



TABLE TALK

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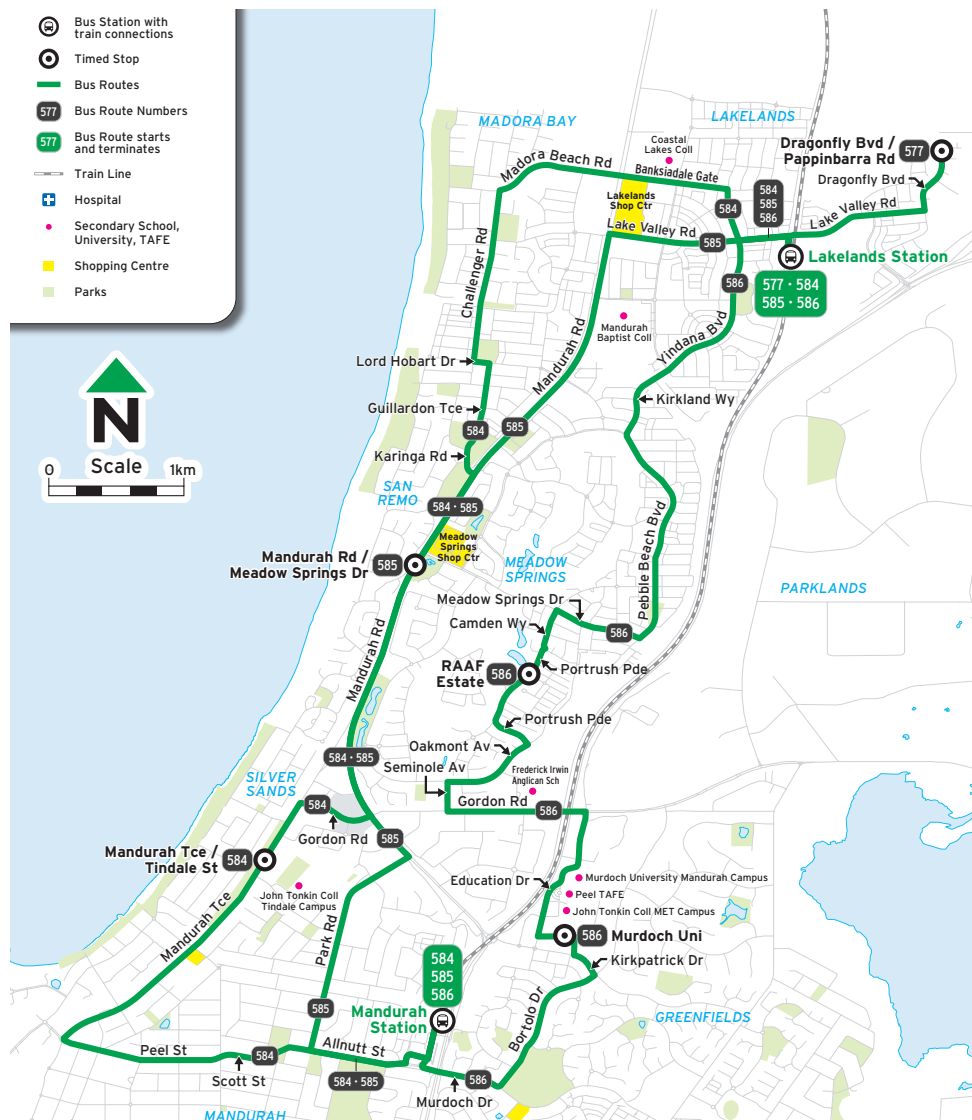
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RAIL & TRAM NEWS

QUEENSLAND



New long distance timetable

A new TravelTrain timetable comes into effect on 17 July 2023 for a period of up to 14 months. It is available from the Queensland Rail (QR) website.

QR says that the adjustments are required to enable the removal of one of the two Tilt Trains from service at a time for significant maintenance including traction power upgrades. With only one train available, trips reduce from 24 weekly services to just 10, with associated timing changes.

The Spirit of Queensland (Brisbane-Cairns) will have two extra trips each week, with some timing changes. The Spirit of the Outback (Brisbane-Longreach) and Westlander (Brisbane-Charleville) have various timing changes.

As operations stand today, Spirit of the Outback services continue to not operate past Emerald, with replacement coaches operating in lieu, at this stage until 10 June due to ongoing bridge works. QR has also confirmed for the duration of the reduced timetable that fares will remain the same. **DENNIS McLEAN, QUEENSLAND RAIL**

NEW SOUTH WALES



Sydney: Rail Review

The Labor state government initiated a review into the rail network and its resilience following its win at the March election.

The interim report by the panel was released in May, providing 12 recommendations:

- Expedition of the planned transfer of SWTT (Standard Working Timetable) development from Transport for NSW back into the Sydney Trains operating agency (with particular reference to the timeframe towards the new SWTT planned to commence in May 2024).
- Delivery of a maintenance blitz to reduce maintenance backlogs back to more acceptable levels, and to be funded from within existing budgets.

- Implement a plan for short-term customer communication improvements, and a longer-term plan to improve real-time communications to station staff and customers during incidents.
- Enhanced reporting of operational matters directly to the Secretary for TfNSW, and to the Transport Minister for matters of government importance.
- Review stakeholder engagement for the delivery of new rail assets.
- Sydney Trains to improve processes for major change with union involvement, and the intent is applied across procurement of all major assets (two recommendations combined by the Editor).
- Provide plans with embedded change management processes to address shortcomings identified with Rail Operations Centre (ROC) processes, systems and roles.
- Expedition of technological capacity to manage train crew resourcing during degraded operations.
- Address outstanding Rail Safety Workers re-certifications.
- Sydney Trains should add new roles of Chief Legal Counsel, Executive Director for People & Culture, and Director Employee Relations (these functions were previously subsumed by TfNSW).
- Consider the recombination of NSW TrainLink Intercity functions with Sydney Trains.

The report said that the 2017 timetable enhancement had directly impacted the ability of the network to respond to incidents and degraded operations. It validly noted that extra services were provided to accommodate heightened annual patronage growth that has not materialised due to the pandemic, with 2023 numbers below 2019-normal for every day of the week. The report noted that weekends are closer than weekdays to pre-pandemic numbers.

Regarding incident response, the report noted that the \$300 million facility (opened in 2018) has failed to meet particular objectives, including operational systems unable to cope with communications volumes during highly degraded operations due to overload, limited testing of business continuity plans, and the descoping of some critical technologies which were supposed to support staff decision-making. On technology, particular reference was made to "decision-making technology during times of disruption has not been successful with a return to previous mainly manual processes and a reliance on individual phone calls."

On crew resourcing, the report said that during degraded mode, while management can invoke emergency working procedures to enable extended shift limits for crew, changes must be notified to the union and require the agreement of individual drivers. Despite investing in over 500 shifts of extra base line standby capacity per week, these additional crewing resources are of limited use during degraded mode because trains and crews may be displaced across the network leading to difficulty in locating both spare resources and

currently operating crew, and uncertainty over which crew members can work extended hours which is dependent on hours already worked, break times, and uncertainty about currency of route/traction certifications. Crew assigners are also unable to handle the volume of calls from stakeholders during significantly degraded operations.

The state Transport Minister said that she had accepted each of the report's recommendations. A final report is due in October, but until then, the above provides groundwork for immediate mobilisation by the government and the Transport bureaucracy.

Some tables from the report are provided below. A copy of this report as well as the Sydney Metro Corporate Plan for 2023/24 is available from the June 2023 ATA Distribution List. A bus industry review is also ongoing currently, with an interim report due in July. **TRANSPORT FOR NSW**

Figure 3: Punctuality, 2014 to 2023

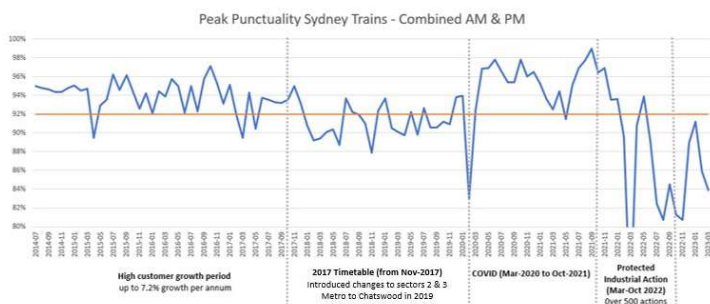
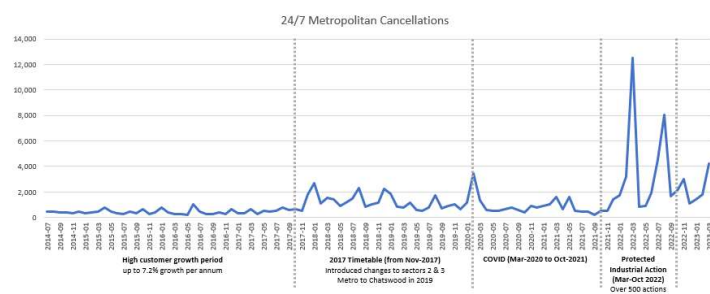


Figure 4: Train cancellations, 2014 to 2023



Melbourne: Union station opening

Located on Metro Trains Melbourne's (MTM) Belgrave and Lilydale lines, Union station opened for passenger services on Monday 22 May. The station forms part of the state government's ongoing Level Crossing Removals project. The station combines the coverage of former stations Surrey Hills and Mont Albert, which have closed permanently.

