



TABLE TALK

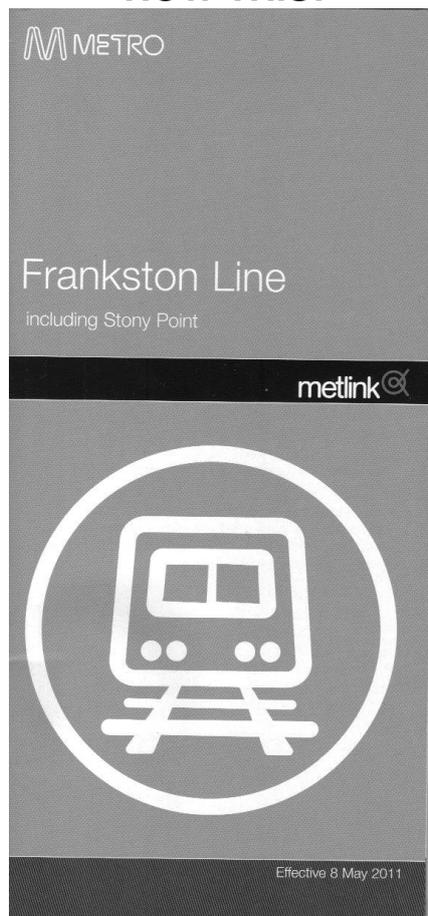
AUSTRALIAN TIMETABLE NEWS

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TOP TABLE TALK - TIMETABLES AND STATE POLITICS

Victoria: Smoke and Mirrors?

From the Age of 6 October, by Clay Lucas and Jason Dowling:

It is Melbourne's busiest railway line, and barely a decade ago it would have been absurd to think that the fortunes of a state government could ride on it. But ask Rob Hudson, the former Labor MP for Bentleigh, what the performance of the Frankston line meant to him last November and the political potency of getting the city's trains to run on time becomes clear. Hudson lost his seat, and with it went John Brumby's keys to 1 Treasury Place. And Hudson says the performance of the Frankston line - along which four seats went from Labor to the Coalition - was largely to blame.

Jump forward 12 months and everything has changed. Over the past four months, following a big timetable change in May, rail operator Metro has been able to boast for the first time in years that the line is running "on time". And the latest results, released [6 October], show the improvement has been sustained in the past month. Some might describe this performance as miraculous. How Metro achieved this turnaround on a number of lines, most obviously Frankston, deserves closer scrutiny. The question is whether the Baillieu government has allowed Metro to pull off a smoke-and-mirrors trick that has saved it millions, and allowed it to boast that the problems on this and several other lines have been fixed. Ted Baillieu was, after all, elected on a platform of "Fix the problems. Build the future." Cynicism about this apparent success story is understandable given the degree to which questionable crime statistics and fudged data in the hospital system have in recent years challenged public confidence in official performance statistics.

In this context, performance on the Frankston line - one of Melbourne's oldest, finished in 1882 - is crucial. With 5705 trains each week, it carries more services than any of the city's 15 lines. Until recently, a third of these trains turned up late - if they turned up at all. The tardy performance of Melbourne's trains along this line, which hugs Port Phillip Bay from Mentone to Frankston, cruelled Labor's election prospects in 2010, Hudson says. "Between July 2009 and May 2010 the number of trains arriving within five minutes of the scheduled time had declined from 80.6 per cent to 62.6 per cent," he says.

Hudson is not alone in seeing this failure as electoral poison. His assessment is backed by Labor's review of the 2010 state election. Internal polling consistently found public transport was a vote switching issue, from Labor to the Coalition, for 25 per cent or more of voters. "Public transport was a bigger vote switching issue than health and hospitals, water, law and order, education and financial management waste," the research found. And the poor performance of public transport "almost certainly contributed to the loss of all four marginal sand-belt seats on the Frankston line, which in the 18 months leading up to the state election had the worst on-time running performance of any line on the metropolitan rail system", it found.

Compare this with seats that benefited from the Bracks government's \$750 million investment in the Regional Fast Rail upgrade, delivered in its early years of government. Seats in Geelong, Ballarat and Bendigo stayed with Labor. The seat of Rippon, where passenger train services to Maryborough returned in 2010, remained in Labor's hands too.

More than any state election in memory, the 2010 poll showed that, with increasingly congested roads and the cost of driving escalating, public transport now matters to voters - which is why the Baillieu government has been quick to welcome the improved performance figures on Melbourne's rail system in recent months from Metro. In July last year - four months before the election - 30.3 per cent of trains on the Frankston train line were more than five minutes late. A year later, only 7.4 per cent of trains were recorded as late. More widely, Metro in September recorded running about 89 per cent of trains within five minutes of their scheduled time, up from about 87 per cent at the same time last year. Both Metro and the government say the improvement in Melbourne's train network is real. Metro's performance figures are not independently audited; instead, the Department of Transport contracts surveyors to take results at Flinders Street and at destination stations every quarter to check Metro's performance. Right now, these

statistics show Metro's performance is on the up. Metro boasts it has exceeded its city-wide punctuality target for the fourth month in a row, a result unthinkable this time last year and the best average performance on the rail network since 2008.

While the numbers look good, there is a view that this illustrates how statistics can be manipulated. RMIT transport expert Paul Mees attributes the apparent success to the fact that Metro has shifted the goalposts: the system has been slowed down to help trains run on time. "The whole mentality since privatisation started has been to relax the performance standards to make it look as if we are performing better," Dr Mees says. The change in punctuality, rail union official Marc Marotta also says, was due to a simple increase in travel times to make Metro look good. "It's a joke," Marotta says. Public Transport Users Association president Daniel Bowen says that while Metro certainly has improved punctuality and cut crowding on lines such as Frankston - which he travels on - there have been problems and trade-offs. "In some cases, too much slack has been put into the schedules. Some trains are regularly leaving stations early, or ... are sitting waiting at platforms for several minutes at a time - making travel times longer." And some stations around the Altona area and on the Belgrave and Lilydale lines have had a reduction of services, he says. Laburnum has lost 10 morning peak services, Camberwell 10 and Glenferrie six. Bowen also believes many of the new timetables begun in May might make life easier for Metro but are overly complex for passengers. Bowen says the timetable is "impossible to memorise" and some passengers are forced to change trains twice during their journey to the City Loop. He also says there has been little or no change to weekend services, despite increasing cases of overcrowding, and long waiting times between trains. "In most cities," says Bowen, "having a 'metro' means trains running every 10 minutes or better, all day, every day. Melbourne's Metro clearly has a long way to go before we reach that." The reductions on some lines come despite the former Labor government having spent about \$600 million buying 38 new trains for Melbourne - 27 of which are now in service.

Simon Lane, who finished as Metro's chief operating officer in mid-September after almost 18 months delivering change, is a vigorous defender of the alterations to the timetable. The changes, he says, have resulted in genuine improvement. Lane, speaking just prior to his departure, identified the new timetable and greater reliability of the city's fleet of trains as key improvements. He said staff had responded well to changes made to improve performance, and rejected claims from drivers that morale on the railways had never been lower. "People always say morale is bad," said Lane. "[But] I think one of the reasons we are performing much better is that the staff have responded to the changes we have made."

In the background to the jump in performance has also been a range of measures designed to cut costs and keep trains with faults running for longer, and a new tough approach by Metro to its almost entirely unionised driver workforce. The tough approach comes despite Metro itself acknowledging last year that drivers were responsible for delays to just 2 per cent of services. Other factors such as faulty trains and passenger behaviour have a much greater impact on train delays, Metro's briefings show. The operator will begin formal negotiations early next year with its drivers for a new three-year enterprise bargaining agreement. It wants to reduce the power of the union, which has been remarkably successful since privatisation in gaining good conditions for its members. Drivers never have to drive the same route twice in a day, control their own rosters, and earn good money - up to \$110,000. But their wages, handsome as they may be, do not compare to senior management at Metro, which is now almost exclusively made up of British railway men despite the company being majority owned by Hong Kong's MTR. Chief executive Andrew Lezala has hired - on lucrative salaries - several former rail industry colleagues from Britain. One British railways figure recently observed, in discussion with *The Age*, that many of those hired by Metro were earning up to triple what they would get for a similar job back in the UK.

