



TABLE TALK

AUSTRALIAN TIMETABLE NEWS

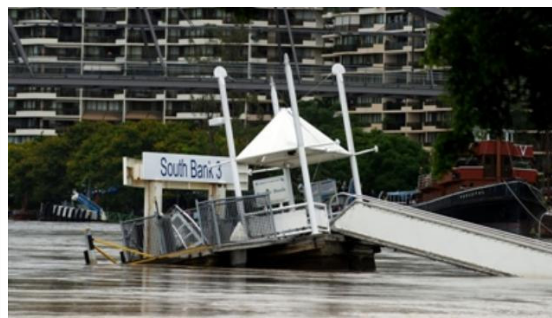
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Summer of disasters

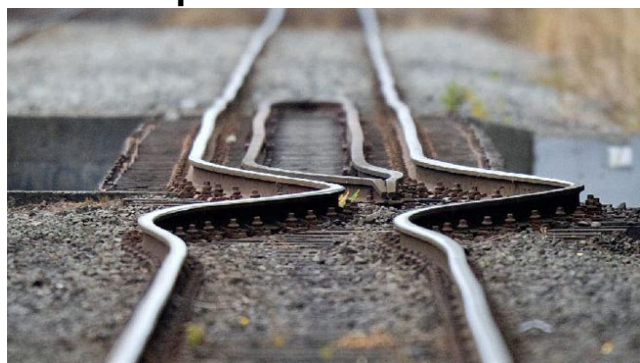
Queensland floods



Victorian floods



Christchurch earthquake



About *Table Talk*

Table Talk is published monthly by the Australian Association of Timetable Collectors Inc. (Registration No. A0043673H) as a journal of record covering recent timetable news items. The AATTC also publishes the *Times* covering timetable history and analysis. Contributions are very welcome and should be sent to the appropriate Editor.

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RAIL NEWS

QR National: coal contract

QR National has won a \$600 million contract for the transport of coal from Jellinbah Resources new Lake Vermont mine to Abbott Point near Bowen. The trains will use the new "missing link: line from Central Queensland to Newlands.

Queensland: Water everywhere

In anticipation of the arrival of category 5 Cyclone Yasi in North Queensland, Queensland Rail operated a special train on Tuesday 2 February to help evacuate people. It departed Townsville at 1600 and Proserpine at 2000. Services north of Townsville were cancelled. The Kuranda Scenic Railway was closed from the afternoon of 2 February until 7 February. On 3 February no services ran north of Rockhampton. Next day, trains ran as far as Bowen, and to Townsville by 8 February. The Inlander from Townsville to Mt Isa on 3 February and return on 4 February were cancelled. Trains commenced running west of Toowoomba much sooner than expected, on 2 February. In mid-February, the line from Townsville to Cairns remained closed with extensive repairs required, particularly to level crossing infrastructure. Freight was trucked from Townsville to Cairns. The line was expected to reopen in late February. The Sunlander and Cairns Tilt Trains commenced and terminated in Townsville, with buses provided north of Townsville. The Spirit of the Outback train was operating to Emerald with buses further west. The Central line from Emerald to Winton re-opened from 18 February. The Western line through Toowoomba is expected to reopen in April. *Our front cover shows damage on the Toowoomba Range.*

The Queensland Government will delay the proposed \$7 billion Brisbane Cross-River rail project for at least two years until 2015 to help fund the \$5 billion damage bill for infrastructure that was affected by flooding. Premier Anna Bligh said that delaying Cross River-Rail would only "inconvenience commuters" and was a small price to pay for the flood disaster. It is estimated that Brisbane's current cross-river link will reach peak-hour capacity by 2016.

More weather

Severe storms caused the cancellation of Kuranda Tourist trains Cairns-Kuranda from 24 to 26 February. On the same dates, the east-west railway was closed by floods near Northam, WA and the "Indian Pacific" cancelled.

Great Southern Railways: Indian Pacific reduced frequency

GSR's Public timetable of 1 April 2010 indicated that the IP Sunday departure from Perth and the Wednesday departure from Sydney would not operate during Autumn/Winter 2011. However, instead it is now the other departure, Wednesday from Perth, and Saturday from Sydney that will not operate from 2 April until 27 August. RailCorp NSW Special Train Notice 0520-2011 refers.

Infrastructure Australia: National Land Freight Strategy

On 22 February, the Federal Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Anthony Albanese, released a National Land Freight Strategy discussion paper. The paper argues the case for an integrated freight network across all modes. Among railway projects proposed for discussion are the Melbourne-Brisbane direct inland railway, and a railway from Geraldton, WA to the Pilbara, and standardization of railways to Hastings Victoria, Bunbury, WA, along the Queensland Coast and inland to Mt Isa. To view the document access

www.infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/national_freight/files/NLFS_220211.pdf

High Speed Rail Study

The Federal Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Anthony Albanese MP, announced on 1 February that the feasibility study to determine the economic benefits and financial viability of a high speed rail network along Australia's east coast has started. A consortia lead by AECOM Australia, and including KPMG, Sinclair Knight Merz and Grimshaw Architects, will identify possible route and station options, to provide the basis for determining indicative transit times and construction costs. This first stage is expected to be completed by the middle of 2011. Shortly thereafter, the study's second stage will determine an optimum route alignment, identify patronage levels, develop robust cost estimates and investigate financing options. The study will build on previous work that's been done and, once completed, will provide the basis for an informed public debate about whether this technology is an appropriate response to our nation's future transport needs.

The study's **terms of reference** are:

A strategic study will be undertaken on the implementation of a high speed rail network on the east coast of Australia. The study will focus on identifying possible routes, corridor preservation and station options, including city-centre, city-periphery and airport stations. This will provide a basis for route development, indicative transit times and high-level construction costs.

As part of the core network element at the centre of the east coast corridor, the Newcastle-Sydney 'spine' will be a central aspect of this work. Options for links northwards to Brisbane and southwards to Canberra and Melbourne will also be considered.

Specifically the study will:

- Identify undeveloped land corridors and/or existing corridors that could be considered for a high speed railway, and preservation strategies;
- Identify the main design decisions and requirements to build and operate a viable high speed rail network on the east coast of Australia;
- Present route and station options, including indicative construction costs and interaction with other transport modes;
- Provide costs estimates of undertaking the next stages of work, such as detailed route alignment identification and corridor resumptions;
- Identify potential financing and business operating models for the construction and operation of a high speed railway;
- Provide advice and options on relevant construction, engineering, financial and environmental considerations.

The study will be managed by the Department of Infrastructure and Transport. It will draw on expertise from the public and private sectors, as well as international experience, growth forecasts and other contemporary data. Stakeholders will be consulted and contribute views through a formal reference group, which will include representatives from relevant Commonwealth, state and territory agencies and other key stakeholder groups.