For the period 22-27 May, a temporary timetable was in effect on these lines to incorporate the above changes. A station timetable was issued for local passengers at Union, providing a simplified view of train departure times for each direction, see top of page 4.

A new permanent timetable was introduced effective from Sunday 28 May. **METRO TRAINS MELB**

V/Line extra weekend services

Updating the recent articles on the extra weekend V/Line services provided on selected lines to cater for anticipated increased patronage from the state government's recently-introduced fare cap policy, the following was scheduled:

On **Sunday 7 May**, the extra Geelong services were scheduled, in line with the previous Sunday.

On the weekend of **13/14 May** as well as on **Saturday 27 May**, the extra services were scheduled without change from the weekend of 29/30 April.

On the weekend of **20/21 May**, the same working was scheduled, except for the return of the appearance of the extra Up trip ex Bacchus Marsh on the Sunday which had disappeared in April.

From Sunday 28 May, a new V/Line Rail Services Plan came into effect, bringing these extra services into the regular timetable. Other changes with the new timetable is provided below. **LEN REGAN, V/LINE**

New rail timetables

Effective from Sunday 28 May, new MTM and V/Line timetables have been issued to incorporate a number of infrastructure changes and operational updates.

The new **Belgrave and Lilydale** timetable incorporates the addition of Union station and completion of nearby Level Crossing Removal projects. PTV says that three extra services have been timetabled on both weekday mornings and weekday evening services. Some adjustments have also been made to service levels at Glenferrie and Laburnum stations. On weekdays, there is now a three-minute transfer time at Camberwell for Alamein services on weekday evenings, in line with weekend connection times.

The new **Hurstbridge and Mernda** timetables incorporate track duplication, completion of Level Crossing Removal projects and modernisation of numerous stations enabling an enhanced service offering for travellers. The replaced Bell and Preston stations opened last September, while the replaced Montmorency and Greensborough stations plus upgraded Diamond Creek opened 30 April. Associated adjustments also affect local bus routes (see the *Bus News* section). PTV said that increased reliability and better service consistency should result from these improvements.

On the Hurstbridge line, PTV advises the following improvements:

- 40 extra services per week, including four during weekday mornings, one during weekday afternoon peaks and one during weekday evenings.
- All AM peak services stop at stations between Clifton Hill and Jolimont.

Union to City

Effective 22 to 27 May 2023

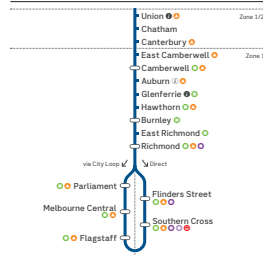


Weekdays	
4 am	
5	08 ac 23 ac 38 ac 53 ac
6	08 ac 16 ac 23 ac 39 ac 45 ac 55 ac
7	03 ac 14 ac 19 ac 25 ac 30 ac 35 ac 40 ac 45 ac 49 ac 57 ac
8	06 ac 11 ac 15 ac 20 ac 25 ac 30 ac 35 ac 44 ac 52 ac
9	05 ac 17 ac 31 ac 43 ac 53 ac
10	05 ac 18 ac 30 ac 45 ac
11	00 ac 15 ac 30 ac 45 ac
12 pm	
1	13 ac 28 ac 43 ac 58 ac
2	13 ac 28 ac 43 ac 58 ac
3	13 ac 20 ac 28 ac 35 ac 43 ac 49 ac
4	00 ac 15 ac 30 ac 45 ac
5	00 ac 16 ac 30 ac 45 ac
6	00 ac 15 ac 20 ac 30 ac 43 ac 57 ac
7	12 ac 25 ac 39 ac 52 ac
8	17 ac 36 ac 52 ac
9	22 ac 52 ac
10	22 ac 52 ac
11	22 ac 52 ac
12 am	
1	25 ac
2	25 ac
3	25 ac
4	25 ac

Saturday	
3 am	
4	25 ac
5	03 ac 33 ac
6	03 ac 33 ac
7	03 ac 34 ac 54 ac
8	14 ac 34 ac 54 ac
9	14 ac 34 ac 54 ac
10	04 ac 14 ac 24 ac 34 ac 44 ac 54 ac
11	04 ac 14 ac 24 ac 34 ac 44 ac 54 ac
12 pm	
1	04 ac 14 ac 24 ac 34 ac 44 ac 54 ac
2	04 ac 14 ac 24 ac 34 ac 44 ac 54 ac
3	04 ac 14 ac 24 ac 34 ac 44 ac 54 ac
4	04 ac 14 ac 24 ac 34 ac 44 ac 54 ac
5	04 ac 14 ac 24 ac 34 ac 44 ac 54 ac
6	04 ac 14 ac 24 ac 34 ac 44 ac 54 ac
7	13 ac 34 ac 57 ac
8	27 ac 57 ac
9	27 ac 57 ac
10	27 ac 57 ac
11	27 ac 57 ac
12 am	
1	26 ac
2	25 ac
3	25 ac
4	25 ac

- TRAIN SERVICE KEY**
- A Flinders Street via City Loop
 - B Flinders Street (direct)
 - C Not stopping at East Richmond
 - D Express between Camberwell > Richmond
 - E Express between Camberwell > Glenferrie > Richmond
 - F Express between Union > Richmond
 - G Express between Union > Camberwell > Glenferrie > Richmond
 - X Friday service only
 - N Night Network service

Belgrave and Lilydale lines



- Interchange station (for connecting lines)
- Customer service hub (staffed first to last service)
- Customer service hub (Not serviced by line)
- Connects to:
 - Train
 - Bus
 - Regional Train
 - Regional Coach
 - SkyBus

Travelling through the City Loop
 The City Loop is made up of five stations that circle the city centre – Flinders Street, Southern Cross, Flagstaff, Melbourne Central and Parliament. Belgrave and Lilydale services run via the City Loop or direct to Flinders Street at different times during the day.

Weekdays
 In the morning travel via Parliament, Melbourne Central, Flagstaff, Southern Cross to Flinders Street.
 In the afternoon travel direct to Flinders Street, before continuing on to Southern Cross, Flagstaff, Melbourne Central and Parliament.

Weekends
 Travel direct to Flinders Street, before continuing on to Southern Cross, Flagstaff, Melbourne Central and Parliament.

Night Network Train
 Trains run direct to and from Flinders Street Station, every 60 minutes, on Friday and Saturday nights. Check timetable for services.

Union to Belgrave and Lilydale

Effective 22 to 27 May 2023



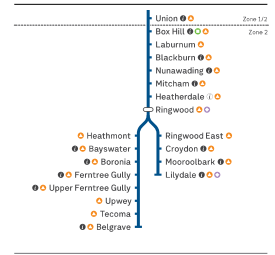
Weekdays	
4 am	
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6	19 ac 38 ac 51 ac
7	05 ac 18 ac 32 ac 45 ac 52 ac 55 ac
8	04 ac 10 ac 21 ac 29 ac 34 ac 42 ac 55 ac
9	09 ac 22 ac 27 ac 31 ac 39 ac 39 ac 54 ac 57 ac
10	07 ac 21 ac 36 ac 51 ac
11	06 ac 21 ac 36 ac 51 ac
12 pm	
1	12 ac 27 ac 42 ac 57 ac
2	12 ac 27 ac 42 ac 57 ac
3	12 ac 22 ac 39 ac 54 ac
4	10 ac 25 ac 39 ac 54 ac
5	05 ac 06 ac 20 ac 23 ac 30 ac 34 ac 45 ac 50 ac
6	01 ac 04 ac 13 ac 15 ac 26 ac 30 ac 44 ac 58 ac
7	02 ac 09 ac 16 ac 31 ac 50 ac
8	05 ac 20 ac 35 ac 50 ac
9	05 ac 20 ac 35 ac 50 ac
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12 am	
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4	05 ac

Saturday	
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6	04 ac 14 ac 24 ac 34 ac 44 ac 54 ac
7	04 ac 14 ac 24 ac 40 ac
8	06 ac 36 ac
9	06 ac 36 ac
10	06 ac 36 ac
11	06 ac 36 ac
12 am	
1	00 ac 30 ac
2	05 ac
3	05 ac
4	05 ac

- TRAIN SERVICE KEY**
- A Lilydale line
 - B Belgrave line
 - C Train to Blackburn
 - D Train to Ringwood
 - E Change at Ringwood for Belgrave line
 - F Change at Ringwood for Lilydale line
 - G Not stopping at Laburnum
 - H Express between Box Hill > Blackburn > Mitcham > Ringwood > Bayswater & Boronia > Upper Ferntree Gully > Belgrave
 - K Express between Box Hill > Blackburn > Mitcham > Ringwood
 - X Friday service only
 - N Night Network service

For more public transport information visit ptv.vic.gov.au, use the **PTV app** or call 1800 800 007.