Victorian Greens MP Greg Barber has been a close observer of Melbourne's rail network in recent years, and was the driving force behind an inquiry into Victoria's train system in the state's upper house last year. Documents released to Barber via the State Parliament show Metro's May timetable change helped slow down services on many lines. The train operator predicted the new timetable would lead to increased punctuality - including a 20 per cent jump on Frankston morning peak hour services - "due mainly to more realistic run times", the documents say. They also show Metro planning to add up to three minutes to train schedules on some lines. "Slowing down trains is the same thing as burning money, because it means you need to buy more trains to deliver the same carrying capacity," says Barber. The Baillieu government signed off on the timetable Metro introduced. Barber says the government should now be held to account for making life easier for the operator. "The government slowed down the timetable to match Metro's lousy performance; now they are all trumpeting how much their on-time running has improved."

Transport Minister Terry Mulder rejects questioning about whether Metro has achieved its improvements by simply fiddling with running times and adding slack to timetables. Like Metro's Simon Lane, Mulder says there have been improvements in the performance across the train network. He points directly to the Frankston line for proof. The May timetable change delivered 15 new one-way trips each weekday on the line. "Punctuality on the Frankston line has dramatically improved under a Coalition government," he says. Mulder says performance on this line is crucial, because it carries so many passengers, and the number using it rises by 6 per cent a year.

For former Labor MP Rob Hudson, some of the success that Mulder and Metro are claiming is being achieved now can ultimately be traced back to the belated extra spending on maintenance and new trains in the final years of the Brumby government. And he warns the Baillieu government against falling for the same trap the former government did - waiting too late to act on public transport. "We probably started a term too late in investing," he says. Big "step-change" projects Labor put forward, such as a proposed rail tunnel to run from Footscray to Caulfield, are still needed more than ever, he says, and they need to start now because of their long construction timelines. "It doesn't get any easier," says Hudson. "You can fiddle with the timetable and put on new trains and make half of them go to Flinders Street rather than around the loop, but eventually we are going to need new investment."

SA: Minister for Timetables

Jay Weatherill MHA succeeded Mike Rann MHA as Premier of South Australia on 21 October. In the resulting new Cabinet, Chloe Fox MHA was appointed to a new portfolio of Minister for Transport Services with responsibility to communicate matters re trams, trains and buses with the public. The Opposition immediately dubbed her "the Minister for Bus Timetables".

RAIL NEWS

National Rail Safety Regulator

The National Rail Safety Regulator will commence operations in January 2013. Although it will not have any authority until then, it will commence preparing business and operational plans in July 2012. It will be based in Adelaide.

Queensland Rail: Cairns Tilt Train

After the end of the holiday season, the Cairns Tilt Train will change from thrice to just twice weekly, while it is refurbished. From 29 January departures from Brisbane will be on Mondays and Fridays and from Cairns on Sundays and Wednesdays.

Airtrain: Evening services

The hours of operation of trains to and from Brisbane Airport will be extended from 20:00 to 22:00 from Monday 12 December. Trains will run every half hour.

Queensland Rail: Springfield line

Construction of the 9.5 km Richlands to Springfield train line began on 23 October, bringing the commuter rail network to Ipswich's fastest-growing suburbs. The line is expected to be finished in 2013, with the trip from Springfield Central to Brisbane planned to take about 40 minutes.

ARTC: Working Timetable 23 October

ARTC re-issued their Working Timetable for their entire system from 23 October. As is now usual, ARTC and RailCorp NSW issued new WTTs effective from the same date. Also, as is usual, the WTT appears on the ARTC website - look under "Operations". The ARTC WTT includes the NSW Country Regional Network, notwithstanding the imminent handover of management of the CRN to John Holland Engineering.

In regard to the Sydney-Melbourne line, ARTC Key Performance Indicators for network availability show zero effect of infrastructure upgrades on transit and running times (everywhere on the N-S route). An analysis of the 23 October WTT shows that all spare paths have been deleted; all crosses on the Victorian North East Standard Gauge have at last vanished with a reduction of crossing time of about 30 minutes; NSW "Deep South" crossing times have increased by about 15 mins- the effect of passing lanes appears to be negative; some Melbourne-Griffith trains between Junee and Albury take 6 hours, with 4 hours spent crossing other trains; there are more of these trains (8 per week each way) running now than the new WTT allows for.

ARTC: Wilpinjong loop commissioned

Wilpinjong loop between Wollar and Ulan on the Muswellbrook-Gulgong line was commissioned on 31 October.

NSW: Country Regional Network

Management of the NSW Country Regional Network will be transferred from the Australian Rail Track Corporation to John Holland Engineering on 14 January 2012.

CityRail: NRL Grand Final 2 October

For the NRL rugby grand final on Sunday 2 October CityRail operated direct trains from Sydney Central to Olympic Park every eight to ten minutes from 11:47 until 18:00. There were also direct trains from Blacktown to Olympic Park every ten minutes from 12:30 to 18:00. The number of carriages on trains from Newcastle and the Central Coast was increased. There was an additional stop at Lidcombe for Blue Mountains line trains. Planned trackwork on the South Coast was discontinued between 08:00 Sunday and 01:30 Monday and trackwork on the Western Line did not commence until late Sunday night.

CityRail: 23 October timetable changes

Complete details of CityRail timetable changes of 23 October are now available. There are many minor changes varying times by a minute or two. Significant changes are:

- Fifteen additional peak services on the Western Line each week;
- More Oscars on existing South Coast Line services,
- A number of weekday South Coast trains are extended to start/terminate at Martin Place or Bondi.
- Additional carriages on selected peak services,
- Additional off-peak services on the Western, North Shore and Illawarra lines,
- Additional weekend services on the Blue Mountains Line,
- All trains which formerly started/terminated at Quakers Hill are extended to/from the relocated Schofields station from 29 October, and
- More trains stop at Wickham (Newcastle line).

There is a change to the Public timetable format. All tables now show Central(i) when the service starts/terminates at Central intercity platforms 1 to 15. Where there is no (i), the service uses Central suburban platforms.

There are changes in the Working Timetable format:

- Integration of the new Schofields station into the network,
- Revised distribution of sectional running times resulting in altered station times at Schofields, Riverstone, Clyde, Emu Plains, Cowan, Epping-Chatswood line and North Shore line,
- Revised working at Epping Platform 2,
- More preparatory work for increased Waratah running,
- Introduction of new services on the West, North and Blue Mountains,
- Consist changes for Blue Mountains services, and
- Revised route codes for greater train visibility.

EASTERN SUBURBS & ILLAWARRA LINE Weekdays

- Most morning down trains run 1 minute earlier between Hurstville and Cronulla and between Hurstville and Waterfall
- 06:53 Martin Place-Waterfall departs Hurstville 1 minute earlier
- 08:30 Bondi Jnc-Hurstville is extended to Waterfall stopping all stations
- 08:37 Bondi Jnc-Waterfall terminates at Hurstville at 09:14
- 09:20 and 09:28 Bondi Jnc-Hurstville depart 7 minutes later and stops all stations
- 09:33 Bondi Jnc-Waterfall departs at 09:31 and makes additional stops at Oatley and Como
- 09:38 Bondi Jnc-Cronulla makes an additional stop at Penshurst and then runs 1 minute later
- 14:53 Bondi Jnc-Sutherland: **additional service** stopping all stations to Sydenham, Wolli Creek, Rockdale, Kogarah, Hurstville and then all stations to Sutherland
- 15:42 Central(i)-Sutherland commences from Bondi Jnc at 15:33, all stations to Sydenham, then as formerly timetabled. It departs Central, plat 25 (15:47), Redfern and Sydenham 1 to 5 minutes later.
- 15:43 Bondi Jnc-Waterfall departs at 15:42 and depart all stations to Sydenham, Wolli Creek, Rockdale and Kogarah 1 minute earlier
- 13:42 Mortdale-Bondi Jnc: **additional service** stopping all stations to Hurstville, then Kogarah, Rockdale, Wolli Creek, Sydenham and then all stations to Bondi Jnc
- 14:36 Waterfall-Central(i) departs Hurstville 1 minute earlier at 14:59
- 14:49 Waterfall-Bondi Jnc departs Waterfall 1 minute earlier at 14:48 and from Waterfall to Penshurst. It is one minute later from Central at 15:44
- 15:10 Hurstville-Bondi Jnc departs Hurstville 2 minutes earlier at 15:08 and runs 1 to 2 minutes earlier
- 15:11 Mortdale-Bondi Jnc: **additional service** stopping all stations to Hurstville, then Kogarah, Rockdale, Wolli Creek, Sydenham and then all stations
- 15:52 Bondi Jnc-Cronulla departs Bondi Jnc to Kings Cross 1 minute earlier

Weekends

- Most down trains between Hurstville and Cronulla, and between Hurstville and Waterfall depart 1 minute earlier at each stop
- South Coast Line services no longer drop off passengers at Wolli Creek, Hurstville, Sutherland and Waterfall. 'u' stops (pick up only) have been added to 11 services from approximately 09:00 until 18:30. This is to manage demand and preserve seating availability for South Coast customers on these intercity services. These services are no longer shown in the Eastern Suburbs & Illawarra Line timetable.