The high speed rail implementation study will by July 2011:

- Identify the requirements for implementation of a viable HSR network on the east coast;
- Identify strategic route and station options, including high-level costing.

This initial phase will provide a basis for consultation and inform the specific direction of a second phase, including consideration of the specific corridors, routes and associated issues to be targeted for more detailed examination.

Further work from July 2011 will include:

- Detailed corridor alignment identification;
- Identification of preliminary geotechnical issues;
- Development of comprehensive robust cost estimates for preferred options;
- Further investigation of investment and (public and private) financing options;
- Detailed patronage and revenue forecasts;
- Consideration of preferred options in relation to other modes (for example, airport capacity implications resulting from diversion of air traffic to train).

This final work and report will take approximately 12 months to complete and inform the Australian Government and state and territory governments' consideration of next steps for high speed rail in Australia.

ARTC & Countrylink: Victorian North East line conversion

Between 19 February and 4 March the former broad gauge line between Benalla and Wodonga was commissioned as a new standard gauge line. It is known as the West line. The former standard gauge line is now known as the East line. There are now two parallel standard gauge lines from Seymour to Wodonga. Both lines are available for bi-directional operation under Centralised Train Control controlled from June. Although the lines are signaled for bi-directional running, the sections on the "wrong" lines provide for only one train in the sections Seymour Benalla and Benalla-Wodonga.

To provide for this work Countrylink's XPTs were cancelled south of Albury between 19 February and 3 March and replaced by buses on slower schedules. Buses for Countrylink ticketed passengers departed Melbourne one hour earlier than the usual times. Buses for V/Line ticketed passengers departed Melbourne at the normal scheduled times. (While V/Line services to Albury are suspended, one carriage of the daylight XPTs is reserved for V/Line passengers). The first northbound standard gauge freight train on the West line from Benalla to Wodonga operated on 19 February.

ARTC: Line improvements

Australian Rail Track Corporation has commenced community consultation as part of the planning for curve easing works on the **NSW North Coast line**. Curves near Urunga railway bridge and a curve near Lyons Road Sawtell are currently being investigated. Preliminary site works currently being undertaken include survey, cable location, land access, soil and environmental investigations. The full program involves 58 locations and should reduce transit times.

In mid-February a new passing loop at **Monteith, SA** on the Melbourne-Adelaide line was completed. The \$5.9 million project involved almost 2km of new track.

ARTC: Amendments to Working Timetable

ARTC Train Alteration Advice 0283-2011 was a minor document, advising the cancellation from 10 April of one freight a week (7PS7 and 3SP6) from Perth to Sydney and v.v. Its significance is that this is the first time that any amendment to

ARTC's Working Timetable (aka as Master Train Plan) has been posted on their website. Therefore, it may be worth keeping an eye on the "Operations" section of www.artc.com.au for more such notices.

It is believed that the ARTC will introduce a new Working Timetable from 11 April.

Countrylink: North Coast buses 13 February 2011

From 13 February Countrylink buses connecting to/from XPTs at Casino have made an additional stop at Lismore Town. Consequently, all buses have their journey times extended by three to five minutes, except the afternoon bus from Brisbane to Casino which now leaves Brisbane ten minutes earlier at 1510. A double sided DL leaflet dated 13 February has been printed replacing pages 6 & 7 in the North Coast public timetable booklet.

Countrylink: Working Timetable?

Has any reader ever seen a Countrylink Working Timetable or Staff Reference Timetable? If so, could you please advise the Rail editor (abvi@iinet.net.au).

CityRail: Major shutdown 19-20 February

On the weekend of 19 & 20 February the City Circle was closed for a range of work, including insertion of concrete sleepers and point renewal at Central. Work also took place on the upgrading of Newtown station. Trains from the Outer West and North (Epping) line terminated at Central, from the inner West at Ashfield, from the East Hills line at Redfern, from the Bankstown line at Sydenham, and from the North Shore at Wynyard.

CityRail: Timetable change 31 January 2011

The 1700 Central to Gosford service is now operated by an Oscar set and stops at West Ryde at 1721.

CityRail: Flinders station

Construction of Flinders station, 1 km north of Dunmore, has commenced. It will have a crossing loop and two platforms. When complete, Dunmore (Shellharbour) station will close.

NSW: Vote for us and we'll give you a new timetable

On 20 February, at the Coalition's policy launch for the NSW Election, to be held on 26 March, Leader of the Opposition, Barry O'Farrell, promised additional express peak hour weekday train services from outer commuter areas. Promised were trains from

- Blue Mountains: one extra AM service stopping at Katoomba-Springfield-Penrith-Blacktown-Parramatta-Strathfield-Central.
- Penrith: five new services including one extra AM peak hour and two extra AM and two extra PM semi-express services, stopping at Emu Plains-Penrith-all to Mt Druitt-Blacktown-Seven Hills-Parramatta-Granville-Strathfield-Redfern-City.
- Campbelltown: 16 additional express train services, one per hour from 0600 to 2000, stopping Macarthur-Campbelltown-Glenfield-Wolli Creek-International Airport-Domestic Airport-Mascot-Green Square-Central (contingent upon completion of the South Sydney Freight Line and the Liverpool turnback)
- Central Coast: six new services including the first direct link between the Central Coast and Macquarie Park/Macquarie University, three additional AM peak and three additional PM peak services, stopping Wyong-Gosford-Woy Woy-Hornsby-Epping-Macquarie Uni-Macquarie Park-North Ryde-Chatswood-Artarmon-St Leonards-Wollstonecraft-Waverton-North Sydney-Milsons Point-Wynyard-Town Hall-Central.

Sydney: Proposed North West line

The *Sydney Morning Herald* reported on 16 February that the NSW Opposition's pledge to prioritise Sydney's proposed north-west rail line, from Epping to Rouse Hill, could lead to service cuts on other lines, including connections to the north shore and central coast, if it does not also invest in extra rail capacity, according to an analysis by the Department of Transport. Only two trains per hour would be able to run from a new north-west link to the CBD without timetable changes and possible service cuts elsewhere.

The Dept. presents four options that would allow extra trains into the city. One is to reduce services from the central coast, Hornsby, Berowra or Gordon that travel to the city through the north shore line. If services from Hornsby and Gordon on the north shore line were reduced from 14 in the peak hour to 10, it would create room on the north shore line for six trains per hour from the north-west to enter the CBD. The north shore line already runs 18 trains into the CBD at peak hour, and has a current capacity of only 20 trains. Another option is to shuttle trains from Rouse Hill to Epping and Chatswood. This would have the disadvantage of adding to crowding on existing lines, at Epping and Chatswood stations, and require passengers on the new link to change trains before arriving at the CBD. A third option is to run trains from Hornsby though Strathfield to the CBD. But this would again require passengers north of Epping to change trains before arriving at Town Hall or Wynyard. The final option would be to run trains from the north-west through Strathfield to the CBD, but that would also require patrons of the new line to change trains at Central.