Belgrave and Lilydale lines



- Interchange station (for connecting lines)
- Customer service hub (staffed first to last service)
- Customer service hub (Not serviced by line)
- Connects to:
 - Train
 - Bus
 - Regional Train
 - Regional Coach
 - SkyBus

Night Network Train
 Trains run direct to and from Flinders Street Station, every 60 minutes, on Friday and Saturday nights. Check timetable for services.

Over on the Mernda line:

- 35 extra services per week, including two during weekday mornings, two during weekday afternoons and two during weekday evenings.
- Some peak services to run express between Victoria Park and Jolimont.
- Early morning service dwell time at Flinders Street reduced to two minutes.

Meanwhile over on the **V/Line** regional network, new timetables commence for the Geelong and Shepparton lines, while minor adjustments impact the Bendigo line and selected V/Line coach timetables across the state.

- **Geelong:** Altered Wyndham Vale stopping conditions, incorporation of the Waurin Ponds stabling yard, and completion of Sunshine platform lengthening.

The weekday 16:55 & 18:34 SX-Wyndham Vale trips now pick up at Sunshine, while the 06:54 Up trip ex Wyndham Vale now sets down at Sunshine. The 17:32 & 18:56 SX-South Geelong and 01:15 SX-Geelong trips now extend through to Waurin Ponds. The 05:06 weekday Up trip ex Geelong now starts from South Geelong at 05:01. The 05:19 Marshall-SX trip now starts from Waurin Ponds at 05:14. The 06:38 South Geelong-SX trip now starts from Waurin

Ponds 06:28. On Saturday nights, the 01:10 SX-Geelong trip now extends through to Waurin Ponds.

The 8 extra Sat and Sun trips between SX and Wyndham Vale due to regional fare cap policy (listed in Table Talk, April 2023, p. 7) are now permanent. An extra two passenger trips have also been scheduled on both days, replacing previously empty positioning moves:

- 09:30 Southern Cross (SX) to Wyndham Vale.
- 18:21 Wyndham Vale to SX.
- **Ballarat/Ararat/Maryborough:** Adjusted running times to improve performance - departure times changed for some trips between Ararat & Wendouree (inclusive) or Maryborough & Creswick (incl.) by up to three minutes.

The weekday 18:48 SX-Wendouree and 20:47 Wendouree-SX trips are now built-up to 6 cars. The additional 10:35 Up trip ex Bacchus Marsh scheduled recently to cater for increased weekend demand has been made permanent on both Saturdays and Sundays. (NB: Until 4 June, coaches replace all trains country-side of Bacchus Marsh due to maintenance.)

- **Shepparton:** Journey time reductions from the removal of level crossing speed

restrictions affecting selected trip departure times between Shepparton and Donnybrook by one minute.

On Saturdays, the now-07:09 Up trip ex Shepparton no longer stops at Heathcote Junction.

- **Bendigo/Echuca:** Echuca corridor adjusted running times affecting stops between Echuca and Kangaroo Flat by up to four minutes.

At Southern Cross, some V/Line services also now arrive at/depart from different platforms. **METRO TRAINS MELBOURNE, BIG BUILD, PTV, V/LINE**

Melbourne: New ticketing operator secured

The state government has announced that it has now signed the contract for the state's next public transport smart ticketing system operator.

American firm Conduent beat the incumbent operator NTT Data (which has run it since it started in 2007) as well as global ticketing specialist Cubic to gain the \$1.7 billion contract, which will commence from this December.

As part of the new contract, Conduent will upgrade the system to allow open payments using a credit card or smartphone, with trials to occur next year.

Public Transport Minister Ben Carroll said that the government has taken "a system that has been tested in Paris, in Dubai, in Montreal, in New Jersey and [is] bringing it to Melbourne".

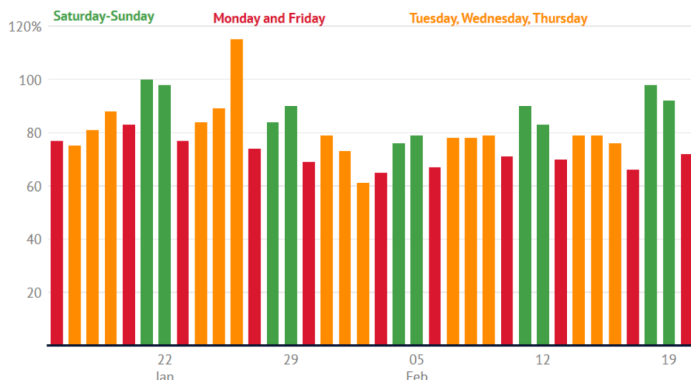
In Parliament, the state opposition pointed to multiple troubles being faced by the new company overseas as cause for concern, however the minister said the government was sure this contract would deliver value for money. **VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT, ABC NEWS (2)**

Melbourne: Patronage days

The Age has reported figures that show, like the trend in Sydney, Tuesdays to Thursdays are busier than the adjacent weekdays, while weekends are also currently not far off their respective patronage pre-pandemic. The newspaper provided the adjacent table from transport department data for 16 January to 20 February. **THE AGE**

Public transport

Melbourne train, tram and bus patronage versus 2019



Source: Department of Transport and Planning

Metro and Yarra Trams contracts

The state government has announced that the tender process will soon commence for the next Yarra Trams operating contract. The existing contract with Keolis Downer is due to finish late next year. A Keolis Downer spokesperson confirmed its interest, saying that the company would put in a "competitive bid" to retain the operation.

Meanwhile, the current suburban rail network contract, held by a 60/20/20 consortium of MTR Corporation, John Holland and UGL Rail (as Metro Trains Melbourne), has been extended for an further 18 months until mid-2026, with the state government saying it wants the \$12.6 billion Metro Tunnel project completed prior to tendering out the next contract. That project is due to open in 2025. **VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT, THE AGE**



Lakelands station opening

Lakelands railway station, built as part of the Metronet series of projects, will open on Sunday 11 June, serviced by Mandurah line services. The first services are planned to depart at 12:12 (to Mandurah) and 12:14 (to city) that afternoon.

New timetables have timing changes for Mandurah, Airport and Midland line timetables.

Transperth advises that bus routes 574, 577, 584, 585 and 586 stop outside the railway station. **TRANSPERTH**

Patronage growing

The Public Transport Authority has reported growing patronage across the public transport network. On the Transperth SmartRider network, patronage has run at 90-95 per cent of pre-COVID levels for most of this year, firming to the high 90s in mid-March. February saw 11.1 million passengers trips, the highest since February 2020, when there were 12.2 million trips made. **PTA**

Free Sunday travel, sometimes...

The state government announced in April that all public transport services would be free to use for SmartRider ticket holders on the first Sunday of each month for two years starting on 4 June, coinciding with the WA Day long weekend. The announcement was made as part of its revelations around its 2023/24 Budget.

The government said in its statement that "the free travel will apply to people using SmartRider cards, so the number of rides can be tracked and

the two-year policy assessed”, however it remains to be seen whether passenger behaviours around tapping on will remain the same for the fare-free days, and therefore impact the expected increase in trips from the 400,000 base that the government is running off from the previous 12 months on Sundays. In documentation sighted by the Editor, no expected cost has been provided for this initiative.

Whilst the *Herald* article put the plan down to easing cost-of-living pressures, stimulating the economy, and encouraging movement through the city, the Editor finds it unusual that it is for just one day per month. **WA TODAY, WA GOVERNMENT**

NEW ZEALAND



Impact of half-price fares

The New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) released an updated research report in February on the impact of the government’s half-priced fare initiative on public transport patronage across the urban centres of Auckland, Christchurch and Wellington since its introduction in April 2022.

Outside of the patronage data on the initial pages, the report relies on survey data to provide the answers on the impact of this initiative. The initial report was published in November 2022, hence data in the report only up to October 2022, although the report says that there has been little variability in the three months since.