BANKSTOWN & SOUTH LINES

- Most down trains depart Cabramatta and Warwick Farm 1 minute earlier.

Weekdays

- 04:08 Strathfield-Campbelltown via Granville departs Clyde 1 minute earlier at 04:20
- 04:37 Museum-Campbelltown via Granville departs Clyde 1 minute earlier at 05:21

CUMBERLAND LINE: No changes.

AIRPORT & EAST HILLS LINE Weekdays and weekend

- All down trains stopping at East Hills and Holsworthy depart these stations 1 minute earlier

NORTH SHORE LINE Weekdays

- 06:14 ex Wyong departs Wyong to Berowra 1 minute earlier, makes additional stops at Lidcombe, Granville and Parramatta and proceeds to Penrith
- 07:14 ex Wyong makes additional stops at Redfern and Strathfield and proceeds to Eastwood
- 10:00 Parramatta-Hornsby: **additional service** stopping at Parramatta, Granville, Strathfield, Redfern, Central (10:28), then all stations to North Sydney, then St Leonards, Artarmon, Chatswood, Gordon and all stations to Hornsby arriving at 11:16
- 13:51 Parramatta-Berowra departs 2 minutes earlier from Hornsby, Asquith, Mt Colah and Mt Kuring-gai arriving Berowra at 15:26
- 16:18 Hornsby-Parramatta runs 1 to 2 minutes earlier
- 20:37 Hornsby-Strathfield via Macquarie Park departs Chatswood to Strathfield 1 minute earlier
- 19:52 Parramatta-Berowra runs 1 minute earlier from Hornsby to Berowra at 21:27

Western Line The new, relocated Schofields Station opened on Saturday 29 October and changes to Richmond line services took effect from then. All services from the City stopping at Clyde depart Clyde 1 to 2 minutes earlier. All services from the City to Richmond depart Schofields 1 to 2 minutes earlier.

Weekdays

- 04:32 Riverstone-Chatswood departs Quakers Hill 1 minute earlier
- 05:06 Emu Plains-Central(i) runs 12 to 13 minutes earlier, departing Emu Plains at 04:53, arriving Central(i) at 05:52
- 05:35 Emu Plains-Central(i) departs 1 minute earlier, arriving Central(i) at 06:30
- 07:10 Quakers Hill-Chatswood commences from Schofields at 07:07
- 07:24 Quakers Hill-Chatswood commences from Schofields at 07:21
- 07:30 Penrith-North Sydney commences from Emu Plains at 07:26
- 07:39 Quakers Hill-Chatswood commences from Schofields at 07:36
- 07:50 Emu Plains-Central(i) departs Strathfield and Redfern 1 minute earlier, arriving Central(i) at 08:44
- 07:51 Schofields-North Sydney: **additional service** stopping at all stations to Parramatta, then Strathfield, Redfern, arriving Central (08:48) then all stations to North Sydney
- 05:16 Seven Hills-Richmond commences from Blacktown at 05:21
- 07:57 Central(i)-Blacktown: **additional service** stopping at Redfern, Strathfield, then all stations to Granville, then Parramatta and Westmead
- 08:06 Central(i)-Emu Plains departs Parramatta 1 minute earlier
- 08:09 Central(i)-Blacktown commences from Chatswood at 07:39 and is extended to Penrith. It stops all stations to Central (08:06), then all stations to Lidcombe, then Granville, Parramatta, Blacktown, St Marys, then all stations to Penrith
- 09:28 Penrith-Chatswood: **additional service** stopping all stations to Mt Druitt, then Blacktown, Seven Hills, Parramatta, Granville, Strathfield, Redfern, arriving Central at 10:28 and then all stations to Chatswood
- 09:35 Emu Plains-Central no longer stops at Blacktown
- 15:39 Central(i)-Quakers Hill extends to Schofields, arriving at 16:36
- 16:24 Central(i)-Emu Plains no longer stops at Parramatta
- 16:31 Chatswood-Quakers Hill extends to Schofields, arriving at 17:59
- 16:43 Chatswood-Richmond runs 1 to 2 minutes earlier
- 16:57 North Sydney-Emu Plains: **additional service** stopping at all stations to Central (17:11), then Redfern, Strathfield, Granville, Parramatta, Westmead, Seven Hills, Blacktown, Mt Druitt, St Marys, Penrith and Emu Plains
- 16:59 Chatswood-Quakers Hill extends to Schofields, arriving at 18:18
- 17:08 Central(i)-Emu Plains departs Central(i), Redfern, Strathfield and Parramatta 2 minutes earlier
- 17:32 Chatswood-Quakers Hill extends to Schofields, arriving at 19:00
- 16:52 Quakers Hill-Campbelltown commences from Schofields at 16:49
- 21:02 Chatswood-Richmond departs Quakers Hill and Schofields 1 minute earlier
- 23:07 Parramatta-Richmond runs 1 to 2 minutes earlier from Quakers Hill

Weekends

- 07:24 Blacktown-Chatswood commences from Schofields at 07:12
- 04:24 Chatswood-Penrith departs Strathfield, Lidcombe, Auburn and Clyde 1 to 2 minutes earlier

NORTHERN LINE Weekdays

- Most services from Epping to Hornsby via Beecroft run 1 to 2 minutes earlier.
- 07:39 Chatswood-Hornsby via Strathfield **no longer** operates
- 08:17 Hornsby-Central via Macquarie Park departs Hornsby 3 minutes later and Normanhurst to Cheltenham 2 minutes later
- 08:40 Chatswood- Epping via Strathfield: **additional service** stopping at all stations to Redfern, then Strathfield and all stations to Eastwood
- 08:52 Chatswood-Hornsby via Strathfield now terminates at Epping at 09:52
- 09:37 Chatswood-Epping via Strathfield departs Denistone and Eastwood and arrives at Epping 1 to 2 minutes earlier
- 09:08 Epping-Chatswood via Strathfield departs Epping, Eastwood and Denistone 4 minutes later
- 10:12 Epping-Chatswood via Strathfield departs Epping, West Ryde, Meadowbank and Rhodes 1 minute earlier
- 13:15 Hornsby-Chatswood via Strathfield now commences from Epping at 13:26
- 14:09 Hornsby-Chatswood via Strathfield now commences from Epping at 14:26
- 15:55 Hornsby-City via Macquarie Park departs Normanhurst, Thornleigh, Pennant Hills and Cheltenham 1 minute earlier
- 16:58 Hornsby-Chatswood via Strathfield now commences from Epping at 17:10
- 16:04 Epping-Chatswood via Strathfield departs Epping, Eastwood and Denistone 8 minutes later

- 18:23 Epping-Chatswood via Strathfield departs Epping, Eastwood and Denistone 3 minutes later and West Ryde to Chatswood 2 minutes later
- 18:53 Epping-Chatswood via Strathfield departs Epping, Eastwood and Denistone 3 minutes later and runs West Ryde to Chatswood 2 minutes later
- 20:37 Hornsby-City via Macquarie Park departs Chatswood to Central 1 minute earlier
- 21:10 Chatswood-Epping via Strathfield runs 1 minute earlier
- 19:23 Epping-Chatswood via Strathfield departs Epping, Eastwood and Denistone 3 minutes later and West Ryde to Chatswood 2 minutes later
- 20:34 Epping to Chatswood via Strathfield departs Epping 7 minutes later

Weekends

- 04:41 North Sydney-Epping via Strathfield runs 1 minute earlier
- 04:46 Hornsby-Chatswood via Strathfield departs Hornsby 3 minutes later and Epping to North Strathfield 2 minutes later
- 05:11 North Sydney-Epping via Strathfield runs 1 minute earlier
- 06:07 Hornsby-Chatswood via Macquarie Park departs Epping to Chatswood 2 to 3 minutes earlier
- 16:08 Hornsby-Chatswood via Macquarie Park runs 1 to 2 minutes earlier
- 16:21 Hornsby-Central via Macquarie Park departs Hornsby and Normanhurst 1 minute earlier
- 05:46 Chatswood-Hornsby via Macquarie Park departs Epping to Hornsby 1 minute earlier
- 06:16 Chatswood-Hornsby via Macquarie Park departs Epping to Hornsby 1 minute earlier
- 07:13 Chatswood-Hornsby via Macquarie Park departs Chatswood to Macquarie University 3 minutes later and Epping to Hornsby 2 minutes later
- 16:24 Epping-Chatswood via Strathfield departs Epping 7 minutes later, from Eastwood to North Strathfield 6 minutes later and Strathfield, Burwood and Redfern 5 minutes later. Departs Central to Chatswood 3 minutes later
- 23:35 Central-Hornsby via Macquarie Park departs Epping, Cheltenham, Pennant Hills, Thornleigh and Normanhurst 1 minute earlier.