The Dept. noted that "The scenarios highlight that, without the injection of major new capacity through the CBD, a range of timetable modifications will be required to accommodate the NWRL. This will require changes, and in some cases potential reductions, to services on the existing RailCorp network."

Victoria: Regional Rail Link project

Further to the report in January's *Table Talk* (page 4), about the possible cancellation by the new Victorian State government of the Regional Rail Link project, its future is now also threatened by both increased estimates of its cost, and by the need to divert Federal government expenditures in the aftermath of the successive Queensland natural disasters (see above). The Federal government had pledged \$3.2 billion towards the project and the former Victorian government

\$1.1 billion, Now the Federal government wants to hold back \$500 million to help pay for Queensland rebuilding. In addition, latest estimates are that the project's cost has increased by \$700 million to \$5.3 billion.

The project is mainly to provide V/Line trains with their own rail line into Melbourne. It would also provide local services to new suburbs north of Werribee. The project envisages 50 km of new line from Werribee to Melbourne Southern Cross Station. The 22.5 km open-field section of the project from Deer Park to Werribee had reached the stage of short-listing possible contractors. Expressions of Interest had been called for other stages. The question of compensation to prospective contractors may now arise. Meanwhile, however, two additional platforms at SX Station are nearly complete. These are the first stage of the project. These can be justified whether or not the rest of the project goes ahead.

In the aftermath of the floods, the Federal government has delayed \$100 million funding for the Northern Sydney Freight Line, although Federal Infrastructure and Transport Minister Anthony Albanese, insists the project will go ahead. \$56 million for extension of the Adelaide O-Bahn into the City has also been moved back.

Victoria: More water

V/Line repaired the flood damaged railway in the vicinity of Kerang quicker than expected. Consequently, passenger trains resumed between Bendigo and Swan Hill from Friday 4 February.

V/Line's freight line to Mildura was closed for a second time by floods in the second week of February, but only briefly. V/Line's Kulwin and Robinvale lines were more seriously affected, and may be closed until about May. *Our front cover shows damage at Charlton and at Inglewood.*

Victoria: Sydenham-Sunbury

The mainline from Sydenham (aka as Watergardens) to Sunbury, 15 km, was transferred from the control of V/Line to the control of Metro Trains Melbourne on 12 December 2010, to facilitate electrification for suburban trains.

V/Line: Abandon your plans to charter a train to Yaapet

The Dimboola to Yaapet line, 84 km, was placed out of service from 14 December 2010 because of poor track condition. This line, when open, is used for wheat traffic.

V/Line: Major closedown 23-28 February

A major closedown from 23 to 28 February resulted in no trains south of Geelong. Buses provided services. This is part of a \$25 million program to renew 16 level crossings and replace up to 86,000 sleepers between Geelong and Warrnambool. Over coming months further service alterations will occur as these works are carried out. The upgrade is expected to be finished in August.

V/Line: New Geelong-Colac bus 14 Feb

From 14 February, a bus connection is provided from the Monday-Friday 1613 Melbourne-Geelong train. The bus departs Geelong at 1730 and runs to Colac arriving at 1900 – see Bus news item.

Metro trains Melbourne: 8 May 2011 timetable

Last month, Table Talk ran a fairly complete and critical review of the Metro Train Melbourne's new timetable of May 2011 (see pages 5-6). So, this month, for the sake of completeness, and to give their side of the story, we will do what we usually do not do, and run a Press Release in full and unedited. This is what Metro Trains Melbourne says:

Metro has signalled the biggest overhaul of Melbourne's train schedule in more than a decade with an improved timetable starting from Sunday 8 May. The new timetable sees 635 new weekly services added across the network – more than double the amount of services added in October, and more than triple the amount added in June last year. These changes take the total number of services per week to 14,000 – a record high on the metropolitan network.

Metro CEO Andrew Lezala said it was the first major step of a complete re-write of the metropolitan timetable, which essentially involved going back to first principles to enable the untangling of the network. "We are building a higher capacity, higher reliability railway with a simple timetable that can be expanded to meet Melbourne's future growth," Mr Lezala said. "These changes are part of a step-by-step process to simplify the timetable by segregating lines to improve the reliability of the railway. We expect to minimise the effects of disruptions for our customers by isolating each line to help avoid any flow-on effect of delays on other lines. Future stages will see other lines operating independently from each other, minimising the impact of any service disruptions for our customers." Mr Lezala said a key priority is ensuring customers are fully informed of all changes.

Some of the major changes include an additional:

- 37 new services each weekday on the Werribee line (including 10 new peak services each weekday);
- 25 new services each weekday on the Belgrave/Lilydale line (including two new morning peak services, one from Blackburn and one from Ringwood, each weekday);
- 18 new services each weekday on the Sandringham line (including eight new peak services);
- 17 new services each weekday on the Cranbourne/Pakenham line;
- 15 new services each weekday on the Frankston line; and
- four new services each weekday on the Glen Waverley line (including one morning peak service).

Other key changes

- All Alamein line services and all Belgrave/Lilydale line services starting from Blackburn to the city before midday (34 in total) will now run through the City Loop.
- All morning services on the Glen Waverley line (34 in total) will run at a frequency of between seven and eight minutes and will run direct to Flinders Street. A cross-platform change at Richmond will enable a direct change

for City Loop station customers, with connecting Loop services running every one to three minutes throughout the morning peak.

- An average 11 minute service from Werribee during the morning peak will operate express from Laverton to Newport, with all services to and from Werribee running express to Flinders St.
- Weekday service frequency between 9am and 4:30pm for Aircraft, Hoppers Crossing and Werribee stations reduces from the current average of 10 minutes to 20 minutes however, the average service frequency between Newport and Flinders street will become 11 minutes. There is currently a four and 16 minute service between Newport and the city.
- Peak time service frequency for Williamstown, Williamstown Beach and North Williamstown stations reduces from the current 20 minutes to 22 minutes however, the same number of services will run during peak times on the Williamstown line. All weekday services between 9am and 4:30pm will run through to Flinders Street instead of the current shuttle service between Williamstown and Newport.
- An additional one to three minutes has been incorporated into the scheduled journey time of most Cranbourne/Pakenham, Frankston and Sandringham line services, reflecting current journey times and making their timetabled journey times more realistic.
- Post-evening peak service frequency increases to 20 minutes (from 30 minutes) until about 10pm on the Cranbourne/Pakenham, Werribee and Williamstown lines.
- Capacity will be doubled on all Craigieburn, Sydenham, Upfield and Werribee line evening and weekend services, with all services operating as six-carriage trains instead of three-carriage trains. There are no other changes to weekend timetables however, Metro aims to introduce a number of significant weekend timetable changes later this year.

