenorchy Bus Station and City in an attempt to speed up the service and improve its level of reliability.

Victoria – Melbourne

Doncaster Area Rapid Transit (DART): New Smartbus route structure and timetables were introduced on 4 October 2010. Revised routes are:

- 905 City to The Pines SC via Templestowe (replaces route 301).
- 906 City to Warrandyte via The Pines SC (replaces route 304). Three am peak trips start from Ringwood and three pm peak trips extend to Ringwood (Monday to Friday only).
- 907 City to Mitcham via Doncaster Park + Ride (replace route 307). No longer runs via Doncaster Shoppingtown but instead stops at Doncaster Rd (Corner of Williamsons Rd, Doncaster Junction).
- 908 City to The Pines SC via Doncaster Park + Ride (replace route 308/319).

Changes to other National Bus routes:

293: Now runs via Elgar Rd instead of Station St.

302: Revised timetable including additional peak services

303: Combined with 306, running to Ringwood North instead of Mitcham, with four trips in each direction.

313: Truncated to Doncaster Park+Ride.

318: Extended to Deep Creek, with six trips in each direction.

364: Truncated to Warrandyte Bridge.

Other National Bus routes to receive revised timetables on October 4 include:

202, 235/237/238 (Fishermans Bend area), 250/251/253 (Garden City to Northland area), 280, 281, 282, 305, 309, 315

Skybus Melbourne Airport service: A new timetable with increased frequencies was introduced on 1 September. From the Southern Cross terminal, frequencies from 0130 to 0430 have been doubled to 30 minutes. Then 15 minutes to 0600, 10 minutes to 2330 (extended from 2030) then 15 minutes to 0130. Patronage since 2000 has quadrupled to nearly 2 million passengers per year and the Company has purchased additional articulated buses.

Smartbus 901 Frankston to Melbourne Airport (Grenda) commenced on 26 September 2010. The Metlink DL booklet format (85 pages) dated 26 September, 2010 v.1 (Aug 10) is divided into sections: Section A+B: Frankston Station to Ringwood Station; Section D+C: Ringwood Station to Epping Station; Section E: Epping Station to Melbourne Airport. The route is 115 kilometres long and running times are approximately four hours in each direction. Frequencies are generally 15 minutes during week days; 30 minutes at night and weekends.

Sunbury Bus Service: The new timetables from 6 September 2010 (refer July *Table Talk*) include new **Route 489** Sunbury to Canterbury Hills. There are improvements to four existing routes:

Route 481 (Sunbury Railway Station - Mount Lion): is re-routed to run via Anderson Road and extended to provide services from Mount Lion

Route 485 (Sunbury Railway Station - Wilsons Lane): is re-routed to Wilsons Lane via Charter Road West, Collins Street and Bradman Drive

Route 487 (Sunbury Railway Station - Killara Heights): is re-routed to run via Stewarts Lane and Stockfield St. This provides a more direct service from Killara Heights to Sunbury Station.

Route 488 (Sunbury - Jacksons Hill): is re-routed to run via Nottinghill Rise, The Strand and Bellview Drive, to provide a more direct service to Sunbury Station from the developing area of Jacksons Hill. Operating hours are also extended to 2100, seven days a week.

Route 400 Sunshine – Laverton (Westrans): New timetable from 10 October with minor route alteration in the Derrimut area. Trip times are unaltered.

Route 571 (East West). A new timetable was introduced on 26 September. Services will now only operate between Epping Station & Morang South Primary School, with the Epping Station - Roxburgh Park section replaced by SmartBus 901. Between Plenty Valley SC & Morang South Primary School the bus will now operate via Morang Dr, Centernary Dr, Plenty Rd & Gorge Rd in both directions - the loop operation is being removed. A 571 bus (Trainlink)

will continue to connect with every train at Epping Station - in peak periods there will be up to 9 buses an hour between Epping Station & Plenty Valley Shopping Centre (routes 571 & 901).

Route 609 Hawthorn to Fairfield via Royal Talbot Centre (Dysons): From 4 October, the morning trips from each end run 10 minutes earlier and the trips from and to Fairfield are extended to serve VATMI. These are workers services; no trips cover the whole route.