NB: Trains shown as starting or terminating at Chatswood originate from/continue to Hornsby, but are not shown as such in the Northern line timetable, to avoid confusion.

CARLINGFORD LINE: All connecting down trains arrive at Clyde 1 minute earlier.

Weekdays

- 07:12 Clyde-Carlingford departs Clyde 1 minute earlier
- 08:35 Clyde-Carlingford: The 07:57 from Central(i) is now the connecting service, stopping Central(i), Redfern, Strathfield, Lidcombe and Auburn

OLYMPIC PARK: No changes.

SOUTH COAST LINE Weekdays

- 04:44 Central(i)-Kiama departs Hurstville to North Wollongong 1 minute earlier
- 05:31 Martin Place-Kiama departs Hurstville to Dapto 1 to 3 minutes earlier
- 06:12 Central(i)-Kiama departs Hurstville to Unanderra 1 minute earlier
- 06:53 Martin Place-Wollongong departs Hurstville 1 minute earlier
- 10:27 Central(i)- Kiama commences from Martin Place at 10:23, departing Central, plat. 25, at 10:29
- 11:28 Central(i)-Kiama commences from Martin Place at 11:22, departing Central, plat. 25, at 11:28
- 12:28 Central(i)-Kiama commences from Bondi Jnc at 12:13, departing Central, plat. 25, at 12:29
- 13:28 Central(i)-Kiama commences from Bondi Jnc at 13:13, departing Central, plat. 25, at 13:29
- 13:58 Central(i)-Port Kembla commences from Martin Place at 13:53, departs Central, plat. 25, at 13:59, and has an additional stop at Wollu Creek
- 14:27 Central(i)-Kiama commences from Martin Place at 14:23, departing Central, plat. 25, at 14:29
- 14:57 Central(i)-Dapto commences from Martin Place at 14:53, departing Central, plat. 25, at 14:59
- 07:24 Kiama-Central(i) extends to Martin Place, departing Central, plat. 24, at 09:47
- 08:32 Kiama-Central(i) extends to Martin Place, departing Central, plat. 24, at 10:47
- 08:53 Wollongong-Central(i) extends to Martin Place, departing Central, plat. 24, at 10:27
- 08:57 Kiama-Central(i) extends to Bondi Jnc, departing Central, plat. 24, at 11:17
- 10:01 Kiama-Central(i) extends to Bondi Jnc, departing Central, plat. 24, at 12:18
- 11:33 Dapto-Central(i) extends to Martin Place, departing Central, plat. 24, at 13:16
- 11:57 Kiama-Central(i) extends to Martin Place, departing Central, plat. 24, at 14:16
- 13:10 Kiama-Central departs Hurstville 1 minute earlier
- 20:28 Central(i)-Kiama commences from Martin Place at 20:23 departing Central, plat. 25, at 20:29
- 21:28 Central(i)-Kiama commences from Bondi Jnc at 21:14, departing Central, plat. 25, at 21:29
- 17:18 Kiama-Central(i) extends to Martin Place departing Central, plat. 24, at 21:31
- 18:34 Kiama-Central(i) extends to Bondi Jnc departing Central, plat. 24, at 20:52

Weekends

- 05:19 Central(i)-Kiama departs Hurstville to Stanwell Park 1 minute earlier

- 06:15 Bondi Jnc-Kiama departs Hurstville to Unanderra 1 minute earlier
- 07:13 Bondi Jnc-Kiama departs Hurstville to North Wollongong 1 minute earlier
- 08:13 Bondi Jnc-Kiama departs Hurstville to Stanwell Park 1 minute earlier
- 09:13, 10:13, 11:13, 12:13, 13:13, 14:13, 15:13, 16:13, 17:13 and 18:13 Bondi Jnc-Kiama: Four 'u' stops (pick up only) have been added at Wolli Creek, Hurstville, Sutherland and Waterfall. These services depart Hurstville and Sutherland 1 minute earlier
- 15:43 Bondi Jnc-Wollongong: Four 'u' stops (pick up only) have been added at Wolli Creek, Hurstville, Sutherland and Waterfall. It departs Hurstville and Sutherland 1 minute earlier
- 19:13, 20:13, 21:13, 23:13 and 00:18: Bondi Jnc-Kiama departs Hurstville to North Wollongong 1 minute earlier
- 22:13 Bondi Jnc-Dapto departs Hurstville to North Wollongong 1 minute earlier
- 19:47 Port Kembla-Bondi Jnc departs Port Kembla to Helensburgh 1 minute later and Sutherland to Bondi Junction 1 minute earlier
- 20:37 Port Kembla-Bondi Jnc departs Port Kembla to Helensburgh (except Coalcliff and Otford) 1-3 minutes later and Sutherland to Bondi Jnc 1 minute earlier
- 21:39 Port Kembla- Bondi Jnc departs Port Kembla to Helensburgh (except Coalcliff and Otford) 1 minute later and Sutherland to Bondi Jnc 1 minute earlier

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS LINE: No changes.

BLUE MOUNTAINS LINE Weekdays

- 03:08 Lithgow-Central(i) runs 12 to 13 minutes earlier, arriving Central(i) at 05:52
- 04:06 Mt Victoria-Central(i) runs 1 minute earlier from Emu Plains
- 05:51 Lithgow-Central(i) runs 1 minute earlier from Strathfield
- 07:36 Lithgow-Central(i) no longer stops at Blacktown.
- 06:23 Central(i)-Mt Victoria extends to Bell, Zig Zag and Lithgow, arriving at 09:13
- 06:39 Central(i)-Lithgow terminates at Mt Victoria and makes additional stops at Glenbrook, Blaxland, and Hazelbrook
- 08:06 Central(i)-Springwood departs Parramatta 1 minute earlier
- 08:24 Central(i)-Lithgow departs Mt Victoria 1 minute earlier
- 15:52 Central(i)-Lithgow terminates at Mt Victoria
- 16:24 Central(i)-Mt Victoria extends to Bell and Lithgow arriving at 19:21. The 'u' stop (pick up only) at Parramatta has been removed
- 17:08 Central(i)-Mt Victoria departs Central(i), Redfern, Strathfield and Parramatta 2 minutes earlier
- 17:37 Central(i)-Lithgow terminates at Mount Victoria

Weekends

- 09:48 Central(i)-Mt Victoria: additional service stopping Central(i), Strathfield, Granville, Parramatta, Blacktown, Penrith, then all stations
- 17:48 Central(i)-Mt Victoria departs Central(i) **1 hour earlier** at 16:48 and runs 1 hour earlier
- 06:36 Mt Victoria-Central(i): **additional service** stopping all stations to Penrith, then Blacktown, Parramatta, Granville and Strathfield
- 09:06 Lithgow-Central(i) commences from Mount Victoria at 09:36
- 10:05 Mt Victoria-Central(i) commences from Lithgow at 09:36 and stops at Zig Zag and Bell.
- 15:36 Mt Victoria-Central(i): **additional service** stopping all stations to Penrith, then Blacktown, Parramatta, Granville and Strathfield
- 16:36 Mt Victoria-Central(i): **additional service** stopping all stations to Penrith, then Blacktown, Parramatta, Granville and Strathfield
- 22:35 Mt Victoria-Central(i) commences from Lithgow at 22:06 and stops at Bell

NEWCASTLE & CENTRAL COAST LINE Weekdays

- All up trains depart Cowan 1 minute earlier
- 06:14 Wyong-Central departs stations between Wyong and Berowra 1 minute earlier
- 06:03 Broadmeadow-Newcastle no longer operates.
- 05:03, 07:23, 15:07 & 19:55 Newcastle-Gosford, 08:03, 09:24, 10:24, 11:24, 12:24, 13:30, 14:37, 15:24 & 16:27 Newcastle-Central(i), 08:15, 09:15, 10:15, 11:15, 12:15, 14:15, 15:15, 15:45, 16:18, 16:45 & 17:45 Central(i)-Newcastle, and 08:51 Gosford-Newcastle make additional stops at Wickham

Weekends

- All up trains depart Cowan 1 minute earlier
- All trains make an additional stop at Wickham

HUNTER LINE Weekdays

- 13:37 Telarah-Newcastle runs 6 minutes earlier
- 18:00 Telarah-Newcastle runs 2 minutes earlier
- 06:50 Newcastle-Telarah runs 5 minutes earlier
- 12:52 Newcastle-Telarah runs 4 minutes earlier

- 13:03 Newcastle-Dungog runs 2 to 6 minutes earlier
- 15:10 Newcastle-Maitland departs Newcastle, Wickham, Hamilton, Warabrook and Metford 1 minute earlier
- 17:30 Newcastle-Dungog runs 1 to 5 minutes earlier.