Full details of all the changes, including PDF copies, will available from metrotrains.com.au at the end of March.

Mr Lezala pointed to major works which will help make this timetable change possible. He said further timetable changes will be made possible with the continuation of infrastructure upgrades. "We're conducting some large-scale works on the Spencer Street viaduct during the Easter and Anzac Day long weekend, platform extensions at Frankston, as well as works to build new or upgrade existing sidings at Brighton Beach, Mordialloc, Upfield, Craigieburn and Newport."

Mr Lezala also said at least 20 of the new X'Trapolis trains will be in service when the new timetable comes into effect, giving Metro greater flexibility with its train fleet. "We've focused these changes on where they're needed most. More trains means more capacity, and as the rollout of the 38 new trains continues, we'll keep putting those trains to where they're needed most."

Timetables can be picked up from premium stations by the end of April. Metro will continue to make one or two timetable changes each year.

TasRail: Altered timetable 13 February 2011

TasRail's Working Timetable of 24 January 2010 (which was reproduced in the March 2010 *Table Talk*) was amended from 13 February 2011. The daily Burnie-Boyer and Boyer-Burnie freights run one hour earlier. The every second or third day Conara-Railton train runs four and a half hours earlier and the return five hours earlier. These changes were advised on their website and in a prominent advertisement in the Hobart *Mercury* on 16 February. This is probably the first time ever that changes to a freight train Working Timetable have been advertised in the daily press.

Adelaide Metro: Dry Creek Railcar depot

The new Adelaide Railcar depot at Dry Creek commenced full operation from 5 February with the final transfer of railcars from the former depot next to Adelaide station. The former depot is now construction sites for the new Royal Adelaide Hospital. To facilitate traffic operations, railcar storage sidings have been established on the site of the former north car yard at Adelaide station. These are used during the day to store railcars to avoid unnecessary transferring of vehicles between Dry Creek and Adelaide station between peak periods.

Adelaide Metro: Electrification

Electrification of the Adelaide rail network will start in 2012. The SA Government has awarded a \$10.2 million contract to Laing O'Rourke for work on 98 km from Adelaide to Gawler Central, Seaford, and Outer Harbor. The first electric trains will run on the new Seaford rail line in 2013, and on the Noarlunga and Gawler lines later that year, with electrification of the Outer Harbor line to be completed in 2015. The Seaford extension, now under construction, is expected to be the testing ground for the new electric trains when they arrive. This will occur before it is connected fully to the City through Noarlunga. The Belair line has been left out of the electrification because of "engineering difficulties". Whether the Grange line is included or not is unclear. There is no mention of it in publicity. It is not well patronised and the idea of a combined tramway linking it to Football Park at West Lakes may well be a white elephant as AFL will probably return to the Adelaide Oval. The Tonsley line has previously been said to be included in the Noarlunga line scheme. There is an investigation well underway to assess extending it to a big interchange at the Flinders Medical Centre and University, as part of an upgrade of the South Road connection with the Southern Expressway.

WA: Karara railway construction commences

Construction of a 79 km railway from Tilley (near Morawa) to Karara in the WA mid-north has commenced. It will serve a new iron ore mine owned by Gindalbie Metals. The branch is being constructed with dual narrow/standard gauge sleepers in case it is ever converted to standard gauge.

Wellington: 20 February 2011 new timetables

From 20 February 2011 Paraparaumu line electric train services were extended one stop to Waikanae. The Paraparaumu line was renamed the Kapiti line since it serves communities along the Kapiti Coast. Running time on the new section is

five minutes. Connecting bus services were altered as detailed in the Bus News section. On this date new timetables were also introduced on the other suburban rail lines to Johnsonville, Hutt Valley, Melling and Wairarapa. The changes are:

- The Paraparaumu line renamed the Kapiti line and services run to Waikanae.
- Some times changed.
- The late night and early morning local services between Paekakariki and Paraparaumu discontinued.
- Express service patterns changed.
- More peak trains stop in Tawa.
- Some Friday-only, late night and early morning services discontinued, including the trains which left Wellington on all lines around 0400 on Saturday mornings.
- More consistency in peak express running patterns.
- Taita services no longer stop at Ngauranga and Kaiwharawhara at peak times.
- Wairarapa line peak hour trains are slowed down slightly.

The timetables are available at www.metlink.org.nz/train-changes/

Christchurch earthquake 22 February

Following the major earthquake in Christchurch at 1251 on 22 February, KiwiRail immediately stopped all trains between Timaru and Picton and on the West Coast. There were no injuries to staff or passengers. The TranzAlpine passenger train was in Greymouth and the TranzCoastal in Picton, both about to depart on their return journeys. These were cancelled. They were not expected to resume operation until at least 4 March. A coal train derailed at Heathcote. Other damage to track included buckles in the Addington area, buckles between Belfast and Rangiora and a slip on the city side of the Lyttelton Tunnel. By 24 February all lines, except Christchurch-Lyttelton, were re-opened to freight trains. The Christchurch tramway was damaged.

European timetable websites

SBB, Swiss Federal Railways is not publishing its CD ROM timetable this year. (As reported last month, DB German Railways, has also not published CD ROM timetables this year). SBB pdf timetables are available on the internet at www.fahrplanfelder.ch/en/welcome/. The Zürich region transport authority, ZVV, also has its timetables available at www.zvv.ch/de/fahrplan/mobiler_fahrplan/offline_fahrplan.html.

ÖBB, Austrian Federal Railways, timetables are at www.oebb.at/de/Fahrplanauskunft/Fahrplan_Offline-Version/index.jsp

South African long distance passenger trains

Long distance passenger trains in South Africa are operated by Shosholozza Meyl, the operating name of the Passenger Rail Authority of South Africa, a subsidiary of Spoornet, the SA Railways. There are three categories of trains: Premier Classe – luxury; Tourist Class- sleepers and dining cars only, and Economy Class- sitting carriages only.

In the middle of last year long distance passenger trains ceased operations. It is not clear why, but it appears that the PRASA was allocated all the dud locomotives. Another source states that there was a dispute over maintenance certification and funding. These stories are compatible. Some long distance passenger trains re-commenced in December. Others were permanently cancelled. Local websites are not well maintained and contain some contradictory information. In addition, the more basic the train, the less information is available. Nor do we now have the trusty Thomas Cook International Timetable to refer to. It appears the current situation is.