From June to October 2022, survey data indicated that an average 33 per cent of public transport users took advantage of the initiative, while out of all New Zealanders, the average was 8 per cent in this period.

Survey data indicated that for period May to October 2022, the locations where the most extra trips were being made were Gisborne (12 per cent out of 71 surveyed), Auckland (11 per cent/2,929), and Wellington (9 per cent/1,082).

Interestingly, each month between 10 and 20 per cent of users have indicated that they were not aware of the half-price fares. The surveys have also looked at which groups non-awareness has differed, with the two largest age groups being 15-24 (27 per cent/649) and 25-34 (25 per cent/1,765), with non-awareness apparently further decreasing by the following age groups. For all adults aged 15+, the largest centres of non-awareness were West Coast (48 per cent/70), Gisborne (34 per cent/71), and Bay of Plenty, Waikato and Taranaki (30-31 per cent/252).

Despite the above, the age groups taking greatest advantage of the initiative have been 15-24s (14 per cent/649) and 25-34s (13 per cent/1,765), 45-54s (8 per cent/1,821) and the rest under five per cent.

The report summarised that trips were mainly being added in locations where usage was already high. It reported that within city centres, the proportion of lower income households (specifically those earning \$30-50,000 per year) taking new trips was twice that of the highest income households.

The report also gleaned that factors other than half-priced fares made an impact on mode decision-making. From respondents reporting they were making additional trips, 45 per cent cited increased fuel costs and 52 per cent general cost-of-living factors as influences. Interestingly, only 9 per cent indicated ‘half-price fares’ as an influence (data April to October 2022, number surveyed was 219), although this number had been materially increasing since August (from 6 per cent in the month of July to 19 per cent for October), but fuel prices/cost-of-living easily remains the largest influence.

The full report is available at <https://www.nzta.govt.nz/assets/resources/research/research-notes/009a/009a-impact-of-half-price-fares-on-public-transport-survey-two.pdf>. **NZTA**

Wellington: New trains

The government has confirmed it will be purchasing 18 new four-carriage hybrid trains for the Wellington suburban network. The hybrid trains would operate using a mix of electricity, fuel and battery power.

The plan is for these trains to be used to replace old trains as well as provide for service growth, with the number of services to Levin, Shannon and Palmerston North to at least double to four a day. The trains are also expected to shave up to 15 minutes off from journey times along the Manawatu line.

Meanwhile, Metlink’s rail services were disrupted between Monday 1 and Thursday 4 May with delays caused by a 70 km/h speed restriction forcing the operator to reduce timetabled services, excluding the Wairarapa line. *The Dominion Post* further reports that shuttle buses between Petone and Melling replaced Melling line services. In total, 49 per cent of train services were reportedly cancelled per day. The speed restriction was put in place because of overdue line inspections which occurred only after KiwiRail’s sole inspection vehicle got stuck in Auckland with technical issues. *Source supplied by ANDREW JAMES, sources THE POST, STUFF.CO.NZ, DOMINION POST (2)*

INTERNATIONAL

UK: Operator loses contract

FirstGroup’s TransPennine Express has had its train operating contract not renewed by the government, following customer dissatisfaction and poor reliability. Under the Operator of Last Resort clause, the government takes over the

operation.

The private operator has been struggling to deliver services because of staffing shortages which have been compounded by industrial action, including a ban on overtime working, which has led to significant levels of cancellations sometimes leaving some routes with no service for hours at a time.

Since Sunday 28 May, the northern England services have instead been operated by TransPennine Trains, a new subsidiary of DfT OLR Holdings (OLR), itself owned by the Department for Transport.

This adds to the pre-existing regions already run by OLR, including East Coast Main Line (since 2018), Northern Rail (2020) and London & South Eastern (2021). OLR says that these three operations deliver over 3,600 daily rail services with a workforce of nearly 15,000.

OLR says that its purpose is to "ensure that train operators that transfer from the private to the public sector are managed well ahead of a return to the private sector." The transition usually sees little change for employees and passengers, outside perhaps improved service reliability?

The UK government confirmed that all OLR contracts would be competitively tendered to the market "once market conditions allow".

Source provided by PAUL BROWN

Sources BBC NEWS, UK GOVERNMENT, OLR, THE GUARDIAN

UK: Wi-Fi review

Britain's Department for Transport says that it is considering the removal of Wi-Fi availability from train services in its bid to manage operating costs of the system.

At a time where Wi-Fi availability is seen as a necessary addition to some public places and services, a Department spokesperson said that "Our railways are currently not financially sustainable, and it is unfair to continue asking taxpayers to foot the bill, which is why reform of all aspects of the railways is essential." The spokesperson went further "Passenger surveys consistently show that on-train Wi-Fi is low on their list of priorities, so it is only right we work with operators to review whether the current service delivers the best possible value for money."

Various rail players said this idea flew in the face of requirements to attract more passengers back onto rail post-pandemic.

Evo-Rail's Simon Holmes said "Wi-Fi is no longer a luxury, but a necessity for rail passengers as journey distances increase in favour of out-of-town living", while Rail Partners chief executive Andy Bagnall said that the proposal was a symptom of disjointed financial management where costs and revenue are looked at separately, putting downward pressure on operators' ability to innovate to deliver to growing customer expectations. *INTERNATIONAL RAIL JOURNAL*

South Africa: Signalling modernisation

Siemens reports that it has completed South Africa's "largest ever signalling project". It says that the circa \$AU150 million two-phase project has enabled the introduction of Centralised Train Control across Gauteng province's railway system, which includes the major cities of Johannesburg and Pretoria, with an operational "nerve centre" located in Germiston and eight satellite hubs to provide for disaster recovery. Siemens reports that this area is now fully bi-directional with the ability to operate services to 2.5 minute headways.

Included in the project are the introduction of ETCS (European Train Control System) Level 1, a small pilot of ETCS Level 2, replacement of Trunk Radio with GSM-R, optic fibre installation, power system upgrades and layout remodelling.

Siemens said the complexity from this project was significant - the three largest interlockings (Johannesburg Park, Braamfontein and Pretoria) contributed a combined 321 signals and 250 sets of points.

A news release from the project's launch back in 2011 provided the following background on the project:

The signalling equipment currently used in the South African province of Gauteng is obsolete. It is composed of a mixture of technologies, some of which date back to the 1930s, and can therefore no longer guarantee consistently reliable processing and monitoring of train movements. Moreover, the supply of spare parts necessary for maintenance cannot be ensured. This will change with the Siemens signalling equipment that has now been ordered. In future, the routes will be set and monitored electronically. The brand-new operations control centre will control a total of 70 interlockings in the Johannesburg area. The interlockings and the Gauteng Nerve Centre will communicate through an optical fibre network which Siemens has delivered in 2010. The new train protection system will increase the operational capacity, provide a higher level of flexibility and safety, and reduce train delays.

The Gauteng project forms part of a \$AU1.34 billion undertaking by the Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa (PRASA) to modernise the country's rail network to improve safety and efficiency.

Operationally, PRASA is slowly increasing its rail services following significant impacts to its operations from the pandemic, supply chain issues impacting train maintenance, and widespread issues of vandalism & theft of equipment.

Along with Gauteng, state-owned Metrorail also provides rail services for three other regions in the country. Timetables for the 15-odd routes on the Gauteng system are available on the Metrorail website (www.metrorail.co.za/Timetables.html) in a mix of PDF and Excel files. Unique 4-digit train identification numbers are also provided for each service. Timetable pages are simple tables with one service per column in a certain direction of travel. Most, but not all, timetables have separate documents for each direction. Separate timetables are provided for days of travel - weekdays, Saturdays and

Sundays. No dates are provided for any of the documents, so it is unclear how old they are, although there are documents advertising a Business Express service and updated Metrorail fares from 2013 and 2014 respectively available on the home page. *SIEMENS, RAILWAY TECHNOLOGY, GLOBAL RAILWAY REVIEW, PRASA, METRORAIL*

ENDS

BUS & COACH NEWS

NORTHERN TERRITORY



Transit Systems continues growth

Transit Systems acquired a tourist coach/charter operator, Grand Touring Operations, in February. Amongst the regular services it provides is arrival and departure transport for passengers off The Ghan rail service in Darwin.

Transit Systems' CEO Michael McGee said the Darwin-based operation would be pivotal in supporting SealInk NT, another division of Kelsian Group, in providing road solutions for tourism packages. *ABC Magazine* also reports that SeaLink NT currently operates ferry services from Cullen Bay, Darwin-Mandorah and the Tiwi Islands. *ABC MAGAZINE*

QUEENSLAND



Redlands service adjustments

Adjustments for Redlands bus services commenced on Monday 29 May.

- Routes **251** and **275** now operate direct in/out of Brisbane city, skipping some Capalaba and Old Cleveland Road bus stops.
- Route 258 has been subsumed as part of new route 271 (see below).