Countrylink: 23 October timetable changes

To coincide with – but not consequent upon – the CityRail timetable changes of 23 October, Countrylink also made a few small changes from 23 October. Altered trains are:

- 11:35 daily XPT Sydney-Grafton has faster running from Coffs Harbour onwards, arriving Grafton fifteen minutes earlier at 21:55.
- 10:05 daily North West Xplorer DMU runs earlier from Tamworth to Armidale, arriving Armidale at 18:12, eight minutes earlier, reflecting introduction of Train Orders on this line.
- The 10:05 daily North West Xplorer DMU is two minutes later at Narrabri, but faster from Narrabri to Moree, arriving Bellata earlier and Moree at 18:40, eight minutes earlier. This reflects that it is no longer required to stop at Edgeroi and Gurley for safeworking purposes.
- The daily Xplorer DMU from Armidale departs Armidale at 09:00, ten minutes later, and has changed times as far as Tamworth.
- The daily Xplorer DMU from Moree departs Moree at 08:25, eighteen minutes later, and has changed times, running faster, arriving Werris Creek four minutes earlier at 11:25.
- 07:10 daily XPT Sydney-Dubbo is one to three minutes earlier at Blayney, Wellington and Geurie.
- 14:10 daily XPT Dubbo-Sydney is one to three minutes earlier at Geurie, Wellington and Stuart Town.

The alleged changes to train times for the Dubbo XPT are strange, because the times in the Working Timetable have not been changed.

There are consequential and non-consequential changes to Countrylink buses:

- 07:05 daily Tuncurry-Newcastle now originates at Taree at 07:00, departs Tuncurry at 07:35, runs thirty minutes later throughout, has an additional stop at Broadmeadow to make the same CityRail train connection as previously made at Newcastle, before it continues to Newcastle. This is an additional service between Taree and Tuncurry.
- 18:30 daily Armidale-Tenterfield runs earlier.
- 18:30 Tuesdays Armidale-Inverell runs earlier.
- 05:50 daily Tenterfield-Armidale runs later.
- 06:30 Tuesdays Inverell-Armidale runs later.
- Because the connecting CityRail train now departs Sydney at 16:24 and arrives at Lithgow at 19:21, the 19:20 Lithgow-Grenfell leaves at 19:30, ten minutes later.
- Because the connecting CityRail train now departs Sydney at 16:24 and arrives at Lithgow at 19:21, the 19:20 Lithgow-Gulgong leaves at 19:35, fifteen minutes later.
- Other connecting Cityrail trains are altered by between one and five minutes.
- 11:20 M-F Lithgow-Orange departs five minutes later at 11:25.
- 20:45 M-F Lithgow-Orange departs 14 minutes earlier at 20:31.
- 06:45 M-F Parkes-Lithgow departs ten minutes earlier at 06:35 and runs earlier to Orange, after which times are unchanged.
- 13:15 M-F Orange-Lithgow departs ten minutes later at 13:25.
- 09:20 Fridays Baradine-Lithgow departs Baradine five minutes earlier at 09:15 and Coolah at 11:05. Other times are unaltered.
- 12:35 Mondays Coonabarabran-Lithgow departs Mendooran five minutes earlier at 13:40. Other times are unaltered.
- 13:00 Tue, Wed, Thur Coonabarabran-Lithgow departs Mendooran five minutes earlier at 14:05. Other times are unaltered.
- 06:00 Saturdays Gulgong-Lithgow altered to depart at 06:20 as on Mondays to Fridays.
- 5:50 Public Holidays Grenfell-Lithgow altered to connect with CityRail train at Lithgow rather than at Mount Victoria, similarly to Weekdays, ie it no longer runs between Lithgow and Mount Victoria.
- 20:35 Saturdays Lithgow-Orange now departs at 20:31 and arrives Bathurst four minutes earlier at 21:31.

Countrylink timetable brochures for the North West and West have been re-issued dated 23 October 2011, whereas the North Coast booklet has been re-issued marked "Effective 11 October 2009 Updated 23 October 2011".

CityRail: Paris-style train plan for city

From the Sydney Morning Herald, 6 October, by Jacob Saulwick:

Rail services on the north shore, inner west, Bankstown, Hurstville and north-west lines would operate as single-deck, high-frequency metro-style trains under a plan being drawn up by Transport NSW. The plan would convert about a third of the CityRail network to metro services similar to those in Paris or London. They would have far fewer seats than they have now but offer greater frequency. An assessment by Transport NSW of Sydney's long-term rail strategy, obtained by the *Herald*, reveals that seven options are being prepared as part of the state's next transport masterplan, due next year. But planners are pushing a so-called three-tier strategy, which would replace large tracts of the rail network with high-frequency metro trains. The proposal argues that more modern rolling stock and signalling equipment would allow up to 28 trains an hour to cross the Harbour Bridge, avoiding the need for an expensive second crossing on what is the rail network's main choking point. At present, 20 trains an hour can cross the bridge. Eighteen trains an hour already cross it during the morning peak, meaning it is approaching capacity.

The document, *Long Term Rail Strategy Phase 5 Assessment*, marked "Cabinet in confidence" and dated August 2011, also reveals that: Rail planners expect that so much money and expertise will be tied up building the north-west rail link until about 2019 that another big project is not considered possible until then; The Epping to Parramatta line is being planned as a shuttle between the stations but is not expected to operate until 2036; If the government does not build extra capacity through the city, or deliver a significant upgrade to rail technology, it would mean that services would need to be cut because passengers would take so long to disembark from carriages. Shifting to a metro-style network would be expensive - and intensely controversial. On the plans obtained by the *Herald*, commuters travelling to the city from Rouse Hill and Cabramatta would most likely need to stand. The assessment does not specify how much extra capacity would be added on the bridge if 20 double-decked trains were replaced by 18 single-decked trains. And it does not reveal how much it would cost to upgrade the signalling and rolling stock needed for the conversion to metros. But the report suggests the government faces a choice between two "service philosophies" - suburban and three-tier or some sort of hybrid - in deciding on a future for the network.

The present suburban system offers double-decked trains with lots of seats, which means they are preferred for longer trips. But the heavier and faster suburban trains need to run with at least three-minute gaps between them, limiting them to 20 services an hour. The "three-tier" philosophy would add metro trains to the present "two-tier" mix of suburban trains and express services from outer areas such as Newcastle, the south coast and the Blue Mountains. The metro trains would run over the bridge. But to facilitate the shift, the report says a "relief" line would be needed between Redfern and Wynyard to allow non-metro trains from the west into the city. The Keneally government promised to build this line but never explained that the reason for it was in part to enable the "three-tier" network. The main alternative to shifting to metros is to build another harbour crossing for the existing network, as promised by Labor in 2005. Through a spokesman, the Transport Minister, Gladys Berejiklian, said the government would consult industry and the community to develop a masterplan. The report says that the consultant MTR, which operates the train network in Melbourne, will review work by other consultants on Sydney's future rail needs.

V/Line & Countrylink: Albury passenger trains

The second V/Line standard gauge passenger train since conversion of the NE line commenced operation on Sunday 30 October. It departs at 17:20 from Albury arriving Melbourne Southern Cross at 21:40 and at 18:01 from Melbourne SX arriving Albury at 22:00. The Working Timetable for these trains is not yet on the V/Line website, but they do appear in ARTC's Working Timetable of 23 October. The evening up train has a rather poor timetabled run from Seymour to Melbourne with three stops, each of nine minutes, for crosses. Its schedule is 48 minutes slower than the train it replaces, a Vlocity (19:35 ex-Seymour)! The Albury line has the unusual attribute for Victoria of having an identical timetable every day of the week.