Premier Classe operating:

Johannesburg – Cape Town Thursdays and Sundays
Cape Town – Johannesburg Tuesdays and Saturdays
Johannesburg - Durban Fridays only
Durban - Johannesburg Sundays only

Premier Classe cancelled: :Hoedspruit – Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth – Johannesburg, Cape Town – Port Elizabeth

Sleeper Class operating:

Johannesburg-Durban & Durban Johannesburg daily except Tuesdays
Johannesburg-Cape Town & Cape Town- Johannesburg daily
Johannesburg-Port Elizabeth & Port Elizabeth- Johannesburg Wed, Fri Sun
Cape Town-Durban Mon
Durban-Cape Town Wed

Sleeper Class cancelled: Johannesburg-East London

Sitting Class operating:

Johannesburg-East London daily except Sat
Johannesburg-Cape Town daily
Johannesburg-Komatipoort daily except Sat
Johannesburg-Musina daily except Sat
Johannesburg-Durban daily except Tues (attached to Sleeper train?)
Johannesburg-Port Elizabeth daily except Sat
Johannesburg-Bloemfontein Fri, Sun
Johannesburg-Kimberley Fri only
Presumably with equivalent trains in the opposite directions.

The privately owned upmarket luxury **Blue Train** from Pretoria to Cape Town and v.v. was unaffected by this setback. It operates weekly. **Rovos Rail** excursions with steam locomotives and heritage carriages were also unaffected.

Thanks to Tony Bailey, Ian Cooper, Neville Fenn, Hilaire Fraser, Scott Ferris, Peter Hobbis, Victor Isaacs, Geoff Lambert, Michael Marshall, Roger Wheaton, *Adelaide Advertiser*, *Australian*, *Hobart Mercury*, *Railway Digest*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, *Today's Railways Europe*, *Weekly Times* and www.vicsig.net for Railway news.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Peter Hobbis writes about Adelaide Metro's bus substitution timetables for the Oaklands-Noarlunga rail closedown (see February Table Talk page 7):

Adelaide Metro did a great job issuing the new timetables five weeks before they commenced, even allowing for the Christmas week!! But.....

In the Currie Street information centre on 4 February I saw large signs saying that Hallett Cove users of routes 681, 682 etc, etc. need a new timetable re connections to the city due to the rail closedown. (Quite good).

But there were no new timetables. On asking I was told: The timetables for 681 etc. dated 16/1/11 in fact do not start until 6 February, when the rail shut down starts. So;

1. We have the wrong starting date - and there are contained therein significant time changes.
2. We also have connections with the old train timetable shown, (the bus times connect perfectly with trains if there are any) and of course no mention of the replacement buses. Some connecting times vary by 15 + minutes, especially at night/weekends. There is no mention of the good connections now at the Hallett Cove Shopping Centre where the buses call en route express to Oaklands.

Unfortunately Adelaide Metro has undone some of good impression built up by the early release and effective advertising of all the new timetables.

(There was also chaos on Saturday 5 February at the Noarlunga interchange where the stops had been changed to allow for the rail buses - but they don't start until 6 February. No signs to that effect.)

BUS NEWS

ACT - Canberra

Bus lanes at the following entrances to the City Bus Station received the red pavement treatment in December: London Circuit at East Row from both the south and west and off Alinga St at the intersection with Northbourne Avenue.

ACTION's overall plan to equip all buses with bike racks may fail as a result of the strict application of vehicle dimension laws applying throughout the country. With the exception of the Ansair bodied Renault/Mack PR100.2s and the Dennis Darts, which are all less than 12.5m in length, other ACTION buses are at the maximum permissible length, either with a permit (14.5m rigid buses) or without a permit (for a 12.5m rigid bus or a 18.0m articulated bus). ACTION may find it impossible to operate 14.5m rigid buses and 18.0m articulated buses with bike racks.

MyWay ticketing

The first stage of ACTION's MyWay ticketing was introduced on 21 February. The first two weeks was restricted to Senior Card holders who were encouraged to move to the new system with an offer of \$10.00 credit on a combined ACT Seniors and MyWay card. Other adult passengers were able to buy Smartcards from 7 March and magnetic tickets will not be accepted from 10 April. School students who had a combined MyWay card and school ID will begin using the new system from the beginning of the Second Semester on 2 May. ACTION is introducing a somewhat controversial procedure with MyWay – all passengers must tag on and off. Passengers who did not tag off when leaving the bus would be charged the standard \$4.00 cash fare. However, the penalty fare would not be introduced until 30 June. A discount of 5% is offered to passengers who recharge cards by direct debit and BPAY. There are no daily, weekly or monthly tickets with MyWay – just the one smartcard. Transfers between buses within 90 minutes, without further charge, will continue to be available. Off-peak and weekend fares can be reduced and it is claimed that the maximum fare to be charged on any one day will be \$7.60 or \$3.80 for concessions. Passengers will not be charged for more than 36 trips a calendar month, which results in a maximum fare for one month at \$90.72 less 5% for online recharging. This is \$1.78 less than the current monthly ticket.

Redevelopment of northern Canberra suburbs

In what should be a boost for the usage of bus services in the northern suburbs of Canberra, especially on Northbourne Avenue, the ACT Legislative Assembly approved, on 16 February, the redevelopment of some areas permitting the construction of higher density housing – a procedure, which up to now, was prohibited.

New South Wales - Sydney Buses

In the approach to the NSW election it is unlikely that any major timetable changes will occur until after the result is known and new minister briefed. Having said, that the SMS timetable trial used on Metrobuses is to be extended to all Sydney buses by early March.

Two new timetables started on 20 February 2011.

Route X74 (Coogee – Randwick – City); the adjustments are:

- The 0752 service from Coogee to the City was cancelled;
- A new 0810 service from Coogee to the City was added; and
- The 0816 service from Coogee to the City now operates two minutes later at 0818.

Route 339 (Clovelly - Randwick - Moore Park - Surry Hills - Central Station - Millers Point). The minor changes which add a few minutes to the journey times are to improve on-time reliability.

New South Wales - Private Bus Services

Shuttle routes In what appears to be a pre-election gesture, the NSW Government has introduced free so-called "shuttle" bus routes in the Sydney suburbs of Liverpool and Campbelltown and the Central Coast city of Gosford. Each of the routes is in the form of a loop round the respective CBD, using dedicated wheelchair-accessible vehicles with green-based liveries, virtually identical to those of the similar free Sydney (Route 555) and Wollongong "shuttles".

The services in Gosford and Campbelltown have been numbered 41 and 777 respectively and started on 31 January, while the Liverpool service is known as 999 and started on week later on 7 February.