- Route **267** has an extra morning peak service into the CBD.
- Route **270** has a bus stop adjustment at Capalaba.
- New route **271** takes over old route 258 and the northern section of the previous 272 with improved service for the latter as a result.
- Route **272** is now split into two (271 and 272). The new 272 extends to Redland Bay Marina. It connects at Redland Hospital to travel north with 271. Weekday operating hours are extended to align with hospital visiting hours. Extra trips operate on Sundays (previously two-hourly) to provide an hourly service daily. 272 skips Victoria Point Town Centre, with access still available at Victoria Point Central.
- Routes **280** and **281** extend to service the new Shoreline development. They now also skip one stop per direction on Shanahan Street in Redland Bay "because very few people catch the bus at these stops and feedback indicates residents don't want buses travelling down their street".

TRANSLINK

Sunshine Coast improvements

Adjustments for multiple Sunshine Coast routes come into effect from Monday 5 June.

- A new route, **608**, commences to service the Nirimba to Caloundra corridor with hourly trips 05:30-21:30 weekdays and 07:30-18:00 weekends. The timetable has been planned to connect with route 607 services at Caloundra. This route provides enhanced service frequency along the Baringa-Caloundra corridor in tandem with slower 604 and 606 services.
- Route **615** has an extra 61 weekly trips timetabled to improve service frequency, and improve connections at Landsborough railway station. There are some timing adjustments to improve reliability.
- Route **622** extends further into Peregian Springs with up to four new bus stops per direction. Previous early and late short-workings now also run along the entire route. Timing adjustments have also been made for general reliability purposes as well as more consistent gaps with route 620 trips between Maroochydore and Mount Coolool. One extra trip has been added early on weekdays.
- Route **631** extends into the Ginger Factory as a two-year trial. Various timing adjustments to improve connection times at Nambour railway station and for general reliability purposes. One Saturday morning trip will now extend to commence from Nambour station.

Minor adjustments also affect routes **606** (timing), **607** (an extra trip later at night seven days a week), **610** (extra late night trips seven

days a week), **612** (timing), **620** (three early AM short-workings extended to commence from Maroochydore), and **630** (the Wednesday 12:20 trip now runs earlier to depart at 12:06). *TRANSLINK*

Brisbane: 330 minor adjustment

Route **330** (and school route P331) commenced servicing a new bus stop in each direction at Taigum State School on Monday 29 May. *TRANSLINK*

Gold Coast On Demand trial

Halfway through its two-year trial, Queensland's transport minister Mark Bailey says the Gold Coast On Demand service "has been a roaring success so far and we've received a lot of positive feedback about it". Mr Bailey revealed that the service has now had 50,000 passenger trips made. *KINETIC*

NEW SOUTH WALES



Sydney: Various updates

In CDC NSW's region 4, since Saturday 13 May, route **632** (Rouse Hill-Pennant Hills) services have a minor route adjustment in Kellyville. Trips are now altered to operate via Fairway Drive, Windsor Road and Memorial Avenue due to Memorial Avenue upgrade works. There is no advertised change to trip times. The diversion also affects local school bus services.

Busways' western Sydney route services have had trips reinstated into the daily timetable from Monday 15 May. Some trips were removed last year due to driver shortages which have impacted the wider industry. A Busways spokesperson said "It has been a difficult and challenging year for our depot teams and customers, so we're very pleased to be able to ease these issues in Western Sydney with this change. Our Scheduling team has worked closely with Transport for NSW (TfNSW) to achieve this result for customers." The Busways announcement also said that printed timetables at stops will be updated by June 2023, suggesting that bus stop timetables had been updated earlier in the year to account for the service reductions.

Over in eastern Sydney, Transdev John Holland's route **399** (Little Bay-UNSW-Little Bay loop) services had a temporary shortening of its Kingsford bus stop coverage from Friday 12 May to Sunday 28 May. In its announcement, TfNSW said that 399 trips would not stop at two bus stops (see third image below right) to enable infrastructure works for the 'Kingsford to Centennial Park walking and cycling' program. During this period, Stand B at Juniors Kingsford

was provided as the alternative bus stop, with a walking map provided with TfNSW's announcement, which displayed up to 26 minutes walking time to the alternative bus stop at Juniors Kingsford. The Kingsford-side loop was also shorter according to online trip data.

A peculiarity to this 399 adjustment is that one weekday morning trip normally timetabled to terminate at stop 'Day Ave after Anzac Pde' is continuing to do so during this two-week period regardless, according to online trip data. *CDC NSW, BUSWAYS, TfNSW*

Bourke: Flexible bus operation

The previous state government introduced a 12-month flexible bus trial for Bourke, called Wilba, which commenced operating from 27 February. Effectively an On Demand solution, the trial is funded by the government's Transport Access Regional Partnerships grant program, with \$161,720 allocated for the trial. Operating times are 08:00-19:30 weekdays and 09:00-14:00 Saturdays.

The former Regional Transport/Roads Minister Sam Faraway said that the service "can also link with NSW TrainLink coaches to Dubbo, and to Bourke Airport where there's a three-day-a-week return flight to Dubbo". Wilba has a pre-existing service in Dubbo. *NSW GOVERNMENT*

Snowy Mountains winter bus returns

Transport for NSW announced in April that Cooma Coaches has once again been contracted to provide the 'Snowy Mountains Bus Service' during the winter ski season (10 June-1 October). Additionally, an enhanced timetable will operate during forecast peak periods of the season (the first and last fortnight on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays only).

This is the third year of the service. Readers will recall the first year was hastily suspended partway due to pandemic impacts. The two maps are provided on the next page. *TRANSPORT FOR NSW*

Wollongong: Route 90 changes

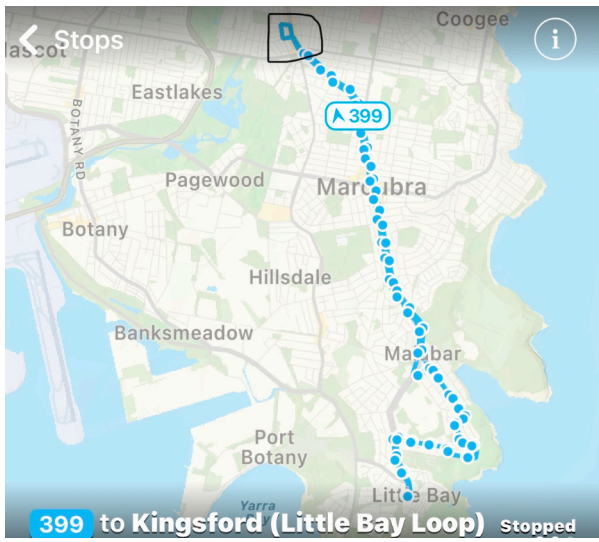
Dion's Bus Service's Route 90 has an adjusted timetable, effective from Friday 5 May.

On Friday evenings, one late trip in each direction has been withdrawn.

On Saturday evenings, two late trips ex Thirroul, including the last trip of the night have been withdrawn. On both nights, the late night trips only operate between Austinmer and Wollongong.

On Sunday mornings, an additional trip has been added in each direction, with operating hours now commencing an hour earlier.

The graphic on page 11 from the company provide an easy-to-digest view of these alterations. *DION'S BUS SERVICE*



The loopy 161

In this month's edition of...
The Times

Route 399
Transdev John Holland Buses

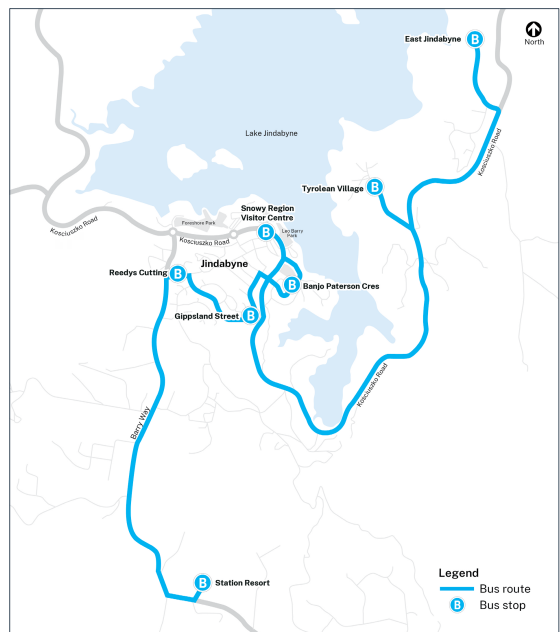
Destination	Time	Status
Kingsford Anzac Pde at Fischer St	14:11	1m late
Kingsford Anzac Pde at Broadbent St	14:11	On Time
Kingsford Anzac Pde at Botany St	14:12	On Time
Kingsford Anzac Pde at Hayward St	14:13	On Time
Kingsford Juniors Kingsford Light Rail (Stand A)	14:14	On Time
Kingsford Juniors Kingsford Light Rail (Stand B)	14:20	1m early
Kingsford Anzac Pde at Botany St	14:22	On Time
Kingsford Anzac Pde at Snape St	09:05	
Kingsford Anzac Pde at Fischer St	09:05	
Kingsford Anzac Pde at Broadbent St	09:07	
Kingsford Anzac Pde at Hayward St	09:08	
Kingsford Juniors Kingsford Light Rail (Stand A)	09:09	
Kingsford Juniors Kingsford Light Rail (Stand B)	09:11	
Kingsford Anzac Pde after Strachan St	09:12	

Left top: Route 399 route overview, affected area circled in black.
Far left: Truncated 399 Kingsford loop stops.
Near left: The one 399 trip still servicing the two stops being skipped.