Connecting buses run to/from Wodonga "CBD" to the new station at Wodonga West. New timetables have also been issued for the broad gauge trains Melbourne to Seymour and Shepparton and for connecting bus services Benalla-Mulwala, Wangaratta-Bright, Wangaratta-Corowa and Albury-Bendigo.

It had originally been announced that the second trains would commence in August, but this was put back by continuing work by ARTC on the line. The promised third daily train will not be introduced until all work on the line is completed, and this is unlikely until perhaps March 2012. The local State Liberal MP for Benambra, Bill Tilley, has warned "When you buy a rail ticket don't expect to be on time for an appointment at the other end." He said introducing another service could delay much-needed works on the rail line. "We will better know (when the third service will be introduced) in the first quarter of next year." Minister for Transport, Terry Mulder said. "As the Australian Rail Track Corporation works to repair the line and install new signals varying speed restrictions will remain in place and continue to have a major impact on V/Line's train punctuality." V/Line Chief Executive Officer Rob Barnett said a decision was made to bring back the second return service despite the condition of the track. "We have found people prefer to use the train over the bus, even if it is going to run slower than we would like. The current train is not running to the high standards of service we expect with only 17 per cent of our Albury and Wodonga trains arriving on time over the last three months. We are hopeful ARTC works will mean speed restrictions in place can be lifted as track and signal issues are addressed."

From 27 to 29 December, **Countrylink's** XPTs between Albury and Melbourne will be replaced by buses.

V/Line: Maryborough passenger service

The new station at Clunes between Ballarat and Maryborough, Vic., is expected to be completed and brought into service in late November 2011. At that time, line speed will be increased to 100 kph, saving about 10-15 minutes.

V/Line: No Mildura passenger train

The Victorian Minister for Transport, Terry Mulder, is reported as stating the return of any passenger train service to Mildura will not be considered until after the completion of the Victorian Regional Rail Link project. This means it will not be considered until at least 2016.

Metro Trains Melbourne: WTT disappears

Metro Train Melbourne's Working Timetable and WTT Addenda (System Description) no longer appear on their website. There is merely a contact name to request copies from. This is another reminder to obtain these sort of documents while you can.

Metro Trains Melbourne: More trains running on schedule

From the Age (Melbourne), 6 October, by Jason Dowling:

Metro has achieved its best four-month punctuality performance since taking over the running of Melbourne's trains in November 2009, but some are questioning whether timetable changes in May have undermined the credibility of performance figures and potentially cost taxpayers millions of dollars in fines for late services. Metro has been allowed to add up to four minutes to the timetable travel times on some busy lines, including the Frankston, Cranbourne and Pakenham, to reflect "real travel journey times". Under its contract with the government, Metro must operate 88 per cent of services on time - arriving at a station within four minutes and 59 seconds of the scheduled time, or face performance penalties. Metro paid \$3 million because services did not meet performance targets - including punctuality - between April and June.

Greens MP Greg Barber said timetables should not be changed to improve performance figures. "Metro absolutely knew what they were getting into when they came to Melbourne in 2009; they should shape up or ship out," he said.

Questions about the credibility of public transport performance figures follow concerns about hospital data and crime statistics. The Department of Transport's David Stockman said the extra travel time added to some lines in the May timetable changes did not require a rewrite of Metro's performance contract because "the existing franchise agreement was developed to get agreement on changes to the timetable. "It should be noted that the Frankston, Cranbourne and Pakenham train lines equate to roughly 20 per cent of the weekly services that Metro provides each week," Mr Stockman said. "Over the course of a 31-stop journey from Frankston to Flinders Street, via the City Loop, a four-minute increase equates to less than eight seconds per stop," he said.

Daniel Bowen, of the Public Transport Users Association, said timetable changes and extra services running in peak hour had helped reduce over-crowding and improved punctuality. "But there are also cases of excessive slack in the timetables, so you regularly see some trains having to wait several minutes at stations because they are ahead of the timetable," he said. "That obviously means it has become a lot easier in some cases for Metro to meet those [performance] targets."

Last month, Metro delivered 89% of train services on time. Metro's Leah Waymark said the new timetable had made it easier to achieve monthly performance targets. She said the September result "reflects the successful transition to the new timetable, but we still have plenty more to do".

The last time Metro delivered the trains on time four months in a row was in December 2008 when on-time performance was measured to a five-minute, 59 seconds standard.

Victoria: Dooen grain terminal

Viterra will build a \$10-million grain receival site at Dooen alongside the Wimmera Intermodal Freight Terminal. The Canadian-owned company, which already has its Wimmera base at Dooen, will expand its facility to include a 200,000-tonne storage capability. Executive manager Dean McQueen said investment would directly benefit Wimmera growers and exporters alike. Construction has started on the project and Mr McQueen said he expected it to be ready by this season's harvest. "Viterra has an existing container packing facility at Dooen, currently packing 120,000 tonnes of grain a year, which will double once the receival facility is completed," Mr McQueen said.

SA: Olympic Dam mine

The Federal and South Australian governments have approved BHP Billiton's plan to develop the world's largest mine (copper, gold and uranium) at Olympic Dam. The project includes a 105km rail line to link the mine to the railway network near Woomera.

Adelaide Metro

On Melbourne Cup Day a 10 minute tram service operated to Glenelg to cater for a meeting at Morphettville Racecourse.

WA: WestNet Rail to Brookfield Rail

WestNet Rail, the long-term lessee and controller of the WA country rail network, has changed its name to Brookfield Rail, to be uniform with its new owner, Brookfield Infrastructure. The website remains www.wnr.com.au and still includes network specifications. To find Weekly Notices it is now necessary to click on "Links".

WA: Oakejee line corridor preserved

The WA government has approved a 570km corridor for a standard gauge heavy freight railway providing key Mid-West iron ore projects access to the proposed deepwater port at Oakajee, near Geraldton. The corridor departs the proposed Oakajee port site and heads east through the Moresby Range to a junction north-west of Mullewa that enables a link to the existing State freight rail network. From here it heads north-east past the Tallering Peak project to Weld Range, and then north to Jack Hills. For more information on the Oakajee project visit www.dsd.wa.gov.au/6616.aspx

TranzScenic: Overlander suspended

The Overlander Wellington-Auckland & v.v. will be suspended from 25 December until 8 January. Major infrastructure works will be undertaken in both Auckland and Wellington in this period.

Swedish Working Timetables

For current Swedish Railway Working Timetables see www.trafikverket.se/Foretag/Trafikera-och-transportera/Trafikera-jarnvag/Tagplan/Tagplan-2011/ These are in the usual European graphical format.

Swiss timetables

The 2012 Swiss timetable is now available in the SBB Journey Planner. Last minute changes could still be made. PDF files of the 2012 timetables are available at http://www.fahrplanfelder.ch/fileadmin/fap_pdf_fields/2012/

Recommended reading

The annual review of world passenger train speeds by member Colin Taylor appears in the September issue of *Railway Gazette International*. It highlights the breaking of the 300 km/p/h barrier for regular scheduled services by China Railways. This is Dr Taylor's final survey.

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BUS NEWS

Queensland: Sunshine Coast & Brisbane

Noosa Junction Bus Station Opens

On 29 August Noosa Junction Bus Station opened. Route 620 Maroochydore-Noosa Heads now serves Pacific Av, Sunshine Beach, previously served by 627 Tewantin-Sunshine Beach. 628 Parklands-Noosa Heads and 632 Cooran-Noosa Heads have been shortened to terminate at Noosa Junction, with passengers continuing over the hill to Noosa Heads required to change to routes 620, 626, 627 and 629. 629 Tewantin-Noosa National Park has been altered to operate Tewantin-Noosa Junction via Noosa Heads omitting the National Park. 630/1 Nambour-Noosa Heads have been extended to Noosa Junction. New timetables have been issued for 620, 622, 626/7, 628/9, 630/1, 632.