The Gosford Shuttle runs every 20 minutes Mondays to Saturdays and a token service on Sundays. It replaces the previous Route 41 service, operating on the same loop, but in the opposite direction (anti-clock wise). The service operates from Gosford Station connecting Gosford Hospital, Gosford High School, Gosford Indoor Sports Centre, Donnison Street, Gosford TAFE and the Imperial Centre. Hours of operation are weekdays 0845 to 1445, with some other services outside these hours (similarly to the previous Route 41 timetable); Saturdays 0905 to 1605 and Sundays 0905, 1205, and 1505.

The Campbelltown Shuttle runs every 20 minutes, running in a clockwise one-way loop from Dumaresq St, connecting Campbelltown Hospital, Macarthur Square, Macarthur Transport Interchange, Marketfair, Koshigaya Park and Campbelltown Mall. Hours of operation are weekdays 0900 to 1435 and weekends 0900 to 1735.

The Liverpool Shuttle runs every 22 minutes, running in a one way loop from Liverpool Station connecting Liverpool Post Office, Northumberland St, Liverpool Library, Westfield Liverpool, Forbes Street and Liverpool Hospital. Hours of operation are weekdays 0900 to 1430 and weekends 0900 to 1745.

As with STA Metrobus routes, there are brochures for these services, but apparently no printed timetables. Timetables however can be downloaded from the 131500 website.

New South Wales - Sydney Private

Veolia Transport The timetable 7 February for Routes 908 and S2, contained a route change from Rookwood Road to Powell St, but was subject to a note on the map that , "At time of printing the use of Powell St and George St was awaiting formal approval. In the short term buses may continue to operate the original route via Bruncker Road to Rookwood Road and vice versa." However, it is still not possible to turn right from George St into Rookwood Road at the southern end of Powell St on southbound trips. An updated version of 14 March is now on the Veolia website, which shows the route running along Powell St only in the northerly direction. This timetable will not be available in printed form for some time.

Busabout A revised timetable for Routes 855/856 (Austral to Liverpool) commenced on 30 January. The 1452 on Route 855 has been amended to operate via Edmondson Av, Bringelly Rd, Fourth Av and Tenth Av back to Edmondson Av. The Route 856 service from Liverpool to Bringelly, departing Liverpool at 0957, will divert on request only via Edmondson Av, Ninth Av and Fourth Av back to Bringelly Rd.

Metrobus routes The last two Metrobus routes are due to start during March, ie before the NSW State election on 26 March. Reports suggest that M60 (Parramatta-Castle Hill-Hornsby), to be run by Hillsbus, is due to start on 7 March and M92 (Sutherland-Bankstown-Parramatta), to be run via Veolia, on 14 March.

New South Wales - Regional/Country

Hunter Valley Buses (CDC) A newer version of the timetable for Routes 278, 279, 280 & W1 (Morisset to Morisset Peninsula & Cooranbong) has been reported to be still version 2 but dated 19 October 2009. It includes train connections which the 28 November 2010 version did not. The version on the Hunter Valley website is also dated 19 October 2009.

Other Hunter Valley timetables to have been revised since 28 November (believed only to a minor degree) are for Routes 140/141, 145, 181/2/7 and 269/70/1.

Dions Further to previous advice concerning a Dions Wollongong timetable for routes 1, 1U, 4 and 4U dated January 2011, it is believed that there are no changes to services and the timetable was reissued merely to correct items and with better formatting. One significant difference is that in the previous timetable there was a comment that routes 1U and 4U only operated during University semesters. This has now been deleted.

Kiama Coaches The latest timetable for Routes 701/2 Jamberoo - Kiama - Werri Beach - Gerringong - Gerroa is dated August 2006.

Nowra Coaches The latest timetable for Routes 732/3 Bomaderry - Nowra - St Georges Basin - Jervis Bay is dated February 2008.

Queensland - Brisbane

Route 186 (Wishart – City) changes: From 24 January, peak hour frequencies were improved to operate every 10 minutes.

More Route 192 services from West End to UQ Lakes: From Monday 21 February, TransLink increased the number of 192 services for passengers affected by the loss of the West End to UQ CityCat service. There is an additional 75 services Monday to Friday, and 48 route 192 services operate on weekends for the first time. The additional 192 services operate only from the Mollison Street Coles via West End to UQ Lakes and connect with the CityGlider services. These additional services also replace the Saturday-only route 191 which operates along the same route.

Bus routes 233 and 234: These temporary routes were discontinued as from Monday 21 February following resumption of CityCat and CityFerry services.

Western Region restructure (Ipswich and surrounds): Further to the items in the December and January *Table Talk*, a number of routes have been replaced. Three routes (505, 510 and 523) have been replaced by the new FlexiLink service to provide continued public transport in these areas in a more cost effective way. Others have been replaced by new or restructured bus services:

501 (Goodna to Ipswich) - covered by route 500

504 (Brassall to Ipswich) - replaced by the restructured 512 and new 515 service

507 (Brassall to Ipswich) - replaced by the restructured 512 service

517 (Brassall to Ipswich) - some parts have been replaced by the restructured 512 service. Sadliers Crossing and Woodend will be serviced by the new 513 service

520 (Springfield to Redbank) - replaced by the restructured 526 service

527 (North Brassall to Ipswich) - replaced by the restructured 513 service.

A Handy guide to public transport in Ipswich and surrounding suburbs has been published. .

Richlands Station Bus Timetables: Following the introduction of train services, two new local bus routes have been introduced to provide dedicated connections to trains from Richlands Station, these being:

Route 465 (Heathwood to Richlands), with some short trip route 465 (Forest Lake Shops to Richlands)

and Route 466 (Willawong to Richlands)

Existing routes 460 (Forest Lake to City) and P461 (Forest Lake to City) also provide services to the station precinct and service existing on-street bus stops at 'Progress Corner', approximately 200 metres walk from the station, on Garden Road.

Selected services on existing route 462 (Darra to Forest Lake) will continue to run to Darra Station when there are no through running CBD trains available from Richlands Station.

Queensland – Regional

Gold Coast Route 761 Tweed Heads to Robina: Frequency increased from 31 January to every 30 minutes weekdays and weekends.

Coolool to Nambour Bus Trial: Sunshine Coast Council is trialing a new bus service between Coolool and Nambour. The trial service is proposed to operate four return services per day, seven days per week, from April to June 2011 initially. This new trial service is being funded by the Public Transport Levy.

Cairns changes: Buses in central Cairns were altered to use Abbott St instead of The Esplanade from 1 February due to the introduction of one-way traffic flow.