Snowy Mountains bus service

Jindabyne to Perisher or Thredbo

Station Resort to East Jindabyne via Snowy Region Visitor Centre and Tyrolean Village



Maps for the seasonal Snowy Mountains bus service from Transport for NSW.



To book your seat, or for more info and timetables scan the QR code or visit snowymountainsbus.com.au



- Services in **Red** will be removed
- Services in **Green** will be added

Friday

Friday					
Route Number	90	90	90	90	90
Austinmer	21:50	22:50	-	-	F 23:30
Thirroul	21:54	22:54	F 23:00	F 23:30	F 23:34
Wollongong	22:25	F 23:25	F 23:30	F 00:00	F 00:05

Friday					
Route Number	90	90	90	90	90
Wollongong	22:10	F 22:30	F 23:00	F 23:30	F 23:30
Thirroul	22:43	F 23:03	F 23:28	F 23:58	F 00:03
Austinmer	22:47	F 23:07	-	-	F 00:07

Saturday

Saturday					
Route Number	90	90	90	90	90
Austinmer	21:10	22:10	-	23:10	-
Thirroul	21:14	22:14	23:00	23:14	23:30
Wollongong	21:44	22:41	23:27	23:41	23:57

Saturday					
Route Number	90	90	90	90	90
Wollongong	19:30	20:30	21:30	22:30	23:30
Thirroul	20:01	21:01	22:01	23:01	23:59
Austinmer	20:05	21:05	22:05	23:05	

Sunday/Public Holiday

Sunday & Public Holiday					
Route Number	90	90	92	90	90
Austinmer	8:10	9:10	-	L 10:10	11:10
Bulli	8:20	9:20	L 9:35	L 10:20	11:20
Wollongong	8:50	9:50	L 10:22	L 10:50	11:51

Sunday & Public Holiday					
Route Number	90	90	92	90	90
Wollongong	7:25	8:25	L 8:55	L 9:25	10:25
Bulli	7:58	8:58	AL 9:35	L 9:58	10:58
Austinmer	8:07	9:07	-	L 10:07	11:07

Explanation of Definitions and Symbols

[A] From Woonona Shops Route 92 services travel to the Bulli Hotel (Park Road, Bulli) via Princes Highway. The bus will then depart the Bulli Hotel for Corrimal via Bulli Beach and Woonona Shops.

[F] Only on Friday

[L] Bus does not operate Christmas Day or Good Friday

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY



Industrial disruption

Transport Canberra bus services did not operate

on Thursday 25 May between 10:00 and 14:00 due to a planned employee industrial meeting. Transport Canberra also said that limited services would be available in the 30-minute period either side. There was no planned impact to school and light rail services. The action did not impact privately-operated services that venture into the ACT. The members voted up a new three-year enterprise agreement with some conditions still to be finalised, such as weekend pay. **DAVID CRANNEY, TRANSPORT CANBERRA**

VICTORIA



Melbourne: Revised bus timetables

With the commencement of the new train timetables on the Hurstbridge and Mernda line, local bus timetables have been adjusted to maintain alignment with train times.

From Sunday 28 May, new timetables are in effect for routes 343, 356, 357, 358, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 564, 569, 577, 578, 579, 580 and 582. **PUBLIC TRANSPORT VICTORIA**

Yarra Valley bus changes

Bus network changes impact Yarra Valley services from some time late this year (actual start date yet to be advised).

After a period of community consultation (March/April 2022 [not a misprint]) and subsequent review, PTV advises that the following changes will be implemented, with the changes designed to "streamline the network, expand customer travel choices, and improve productivity and patronage on the network".

- **684** (Eildon-Melbourne): Route shortened to only run Eildon-Ringwood station due to low patronage into the CBD. Scheduled trips to wait up to 20 minutes at Ringwood station for late incoming trains. The Sunday timetable will now also duplicate the Saturday timetable.
- **685** (Lilydale-Healesville): Additional trips on weekdays (to run every 40 minutes), weekends (to run hourly) and evenings. Reduction in the number of route deviations. Between the weekday school peaks, trips will also extend to Healesville Hospital.
- **686** (Healesville-Badger Creek): Withdrawn, coverage instead provided by extended route 685.
- **687** (Healesville-Chum Creek): Withdrawn due to low patronage.

An excerpt from the consultation summary report is provided on the next page. **PUBLIC TRANSPORT VICTORIA**

Your concerns

1. No direct service to the CBD on Route 684.
2. Needing to interchange between bus and train on Route 684.
3. Possible journey time increase because of the need to interchange on Route 684.
4. Connection times between Route 684 and the train at Lilydale Station.
5. Missing Route 684 to Eildon if trains are running late.

What you would like to see

1. Increased span of hours on Routes 684 and 685.
2. Preference for Route 684 to start/terminate at Ringwood Station (Eastland Shopping Centre) instead of Chirside Park Shopping Centre.
3. Increased connection times to ensure sufficient time to transfer between bus and train services.
4. Better weekend services.
5. A bus between Healesville and Woori Yallock.

What you supported

1. Increased services on Route 685.
2. Removal of complex deviations on Route 685.
3. Extending services to Healesville Sanctuary.
4. More services to Healesville Hospital.
5. The consolidation of Route 686 and Route 685.

Your words

"I think Lilydale Station is a good change over point."	"We need more services, more often."	"We need more services to link with the train as there is currently poor bus/train connections and too much waiting time."
"The elderly wanting to get to Southern Cross Station would like to stay on the Route 684 bus and not change to a train at Lilydale."	"Good to see Route 684 going to Chirside Park and Lilydale Station. Nice new station too."	"Need more options for the bus back from Lilydale. If you miss the bus you are stuck in Lilydale."
"People need buses and so do tourists."	"It makes more sense to go to Ringwood and Eastland as you have more trains to transfer to."	"My kids travel to Eastland from Eildon regularly (Route 684). They feel safe knowing they only have to be on one bus."

We consulted on bus routes

- 684 Melbourne - Eildon via Healesville
- 685 Healesville - Lilydale
- 686 Healesville - Badger Creek
- 687 Healesville - Chum Creek

Yarra Valley bus network changes - community consultation summary published April 2023 (source: PTV).



Hobart: School bus adjustments

Some Hobart school route services were adjusted effective from early February. Route **203** morning service was extended into West Hobart and Mount Stuart. Route **212** was extended to service Lenah Valley. Two route **451** services were withdrawn due to "extremely low patronage". *TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT*

Launceston: Intercity adjustment

Since Monday 1 May, Launceston (Cornwall Square) Transit Centre has closed, with intercity/East Coast routes (700, 702, 705, 740 and 762) now instead departing from stop Charles Street at Williams Street. There is no change to trip times. ABC News reports that the tenancy was not renewed by the private owner.

The state government is reportedly working on a long-term solution for these services, with Launceston Interchange not available due to lack of capacity. *CALOW'S COACHES, TASMANIAN GOVT, ABC NEWS*

Hobart: SkyBus patronage growing

Patronage on Kinetic's Hobart SkyBus operation continues to grow.

November 2022 was its busiest November on record, with 12,000 trips, while 2023 has seen

its busiest start of the year since commencing five years ago with over 30,000 travellers between the airport and CBD. It also said that around 60 per cent of these were inbound travellers.

A SkyBus spokesperson said "As we continue our post-pandemic recovery, it's great to see more and more people continue to choose SkyBus for our ease, convenience and affordability. We deliver superior service with affordability, reliability and convenience – and we've invested significantly in enhancing this experience with zero emission buses now making travel cleaner, greener and quieter. We're also seeing an increase in outbound passenger numbers, with people choosing SkyBus to get to the airport."

In association with Tourism Tasmania, SkyBus also delivered its SkyBusk initiative with live music performances from local artists to greet visitors at the airport and on-board services late in 2022.