Thompson's Proposals

At present Thompson's Bus Services in the outer northern suburbs of Brisbane operate:

- 671 Strathpine-Joyner South
- 672 Strathpine-Joyner North
- 673 Strathpine-Lawnton
- 674 Strathpine-East Strathpine
- 675 Petrie-Murrumba Downs
- 676 Petrie-North Lakes via Murrumba Downs

Translink has invited public comment on two options for the future Thompson's network. Option One combines the public and parallel school services to produce a new proposed network as follows:

- 670 Strathpine-Warner
- 671 Strathpine-Cashmere
- 672 Strathpine-Warner Lakes
- 673 Bray Park-Warner
- 674 Strathpine-Lawnton
- 675 Petrie-Murrumba Downs
- 676 Petrie-Murrumba Downs direct
- 677 Petrie-Griffin
- 678 Petrie-Warner
- 679 North Lakes-Griffin

Option Two introduces a new 670 Strathpine-Cashmere and additional trips on existing 671/2/3/4.

Veolia Proposals

Translink has invited public comment on proposals to change Veolia's bus services in the Redlands area east of Brisbane and adjoining Moreton Bay. The biggest changes appear to be that many services will be modified and the 250 Brisbane City-Redland Bay and 270 Brisbane City-Victoria Point trunk services will become express from Carindale to Stones corner. Passengers for locations between Carindale and Stones Corner will need to change to and from Brisbane Transport services at Carindale. This will reduce journey times for 250/270.

Brisbane Transport changes 31 October

100 City-Forest Lake via Inala and 180 City-Garden City via Mansfield will be upgraded to become BUZ (Bus Upgrade Zone) services operating every fifteen minutes 7 days a week. 170 City-Garden City via Newnham Rd Cityxpress and 174/5 City-Garden City via Logan Rd have additional peak services. 111 Roma St-Eight Mile Plains has additional Saturday night services. New timetables have been issued for P88, 100/N100/118, 110/115, 111/133/160/162, 135/155/134/145, 170/171/P176, 172/P173, 174/175, 177/178/183, P179/180/181/186/P189.

Park Ridge Transit changes 31 October

534 Springfield-Browns Plains now has a Sunday service. 541/2/3/4 Browns Plains Locals have additional peak trips. 545 Browns Plains-Garden City has additional peak and Saturday evening services. New timetables have been issued for 534, 540/P546, 541/2/3/4, 545.

ACT: Canberra

2012 bus network: ACTION's proposed weekday bus network for 2012 has been released by Transport for Canberra, with residents in Canberra's newest suburbs in Gungahlin set to benefit. More details next month.

New South Wales: Sydney

Sydney Buses

In the first major timetable changes since start of the O'Farrell Coalition government there are new timetables for many Lower North Shore and Northern Beaches bus services. The main changes were caused by the reintroduction of many ferry services cancelled in an economy measure by the previous government. The ferry changes in turn caused a few of the bus timetable changes, but mainly the opportunity was taken to adjust running times on many services which don't connect with ferries. Journey times were increased in most cases by 1 or 2 minutes between some timing points requiring some earlier outer terminal departures or in a few cases later arrivals. There are no route changes or new services. There are no changes caused by train timetables. Timetables remain in the same layout and some cover pictures have changed from bus operators to local scenes as noted below. DL sized 'Important Notice' handbills were distributed for all of the changes; all referred to either the 131500 website or to the 131500 telephone service. None referred users to information stalls for hard copy timetables.

New timetables, dated 23 October 2011, were issued for:

Title	Routes	Notes
Manly & Balgowlah Heights	131 132 E70 171 E71	Journey times
Chatswood & Dee Why to Manly and Mona Vale	136 137 L70	Journey times
Chatswood & St Leonards to Manly	143 144	Journey times
Palm Beach and Pittwater to City	151 183 184 E84 L84 E87 L87 188 E88 L88 E89 190 L90	Journey times, cover picture of Avalon Beach surf boat
Collaroy Plateau & Cromer to City	153 178 E78 179 E79 180 L80	Journey times
Wingala to Manly & City	159 176 E76 E77	Journey Times
Nth Balgowlah & Narraweena to Manly & City	168 E68 169 E69 173	Journey times, cover picture of sea wall at Manly
Warringah to City & Milsons Point	175 L78 plus parts of 151 E70 176 E76 E77 178 E78 179 E79 180 L80 183 E83 184 E84 L84 185 L85 E86 187 E87 L87 188 E88 L88 189 E89 190 L90	Journey times and possibly the most route numbers ever on a
Warriewood & Elanora Heights to City & Mona Vale	182 E83 185 L85	Journey times
Crows Nest & Cammeray to City	201 263	Journey times
Neutral Bay Wharf to Cremorne Wharf	225	Daytime trips now every 30 mins from Neutral Bay instead of 25/35 minutes. This meets new ferry trips.
Mosman to City & Milsons Point	227 228 229 230 243 244 245 246 247 248 249	Combination of changed trip times and some additional services. Also minor changes on 230 at Mosman Wharf.
Balmoral Local – Spit Jn & Taronga Zoo	236 238	Some journey times
McMahons Point to Lane Cove & Kirribilli	265 269	North Sydney to McMahons Point trips no longer a continuation of previous McMahons Point to North Sydney Trip
Birchgrove & Balmain to City and Art Gallery	441 442	Changes in which early morning trips start from Balmain East Wharf. One later departure in the evenings. These were due to simplification of the complex stopping patten of Woolwich ferry services. The cover picture is now of Balmain Markets.

Nightride Buses

Two new Nightride services are N61 to Carlingford and N71 to Richmond. N61 provides 4 outward and 3 inward trips on Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Public Holidays only; trip time 1hr 8 mins N71 provides 5 outward and 4 inward on the same nights. Additional Friday morning trips were also provided on other Nightride services.

Barrack Street

To attempt to alleviate bus problems around Wynyard Sydney City Council is canvassing opinion on making changes to parking to allow Barrack St to become a bus stand again. Many years ago the Lane Cove privately operated services stood there.

Sydney Private Operators

Caringbah Bus Service routes 977 & 978

Caringbah Bus Service's routes 977 and 978 were transferred to Veolia Transport from 1 October. Veolia now runs all bus routes in Regions 10 and 11. The routes are:

- 977 Miranda – Caringbah – Lilli Pilli
- 978 Miranda – Caringbah – Gannons Point – Dolans Bay – Port Hacking

Timetables are unchanged. However, timetables in Veolia format were being displayed on its website the following week.

Veolia Transport route M92

An interim new timetable for Route M92, Parramatta-Sutherland, started on 12 September. It features reduced running times by as much as 19%. For example, running times over the approx. 40km route in weekdays peak periods have been reduced from 110 to 85 minutes, and in off-peak periods and weekends down from 105 to 85-89 minutes. One *Table Talk* correspondent commented that running times were previously excessive.

Then a permanent new timetable was issued for M92 from 10 October, to allow for new shifts and rosters. The route also now enters Bankstown Square bus terminal in both directions. The lack of a bus stop in the terminal had previously been a point of criticism. Instead of having a common timetable for weekends, this timetable has separate sections for Saturdays and Sundays/Public Holidays, as different running times apply on the two day-types.

Veolia Transport route M91

A new timetable dated 10 October has been issued for Route M91, Hurstville – Parramatta. It is not known if it will be available in paper form. The only difference noted is inclusion of previously scheduled late night/early morning trips between Parramatta and Chester Hill on Friday and Saturday nights.

Busways Blacktown - new timetables for all routes

To coincide with the opening of the new Schofields Station, there were a range of changes made to Busways services in the Blacktown and Mt Druitt areas, commencing Saturday 29 October. Whilst most of the alterations are only minor time changes to provide connections with trains or improve reliability, there have been some significant changes to trip times and/or routes on the services as listed below:

- Route T70 (Blacktown-Glenwood-Castle Hill) – changes to trip times (particularly in the peak) to improve reliability.
- Route T71 (Blacktown-Rouse Hill-Castle Hill) – most trips will no longer divert via Stanhope Parkway to the Perfection Avenue roundabout. Passengers travelling to or from Blacktown now catch the improved T74 service, whilst students travelling to or from Castle Hill will have one bus in the morning and one bus in the afternoon that still operates via this diversion. There are also changes to trip times (particularly in the peak) to improve reliability.
- Route T74 (Blacktown-The Ponds) – this service has been enhanced and extended and will continue from The Ponds via Stanhope Parkway (temporary route) to the new Schofields Station, Schofields Village and Riverstone. Buses will operate seven days per week at regular frequencies (half hourly on weekdays and hourly at weekends) and all trip times have changed. The route provides a link between the location of the old and new Schofield stations.
- Route T75 (Blacktown-Rouse Hill-Riverstone) – changes to trip times to improve reliability and frequency.
- Route 740 (Plumpton-Macquarie Park) – changes to trip times to improve reliability because of the M2 upgrade. There will also be a change to the route in Macquarie Park, with the loop via Lane Cove Rd, Talavera Rd and Khartoum Rd being discontinued. All trips will operate from Herring Rd via Waterloo Rd direct to Eden Park Dr and return via the same route.
- Route 745 (Plumpton-Castle Hill) – changes to trip times (particularly in the peak) to improve reliability.