Routes 670 Ringwood – Lilydale and 691 Boronia – Waverley Gardens (Invicta): new timetables from 4 October

Routes 688, 694 and 696 (US Bus Lines/Ventura): The revised services (refer August *Table Talk*) commenced on 30 August with new timetables.

Victoria - Regional

Possible improvements to Latrobe Valley bus services

In mid-2009 consultations were undertaken by the State Government involving community groups, Latrobe City Council, Latrobe Valley Bus Lines and the public in the Latrobe Valley to improve bus services in the area. Key issues identified were:

- improved connections with V/Line rail and coach services
- reduction in travel times on the intertown route (Moe-Morwell-Traralgon)
- improved frequencies on town services
- services to new estates and outlying towns
- services to Churchill and Monash University

It is hoped that a new route structure will be introduced in coming months (certainly leading up to the State election).

Some of the possible changes could include:

- new Traralgon South - Traralgon - Tyers - Yallourn North route and/or extension of the existing Moe - Yallourn North service to Tyers and Traralgon
- extended operating times of the intertown service to correspond with the visiting hours (20.00) of the Latrobe Valley Regional Hospital which is on the route and a key driver of traffic
- reorganisation of town routes in Traralgon to improve services to Traralgon East including the new estate in Ellavale
- earlier start and later finishing times of all town services in Moe, Morwell and Traralgon to suit office workers, etc.
- possible Saturday afternoon town services (not all routes)
- possible new Morwell town route covering the north and western part of the city which has seen recent new housing development linking with the Southside route and running to Mid Valley
- possible new Newborough - Moe - Moe North route covering industrial areas and new residential development and relieving pressure off the intertown service
- possible new Churchill town loop connecting with services from Traralgon and Morwell and making trips to Boolarra and/or extension of Morwell and Traralgon Churchill services to run as a town loop between runs
- more services to Monash University
- services running past libraries and nursing homes where possible
- tweaking of existing town services in Morwell and Moe to adjust for residential changes
- improved connections with V/Line services particularly in peak times
- better signage and low floor buses for all services

In recent weeks route numbers have been started to be displayed on the destinations of town service buses in Moe, Morwell and Traralgon which have not been shown for years so this could be the sign of things to come.

Maryborough Transit Train Connector

An extended trial bus service has been introduced with new services as part of the restoration of Maryborough rail services. The service provides a demand-responsive service to meet with morning and afternoon trains and an around-town fixed-route service that operate every day except Sundays and public holidays. Passengers must present a valid V/Line ticket for free travel or the standard fare of \$1 concession or \$2 full applies.

The demand-responsive service will pick up residents near their homes inside the town boundary and take them to Maryborough Station by 0710 weekdays and 0650 on Saturdays in time for the train. On arrival of the train at Maryborough, the bus will depart five minutes later and set down passengers as arranged inside the town boundary. Bookings for the demand-responsive service must be made between 0900 and 1700 before the day of travel.

Member for Ripon Mr Joe Helper said the extended fixed-route service now operated from 0713 to 1500 and 1700 to 1830 weekdays and from 0700 to 0900 and 1700 to 1830 on Saturdays.

Geelong UCI Road World Championship cycling event

More than 2700 extra bus services (a 66 per cent increase) were scheduled across Geelong and the Bellarine Peninsula for this event from Wednesday 29 September to Sunday 3 October. With a significant amount of road closures, buses operated on revised routes for the duration of the event. Two temporary bus interchanges were established in central Geelong – one at Little Malop St West (Johnstone Park) and the other at Little Malop St East (behind Officeworks). Minister of Transport Martin Pakula said event organisers expected that the course would be lined with up to 300,000 spectators across the five days of competition, including 150,000 on the Sunday alone.

Western Australia – Perth

Transperth has announced new trial service, Route 529. (Armadale - Cockburn Central). Commencing Sunday 17 October 2010, Route 529 will provide direct access between Armadale Station and Cockburn Central Station, extending to Cockburn Gateway Shopping City outside peak periods. The proposed service will operate Monday to Friday on a 30-minute frequency during peak and on an hourly frequency outside peak periods.