South Australia - Adelaide

The diversion of the W90, 91 services avoiding the Brownhill Creek bridge (November *Table Talk*), only lasted approx. 4 weeks. A similar situation is ongoing at the King St bridge, North Glenelg, which was closed to all traffic 12 months ago. But for several months the J1 service (Elizabeth to Glenelg, via O Bahn and Airport) has been and is still using it. Meanwhile the Glenelg Council and State government are arguing over funding for a rebuild.

Southlink has "jumped the gun" trying to service new suburbs with recent timetable changes. Both the 451/452/461 in Smithfield area, and 740/752/753 services at Seaford are not able to use the new routes due to incomplete roads and access roundabouts.

Tasmania – Hobart

MONA – Museum of Old and New Art: One of the most significant events of the 2011 cultural calendar also became a significant public transport event. David Walsh' MONA (Museum of Old and New Art) – the largest privately owned and operated art gallery and museum in Australia – with a collection valued at over \$100m – was officially opened on the weekend of 21-23 January. Over 10,000 persons visited the museum and art gallery, located at the Moorilla Winery Estate at Berriedale in Hobart's northern suburbs, in the first three days. Such numbers are the equivalent of 5% of Hobart's population. As no car parking was permitted on the site, almost every person visiting MONA had to use a bus or ferry. Metro operated shuttle buses from a temporary park and ride site at the Derwent Entertainment Centre (DEC) Elwick and from Franklin Square in the City. The hours of operation of these buses varied depending upon the day or night. For example, on the Saturday of the opening, shuttle buses operated between DEC and MONA every 15 minutes from 0900 to 0230 on Sunday morning. The shuttles from Hobart City operated every 60 minutes from 0900 to 1400 and then every 30 minutes from 1400 to 0230 on Sunday morning.

Upgrade of services to Oakdowns: Routes 632 and 638D to Oakdowns, a relatively new estate near Lauderdale on the eastern shore of Hobart, were amended on 19 December 2010 to operate a large two-way loop through the new subdivision. Following completion of bus suitable roads, services from Hobart now travel via Horsham Road, Cavenor Drive and Oakdowns Parade. Services to Hobart now traverse Oakdown Parade, Cavenor Drive and Horsham Road. Previously, less than 50% of the estate was serviced by bus.

Fare-free long weekend: Metro is very active in promoting services for special occasions. The long weekend in Hobart – 12 to 14 February, attracted a significant number of events – the Royal Hobart Regatta, the Hobart Cup, the International Wooden Boat Festival – with over 500 boats on display and a Sheffield Shield cricket match at Bellerive Oval. In the north Launceston hosted its Festivale (of wine and food). Metro extended its provision of services to the extent that a Saturday timetable operated on both the Sunday and the Public Holiday Monday in Hobart and Saturday schedules also operated in Launceston on Sunday 13 February. All services over the weekend (and the Public Holiday Monday in Hobart) were free. Saturday services were also free. Metro does not operate in Burnie on Sundays. The free travel long weekend in Hobart was a resounding success with Metro adding 20 services on the Saturday to cope with the demand. A local observer in

Sandy Bay reported that he had not seen such passenger loads on a Saturday for many decades. Long queues developed, even when buses were operating every 30 minutes. Metro CEO, Heather Haselgrove, told *The Mercury* that Metro would be interested in discussing free public transport on other weekends with event organisers or where the State Government complemented Metro's funding.

Victoria - Melbourne

An additional service was introduced on **Route 490 (Airport West - Gowanbrae)** from 31 January, departing Airport West at 1525 Monday to Friday. This trip has been introduced upon request from students living in the estate to reduce the time taken to get home. To accommodate this change, the 1503 trip is rescheduled to depart at 1455.

Victoria – Regional

New V/Line bus: A new bus service from Geelong Station to Colac Station began on Monday, 14 February. It departs Geelong Station at 1730 and travels via the Geelong Deakin University campus, Winchelsea and Birregurra, arriving in Colac at 1900. The bus connects with the 1613 Southern Cross-Geelong train which arrives at Geelong Station at 1713.

In the same locality, the Surfcoast Shire (not V/Line) summer bus services between Colac and Lorne (two return trips daily Mo-Su) and Winchelsea to Torquay via Wauran Ponds (two return trips Sats only) are scheduled during the periods 31 Jan to 24 April and 5 Feb to 23 April respectively.

Western Australia - Perth

Transperth: Recent timetable changes (all 20 February 2011)

Eastern 90, 100, 102, 103; Northern 68, 74; South Eastern 4, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19; Southern 123; Western 32, 46.

New Zealand by Hilaire Fraser

Auckland

On 30 January 2011 new timetables were introduced for Sandringham Rd, Dominion Rd, Mt Eden Rd & Waikowhai services in the Central Auckland area.

The Sandringham Rd Corridor now has ten route numbers reduced to four as follows:

202 Midtown-New Windsor via Bond St & Owairaka (discontinued, now a school service), 233 Midtown-New Lynn via St Lukes Mall & Owairaka (unchanged), 240 Midtown-Mt Albert Rd via Queen St (unchanged), 241 Midtown-Owairaka (extended to New Lynn as 243), 243 Midtown-New Lynn via Owairaka (unchanged), 246 Midtown-Wesley (now 249), 247 Midtown-New Windsor via Wesley (extended to Blockhouse Bay as 249), 248 Midtown-Blockhouse Bay via Wesley (now 249), 249 Midtown-New Lynn via Wesley (unchanged), 24F Midtown-Blockhouse Bay Flyer (now 249 Flyer)

Monday to Friday daytime services are every 30 minutes on 233 & 249 to New Lynn, combining to provide a 15 minute service along Sandringham Rd. 233, 241, 243, 246-9 are a remnant of August 1978 scheme of fourteen routes, 241-3, 246-9 including 242 New Windsor via Owairaka, with 231-3, 236-9 used for the diversion to St Lukes Mall. From 1974 to 1978, and as trolleybus services until Jan 1977, the Sandringham Rd services were 235 Owairaka, 238 Wesley, 239 New Windsor via Wesley. Prior to 1974 the trolleybuses were numbered 7 Owairaka, 7W Wesley, 7N New Windsor via Wesley.

The Dominion Rd Corridor now has eleven route numbers reduced to four as follows:

250 Civic Centre-May Rd Limited Stop (unchanged), 253 Civic Centre-Mt Roskill Shops (now 267), 255 Civic Centre-May Rd (now 258), 256 Civic Centre-White Swan Rd (now 258), 258 Civic Centre-Blockhouse Bay (unchanged), 262 Civic Centre-Valley Rd (now 267), 265 Civic Centre-Carr Rd (unchanged), 266 Civic Centre-Hillsborough Rd (now 267) 267 Civic Centre-Lynfield (unchanged), 25F Civic Centre-Blockhouse Bay Flyer (now 258 Express), and 26F Civic Centre-Lynfield Flyer (now 267 Express)

Monday to Friday daytime services are every 10 minutes on 258 May Rd, & 20 minutes on 258 Blockhouse Bay & 267 to Lynfield, combining to provide a 5 minute service along Dominion Rd.