SkyBus says that it operates seven days a week from 04:30 to 22:30 between Hobart Airport and six convenient CBD locations linking with flight times. *KINETIC, SKYBUS*



Adelaide: Updated timetables issued

Adelaide Metro has issued new updated timetables for many of the city's bus routes effective from Monday 1 May.

The announcement did not reveal specific changes made to services, or whether the reissue has been made to include ongoing service reductions caused by driver shortages (as previously reported). The length of the route list online suggests that it may be a network-wide reissue. **ADELAIDE METRO**

WESTERN AUSTRALIA



Lakelands station opening

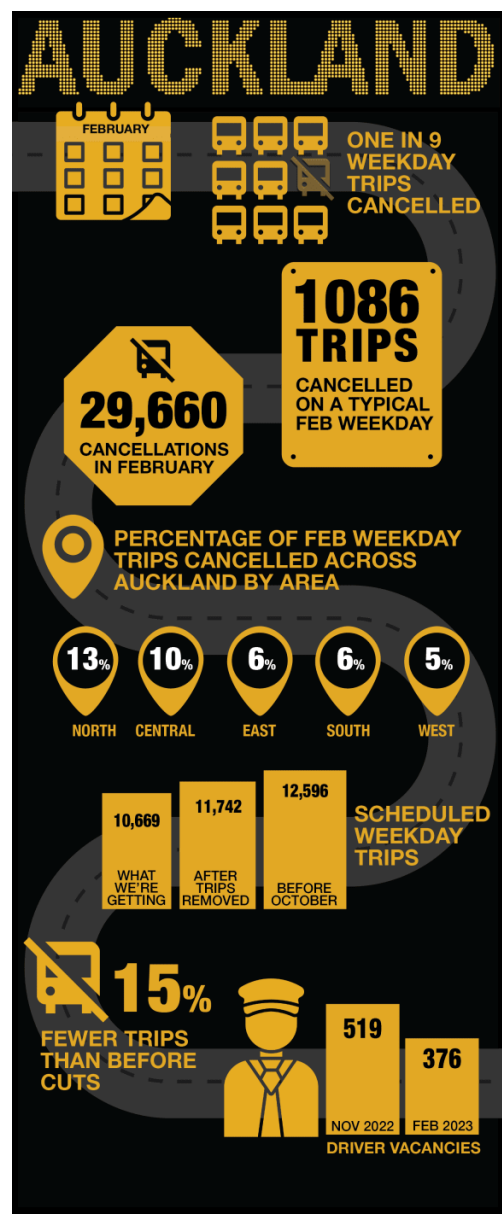
With the opening of Lakelands railway station, timetable adjustments impact local bus services from Monday 12 June as advised by Transperth. Multiple routes have selected trips withdrawn or added to timetables.

- Route **39**: An additional trip operates school days ex Ursula Frayne Catholic College 15:41 to Redcliffe station. Some timing changes to existing trips.
- **67**: Timing changes and the withdrawal of the 07:26 weekday trip ex Mirrabooka due to poor patronage.
- **68**: Timing changes and the withdrawal of service deviations via Pitt Street due to poor patronage.
- **96**: Timing changes, the 17:02 trip ex UWA now extends from Leederville station to Dog Swamp shopping centre, and two extra weekday morning trips operate departing Leederville station at 07:05 and 07:26 to QEII Medical Centre.
- **270**: Timing changes and on weekday mornings, the 07:09 shortworking ex Hartfield Park to High Wycombe now instead runs the entire route, commencing from Elizabeth Quay at 06:31.
- **271**: Timing changes and withdrawal of the 08:21 ex High Wycombe and 15:08 ex Darling Range Sports Club due to low patronage.
- **273**: Timing changes and numerous trips withdrawn due to low patronage.
- **283**: Timing changes, extra early morning weekday trips (05:20 ex Kalamunda and 06:25 ex Elizabeth Quay), and the withdrawal of a weekday evening trip ex Elizabeth Quay due to low patronage.
- **292**: Route adjustment to speed up trips between Perth Airport and Redcliffe railway station. One bus stop on Bond Avenue has also been removed due to low patronage.
- New trial route **294**: Operates High Wycombe-Foodbank for three months consisting of three trips per direction per weekday.
- **320**: Timing changes, 07:02 school days trip ex Mundaring now operates on all

weekdays, and the 18:28 trip ex Mahogany Creek is withdrawn due to poor patronage.

- **328**: Timing changes and the 18:07 weekday trip ex Midland station no longer deviates via Mahogany Ck due to poor patronage.
- **331**: Timing changes, withdrawal of the 06:50 trip ex Mount Helena and removal of 08:13 ex Chidlow trip extension to Sacred Heart Primary School due to poor patronage.
- **341**: Timing changes and withdrawal of the 15:17 school days trip ex Sacramento Avenue due to low patronage.
- **343**: Timing changes and the withdrawal of the 07:55 trip ex Sacramento Avenue due to low patronage.
- **353**: Timing changes and the 07:19 weekdays trip ex Bassendean will extend only on school days to Ellenbrook Secondary College.
- **558**: Timing changes to link with train services at Rockingham station, and an adjustment of the route to no longer service south of Warnbro station, instead running via Read Street. Route south of Lakelands instead covered by new 585.
- **559**: Pre-existing route 559 is withdrawn (instead covered by 558 and new 574), but the number will be immediately reused by the previous route known as 562.
- **561**: Timing changes, route change to not service Rockingham station and timings made to connect to trains at Warnbro station.
- 562: Renumbered as the new 559.
- New route **574**: Operates Warnbro-Lakelands station, with connections to trains at Warnbro. Extra trips are timetabled at school times to cater for local schools including selected deviations.
- New route **577**: Operates Lakelands-Lakelands East weekday shuttle service with trips every 20 mins peak periods and hourly off-peak. Transperth plans to extend the route into Eastern Lakelands with further local development (see local map on our front cover).
- **584**: Timing changes, route changed to instead operate Lakelands-Mandurah via Madora Bay, trips timed to connect with trains at Lakelands, some selected trips deviate to cater for local schools, some weekend trips now deviate to Dolphin Quays Marina.
- New route **585**: Operates Lakelands-Mandurah via Mandurah Road with trips timed to connect with trains at Lakelands, and some trips to deviate via local schools at start/finish times. Trips every 10-20 mins in peak periods, half-hourly off-peak and hourly on weekends.
- **586**: Timing changes to link with trains at Lakelands, route changed to operate Lakelands-Mandurah via Meadow Springs, some trips to deviate via local schools at start/finish times, and as a result of the January 2023 community consultation a trial of selected trip deviations via Lakelands town centre and/or Meadow Springs shopping centre.

- 587: Route withdrawn, coverage instead provided by adjusted 586.
- **588** and **589**: Timing changes with earlier first trips on weekdays. Reduction in daily evening and early weekend morning service frequency to a bus every 30 mins due to poor patronage.
- **591**: Timing changes, an additional later trip on Sundays/PHs, and withdrawal of one morning trip to Mandurah and one evening trip ex Mandurah due to poor patronage.
- **592**: Timing changes, additional trip on weekday afternoons to Mandurah and an extra trip weekday evenings ex Mandurah, and the withdrawal of a weekday AM trip to Mandurah due to poor patronage.
- **593**: Timing changes, additional trips to expand operating hours and improve weekend service frequency, and the withdrawal of a weekday evening trip ex Mandurah.
- **594**: Timing changes, additional trips to expand operating hours and improve weekend service frequency, the withdrawal of two trips ex Mandurah on weekdays (one AM and one PM), and removal of some school deviations.
- **597**: Timing changes and improved service frequency on weekdays.
- **598**: Timing changes, improved service frequency ex Mandurah for AM peak period, reduction in early morning service towards Mandurah due to poor patronage, and withdrawal of the final Saturday trip ex Mandurah due to poor patronage. The final Sat trip towards Mandurah also runs earlier.
- **600**: Timing changes, including accommodation of local school start/finish time changes.
- **604** and **605**: Timing changes to link with Mandurah line trains and better reflect current traffic conditions.
- **950**: Timing changes with extra trips between Elizabeth Quay and UWA/QEII plus extra Sunday evening trips with an extension to the 15-min service frequency for both directions.



Routes 37, 38, 66, 97, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 290, 291, 293, 301, 307, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 335, 336, 337, 338, 342, 345, 355, 935, 940, 950 and 955 have trip time changes only.

Changes also affect bus departure stands for selected routes at Mandurah, Rockingham and Warnbro stations. Mandurah station bus stands are also renumbered.

School students were asked to check their local services as adjustments may affect them, including removal or addition of school deviations, new trips or adjusted trip times.