David Whiteford reports: The route is very direct, using Armadale Road, and most of it is along what was the route of the Armadale - Jandakot - Fremantle railway (closed 1963). I can recall having a timetable for an Armadale - Fremantle bus service that ran either one or two days per week, once in each direction, in the early 1970s but it has been a long time since that ran and since Armadale had such a public transport link to the west.

Thanks to Simon Aalbers, Tony Bailey, Ian Cooper, Steven Haby, Len Regan, Lourie Smit, Victorian Ministry of Transport, Roger Wheaton, David Whiteford and contributors to the Australian Transport Discussion Board.

AIR NEWS

International

Air Niugini added a tenth weekly service from Port Moresby to Cairns from late August, operating on Tuesdays with the return from Cairns on Wednesday.

Garuda Indonesia will introduce a daily service Sydney-Jakarta from 20 December, increasing the existing capacity by four flights a week.

British Airways and **Iberia** have agreed to merge.

LAN Chile has taken control of Brazilian airline **TAM**.

Aerolinas Argentina is scheduled to drop services to Auckland from January 2011 and fly non-stop Sydney-Buenos Aires.

V Australia, despite increasing services to South Africa (see Sept *Table Talk*) will redeploy aircraft from that route to serve Sydney-Abu Dhabi thrice weekly from Feb. 2011 and ex Brisbane from Feb. 2012. The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has not approved an alliance between **Virgin** and **Air New Zealand**.

Qantas will provide an additional Brisbane to Los Angeles service on Mondays bringing the service to daily for the period 3 January to 21 March 2011.

Jetstar will introduce 39 extra weekly trips between Auckland, Christchurch, Wellington and Queenstown by the 2011 Rugby World Cup in NZ.

Malaysia will introduce three weekly non-stop flights from Perth to Kota Kinabalu effective 15 January 2011. Flights will depart Perth at 0040 on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday and arrive in Kota Kinabalu at 0615. From Kota Kinabalu, flights will depart at 1800 on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday and arrive in Perth at 2325.

Domestic

Jetstar has added ten additional weekly Melbourne-Adelaide flights and extra daily services from Melbourne to Brisbane and Newcastle, taking frequencies to three daily to Adelaide and Brisbane and four times daily to Newcastle (four times a week from 31 October and every day from 6 December). Sydney will also be bolstered with additional daily services to Brisbane and Adelaide with five extra weekly services to Townsville and Ballina. The majority of the additional flights will be added from early December, with the additional Sydney-Brisbane flights on 13 January.

Brindabella Airlines:

- Commenced weekday Brisbane-Moree flights from July: Brisbane 1015-Moree 1125, Moree 1150-Brisbane 1305;
- Commenced weekday flights Sydney-Cobar from 24 September on a four months trial: Sydney 0645-Cobar 0810, Cobar 0840-Sydney 1000. In addition there are Friday flights: Sydney 1630-Cobar 1755, Cobar 1825-Sydney 2000.

Thanks to Tony Bailey, Tris Tottenham and the *Australian* for Air news.

FERRY NEWS

The NSW government has backed down on proposed cuts to Sydney Ferries timetables after outraged commuters feared longer waits (see September *Table Talk*, page 13). The main request was for more services to wharves along the Parramatta River during peak times.

The timetable now increases from six to 11 the services from Cabarita to the CBD in the morning peak, and from seven to 10 in the evening peak. There will be 11, up from eight, services from Abbotsford to the CBD in the morning peak and 10, up from eight, leaving the CBD in the evening peak. There will also be 10 services from Chiswick to the CBD in the morning peak and 10 services from Drummoyne. Among other changes:

- Extra late night services to Neutral Bay, Mosman and the Balmain/Woolwich precincts will be reinstated.
- More services to and from Huntleys Point and Chiswick.
- The 1514 RiverCat to McMahons Point, used by a large number of school students, will remain.

Thanks to the *Sydney Morning Herald* for Ferry news.