255, 256, 258, 265, 267 were part of the August 1978 route-numbering scheme as were 257 Lynfield via White Swan Rd, 263 Mt Albert Rd and 266 Mt Roskill-Richardson Rd. From 1974 to 1978, and as trolleybus services until Aug 1977, the Dominion Rd Services were 244 May Rd, 245 Wesley, 247 Mt Roskill-Richardson Rd, 249 Lynfield. Prior to 1974 the trolleybus services were numbered 8D May Rd Depot, 8S White Swan Rd, 8 Mt Roskill-Richardson, 8L Lynfield.

The Mt Eden Rd Corridor services continue unchanged as:

274 Downtown-Three Kings, 275 Downtown-May Rd, 277 Downtown-Waikowhai, except for additional services added to routes 274 and 277 between 3pm and 4pm weekdays. There have been some timetable changes to 274 and 277 services between 5pm and 6 pm on weekdays. Monday to Friday daytime services are every 10 minutes on 274 to Three Kings with every third trip extending to Waikowhai as 277. From 1974 to 1978, and as trolleybus services until Aug 1976, the Mt Eden Rd Services were all 255 to Three Kings, although the trolleybus replacement services also operated as 256 to May Rd. Prior to 1974 the trolleybus service was numbered 9 to Three Kings.

The Waikowhai Corridor now has four route numbers reduced to one as follows:

287 Buckley Rd-Civic Centre via Mountain Rd (discontinued, now a school service)
288 Civic Centre-Waikowhai via Mountain Rd & Albrecht Av (discontinued, now a school service)
297 Civic Centre-Waikowhai via Melrose Rd (discontinued, Melrose Rd served by 277)
298 Civic Centre-Waikowhai via Albrecht Av (now 299 extended to Lynfield)

Monday to Friday daytime services operate every 30 mins on 299. From 1974 to 1978 287, 288, 297, 298 were numbered 263 to Waikowhai via Melrose Rd, 274, 268 and 278 respectively. Prior to 1974 services were numbered 16 Waikowhai via Albrecht Av, 16M Waikowhai via Melrose Rd.

On 31 January a new timetable was introduced for Beach Haven/Birkenhead on Auckland's North Shore. 957 Albany Bus Station –Highbury has been extended to Birkenhead Wharf replacing the Highbury-Birkenhead Wharf section of 960,

previously Northcote Point-Birkenhead Wharf. 960 now provides five return trips from Northcote Point to Highbury. 961 Chatswood-Birkenhead Point has been discontinued. Passengers will need to catch 971 Chatswood-Auckland University to Highbury and transfer to 957.

Also on the North Shore a new Forrest Hill/Sunnynook/East Coast Rd timetable was introduced on 1 February. Additional peak services were provided on 881 Torbay-Newmarket via Auckland City, 0555 ex Torbay, 0657, 0727, 0757 ex Albany Bus Station, 1500, 1530, 1600 ex Newmarket.

Wellington

With the extension of suburban railway services to Waikanae from 20 February (see Rail news) the Kapiti bus network now comprises:

250 Paraparaumu-Raumati South, 251 Paekakariki Community Bus, 260 Paraparaumu-Raumati Beach, 261 Paraparaumu-Paraparaumu Beach via Guildford Drive (replacing 258 clockwise loop/259 anti-clockwise loop), 262 Paraparaumu-Paraparaumu Beach via Mazengarb Rd, 263 Otaihanga Community Bus, 270 Paraparaumu-Paraparaumu East, 271 Paraparaumu-Lindale, 280 Waikanae-Waikanae Beach (previously Paraparaumu-Waikanae Beach), 285 Wellington-Waikanae, and 290 Waikanae-Otaki (previously Paraparaumu-Otaki)

The combined 265 Raumati Beach/Raumati South and 266 Guildford Drive/Mazengrab Rd evening services have been replaced by later 260 and 262 services respectively.

Also on 20 February a Porirua/Tawa bus network review was implemented. The new network comprises: 210 Johnsonville-Titahi Bay West via Tawa & Porirua, 211 Wellington-Porirua via Tawa, 220 Ascot Park-Titahi Bay East via Porirua, 226 Sievers Bay-Elsdon via Porirua, 227 Porirua East Community Bus, 230 Porirua-Whitby West via Warspite Av, 235 Paremata-Whitby East, 236 Porirua-Whitby West via Papakowhai, The new network replaces eleven routes numbered 59 to 69.

Thanks to Ian Cooper, Hilaire Fraser, Craig Halsall, Robert Henderson, Peter Hobbis, Duncan MacAuslan, Lourie Smit and contributors to the ATDB, Roger Wheaton and operator websites.

AIR NEWS

International

Strategic Airlines commenced flights from Melbourne to Phuket, Thailand on 22 February. They will operate on Tuesdays and Fridays, departing Melbourne at 1045, arriving in Phuket at 1540 local time. The return flights will depart Phuket on Thursday and Sunday at 1930 arriving in Melbourne at 0755 the following day. Then on 24 February, Strategic Airlines commenced twice-weekly flights from Brisbane to Phuket.

Domestic

Tiger Airways will launch daily Sydney-Sunshine Coast flights from 27 March. Tiger Airways has abandoned Melbourne-Darwin flights due to lack of demand. It has added a fourth weekly flight between Melbourne and Alice Springs.

QantasLink's new Perth-Exmouth service, commencing 31 March, will depart Perth at 1030 on Wednesdays, returning at 1250. On Fridays and Saturdays, flights will depart Perth at 0950 and return from Exmouth at 1210.

Commencing 28 February **Skippers Aviation** is providing the flights between Perth and Carnarvon. The number of return services increased to 10 per week - 8 direct return services Perth - Carnarvon and 2 via Geraldton. Skippers operates from its own Perth terminal in Valentine Road rather than the main terminals and free bus transfers are available between Perth domestic terminals and Skippers' terminal.

Thanks to Tony Bailey and David Whiteford for Air news.

FERRY NEWS

Queenscliff – Sorrento ferry

Due to the ferry "Queenscliff" being currently out of service, the Queenscliff to Sorrento, Victoria ferry service has been reduced to every two hours with sailings from Queenscliff at 0700, 0900, 1100, 1300, 1500, 1700 and 1900 and sailings from Sorrento at 0800, 1000, 1200, 1400, 1600, 1800 and 1940.

Thanks to Tony Bailey for Ferry news.