There are other minor improvements. Passengers on routes 750 – 754, T70 – T75, or 743 travelling to or from Westpoint, will now need to use the shuttle bus between Westpoint and Blacktown Station. These depart from Rank 1 at Blacktown Station or Stand 1 in the Westpoint tunnel and operate every 15 minutes between approximately 09:00 and 17:45.

The new timetable booklets involved are:

- 721, 722, 724, 725, 726, 727 South Blacktown (orange)
- 737, 738, 739 Minchinbury -Eastern Creek (purple)
- 740, 745 Castle Hill and Macquarie Park (dark blue)
- 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 756 Glendenning - Doonside (light blue)
- 750, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 761 Mt Druitt (north side) (red)

- T70, T71, T74, T75, 718, 743, 744 Rouse Hill - Castle Hill (light green)
- T74, T75, 746, 757 Rouse Hill - Riverstone (dark green).

It is thought that timetables for Busways' two Shopper Hopper routes will be included in some of the above booklets, S7 in the Rouse Hill – Castle Hill timetable (as previously), while S12, which was previously standalone, in the Glendenning – Doonside timetable.

New South Wales: Regional

Ulladulla Bus Lines

New timetables dated May 2011 have been issued for its two routes:

- 740 Ulladulla-Narrawallee-Milton
- 741 Ulladulla-Tabourie-Kiola.

No significant changes to the service have been noted. However, from the website, it appears the timetable is a Transit Graphics production.

Letter from Tris Tottenham: Just a short note to correct the item on **Kennedy's Nowra** on page 8 of September *Table Talk*. A copy of **Berrima Buslines** Route 809 timetable quite specifically now states "operates School Days only" and leaves Moss Vale at 15:45." Confusion arises in the Kennedy's timetable which does not specify the heading "School Days" although on the right side table, "School Holiday" trips are listed on Route 809."

South Australia: Adelaide

Holdfast Bay Council is unlikely to support proposed changes to re-route bus services down Partridge St after Glenelg residents flooded it with letters and petitions to block the move. It has been claimed that about 290 buses will travel along Partridge St each weekday under plans to reroute buses off Jetty Rd and Moseley St and plans to move two bus layovers from Moseley St to Partridge St and Anzac Highway.

Tasmania

All **Launceston** timetables were re-issued effective 6 November and all **Burnie** timetables re-issued effective 8 November to reflect actual running times.

Victoria: Melbourne

Terminus relocation: To improve efficiency, the Brighton terminus of routes 811 and 812 (Dandenong – Brighton via Springvale/Parkmore) has been permanently relocated from 10 October. Buses now use a new terminus at Church St, outside Middle Brighton Station and no longer terminate at Wilson St, near the corner of Carpenter St.

Western Australia: Perth

The proposed Wanneroo Rd, Stirling, Warwick, Ballajura, Alexander Heights, Alexander Dr and Mirrabooka changes detailed in the September *Table Talk* were implemented on 6 November 2011.

Commonwealth Heads of Government's Perth meeting and public transport.

CHOGM met in Perth from Friday 28 to Sunday 30 October and W.A.'s usual Queens Birthday (combined with former Royal Show holiday) public holiday was put back a month to Friday 28 October. The Esplanade Busport was closed for the three days with all routes terminating there moved to Wellington St Bus Station. Bus stops in St. Georges and Adelaide Terraces and some adjoining roads were not in use. Services that terminated in Kings Park were also moved to the Bus Station. Blue CAT services operated to a much shortened route and did not serve Barrack Street jetty, Mounts Bay Road or the Convention Centre. Ferry services operated every 15 minutes during normal hours on all three days and buses operated to Saturday timetables. Trains operated to a Saturday timetable on 28 October. Despite closure of the Esplanade Busport, the adjacent Esplanade railway station remained open. All Transperth services were free on Friday and Saturday with additional trains run to support CHOGM related events on the 28th.

Thanks to Tony Bailey, Hilaire Fraser, *Guardian-Messenger*, Robert Henderson, Duncan MacAuslan, Lourie Smit, Roger Wheaton, David Whiteford.

FERRY NEWS

Melbourne West Gate Ferry

The West Gate Punt bicycle and pedestrian ferry under the West Gate Bridge has expanded operations to cater for a major increase in daily bike commuting. It previously operated between 09:00 and 16:00 on weekends only. It now also operates on weekdays between 06:30-09:30 and 16:00 and 19:00. This follows a \$1.4 million allocation from the 2011-12 State Budget. Travel on the punt will be free on weekdays until Friday 4 November.

Thanks to Tony Bailey for Ferry news.

AIR NEWS

Domestic

QantasLink is expanding services to regional Queensland from 17 October:

- A twice-weekly Townsville-Moranbah service will commence.
- Brisbane-Moranbah services will increase with a new service from Brisbane at 17:00 on Sundays, Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays
- Additional Brisbane-Emerald flights will operate on Wednesday and Saturdays.
- Additional Cairns-Weipa flights will operate on Tuesdays and Thursdays, offering 16 return flights.
- The airline will increase capacity on the Roma and Charleville service. Roma will be serviced by six return services weekdays and two return services on weekends.

Subject to regulatory approval, commencing 30 October, **Regional Express (REX)** will fly up to thrice daily between Sydney and Newcastle and fly daily between Newcastle and Ballina/Byron Bay.

Virgin Australia will add 64 domestic services over the next two weeks to meet demand and “support the Australian travel and tourism industry”. The additional services between Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide will operate from October 31 to November 13 and will create an additional 9000 seats. This coincides with strikes affecting Qantas. Virgin provide double-daily services to Emerald, Queensland from 16 January. Flights will depart Brisbane at 05:45 on Monday-Friday arriving in Emerald at 07:40; and depart Emerald at 08:10 arriving Brisbane at 09:55. Afternoon flights will depart Brisbane at 16:00 arriving Emerald at 17:55 with a return flight departing Emerald at 18:25 arriving Brisbane at 20:10. Sunday afternoon services will also operate to this schedule.

Rex services from Sydney to Newcastle commenced on 30 October, in competition with Aeropelican. Rex has three services on weekdays (one extended to/from Ballina) and two on weekends.

International

Jetstar has changed its operations to Queenstown. Gold Coast-Queenstown services are discontinued from 8 November, replaced with twice weekly Queenstown – Sydney flights from 22 December. It will provide daily Wellington – Queenstown flights from 22 December and two additional Auckland-Queenstown weekly flights and an additional Melbourne-Queenstown weekly flight. Auckland – Cairns flights will be suspended from 8 November until the high-season re-commences on 31 March 2012.

Qantas flights to Dallas/Fort Worth will increase from four to six a week from 15 January, and then daily from 1 July. Qantas is rescheduling the departure time of flight QF72 from Singapore to Perth from 26 March. It will depart Singapore at 23:30 instead of 09:05. It will arrive Perth at 04:45. QF78 will continue to depart Singapore at 19:20. The 04:45 arrival into Perth will provide Qantas customers on QF72 with connections to a range of Australian destinations. Qantas flights from Perth to Singapore will remain unchanged with QF77 departing at 11:55 and QF71 departing at 15:35.

Air Australia (formerly Strategic Airlines) withdrew from the Brisbane-Townsville-Bali route from 2 October because of low passenger numbers.

From 31 October until February, **China Southern Airlines** will double the number of flights between Melbourne and Guangzhou to twice daily. It will also add an extra weekly flight to Brisbane and commence flights to Perth from 9 November.

Australia will be on the network of Singapore Airlines’ new low cost carrier, **Scot**, which is scheduled to launch next year.

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

AND FINALLY

How a news magazine is produced

The moods of a news magazine Editor change as news comes in and the month proceeds:

1. **Annoyance** that news has arrived just after the deadline for the preceding issue has closed; then
2. **Worry** that there will not be enough material for the current issue; followed by
3. **Satisfaction** that the magazine has filled up nicely; and finally
4. **Panic** that there is now too much news to be fitted in.