As at 25 May, most of the updated timetables were available on the Transperth website.
TRANSPERTH

Route 253: Future change

From January 2024, Transperth advises that "a small number of additional school days only trips" on route 253 will operate between Jarrahdale, Byford and Armadale station to cater

for local schools. Some new bus stops will also be installed along some Jarrahdale roads prior to the new year. **TRANSPERTH**

NEW ZEALAND



Bus cancellations continue

Environment Canterbury (ECan) advises that it has no expectation of when the staffing shortages causing bus cancellations across **Christchurch** will end. However, the council says that it continues to work "as swiftly as possible" to remedy the situation.

Stuff Online reports that 15,000 trips were cancelled between October and January, that is an average of nearly 4,000 per month. From

March 2022 to January 2023, it reports that out of 668,291 timetabled trips (*Editor comment: added missed trips and run trips*), 28,674 of those were cancelled, averaging close to 4.5 per cent across the period.

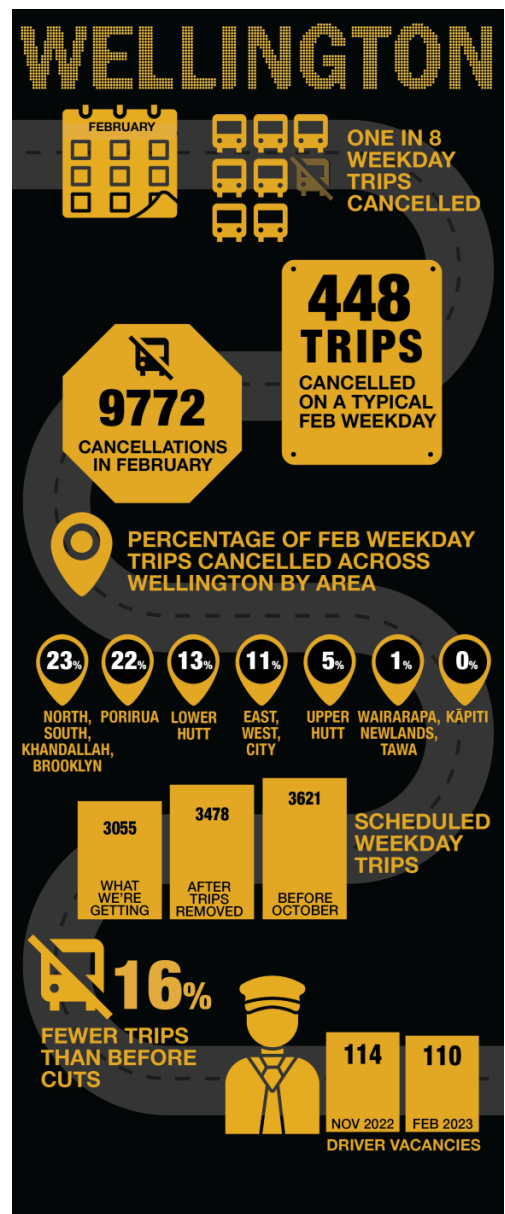
ECan said that express buses continue to stop at all stops, while school bus services were being prioritised on school days. Regular passengers that *Stuff* spoke to for the article cited poor communication by the agency, including its mobile application. ECan said once a trip was confirmed as cancelled, operators remove the trips from the real-time information system as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, Christchurch's upcoming revamped bus network, which promises to provide peak buses every 7.5 minutes on key routes (1, 3, 5, 7 and The Orbiter) between 07:00 and 19:00 weekdays, should now be delivered earlier than expected with more near-term funding now secured from the national government out of a cancelled Auckland cycling project. The \$78 million will cover a third of the cost, with councils and NZTA covering the other \$160 million, with the project now slated to be delivered by 2029, instead of 2032.

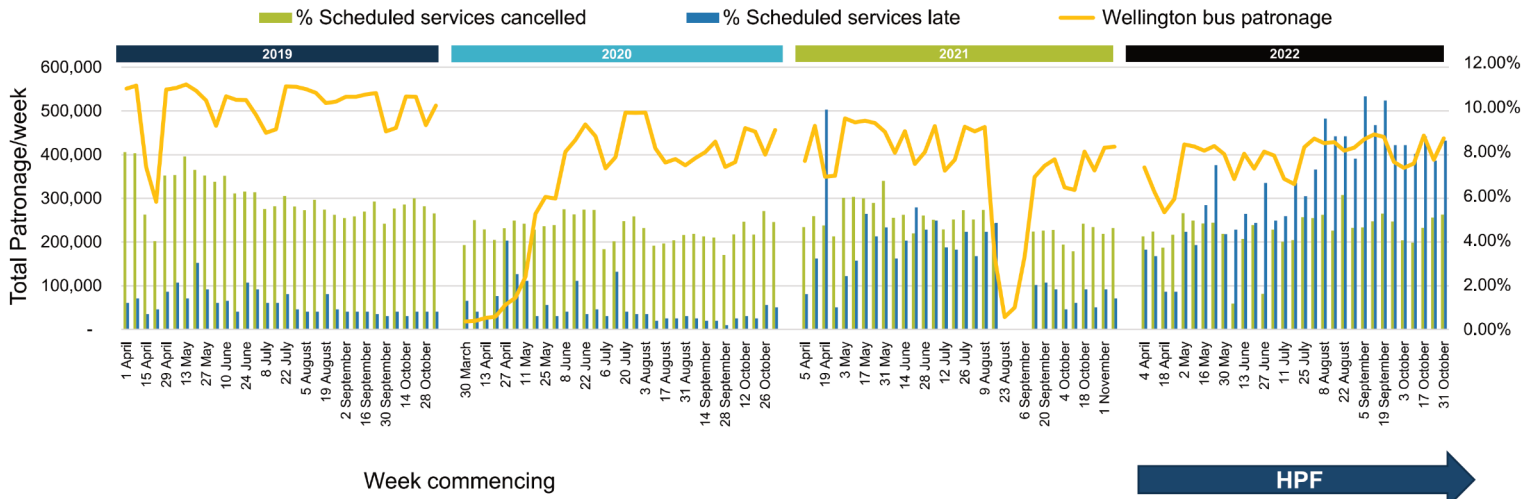
Amongst the planned improvements are a hundred extra buses, 22 kilometres of extra bus lanes, and over 470 new bus shelters. The key routes would also get priority at traffic lights. Some of the work has already begun, like adding bus lanes to Lincoln Road. The 100 new buses are being introduced despite the driver shortages.

Over in **Wellington**, Greater Wellington Regional Council's transport committee chairperson, Thomas Nash, says that Fridays are particularly horrible for reliability - "Drivers have a certain number of hours and they need time off. If they've logged a maximum number of hours and there's no other option, we have to cancel them." On the staffing front however, Mr Nash said that council expected the shortages to be resolved by the end of the year - "We have the drivers in the country and we are training them. We know that by the end of the year, we'll be where we need to be and that'll happen gradually over the year".

NZ Bus, which services the busiest route, 2 (Karori to Seatoun or Miramar) said in March that it had 88



Taking a longer term view, late and cancelled services in 2022 have been consistently more common in Wellington than in the three preceding years. Despite the ending of the COVID protection framework, weekly patronage remains comparable with the end of 2020.



Actual rates of paid PT patronage, based on daily patronage up to end June 2022 against comparable April-June period from '19/'20/'21
 Weekly data is based off information from daily data supplied from GWRC
 "Services cancelled" inverts bus reliability metric (percentage of scheduled services that actually ran, as tracked in RTI and Snapper systems), showing % scheduled services that do not meet these conditions
 "Services delayed" inverts bus punctuality metric (bus departure from trip origin, leaving between one minute early and five minutes late), showing % scheduled services that do not meet these conditions
 Data published by Metlink on <https://www.metlink.org.nz/news-and-updates/surveys-and-reports/performance-of-our-network>

international driver recruits in the pipeline, while 10 were in the city undergoing familiarisation training. Tranzurban said that it continues to be "actively recruiting". Metlink said that it was "looking forward to September" to see a positive dent with vacancies being filled.

An overview of Wellington bus delays and cancellation numbers between 2019 and 2022 is provided on the bottom of page 15.

In **Auckland**, the numbers of cancellations are greater, with roughly 3-4 times as many driver vacancies. Auckland Transport's (AT) metro optimisation manager Richard Harrison says that the Auckland bus system is still in good shape, with 11,000 trips still operating each weekday, despite another 1,000-plus not running, after the temporary service reductions were implemented, and for which there is currently no end in sight. The Radio NZ graphics pages 14 and 15 tell the story in numbers.

AT was also forced to adjust its usual March strategy of running extra buses to cater for increased demand largely caused by the return of tertiary students. In February, with the workforce shortages and buses also being used up by rail replacement work for the Rebuild, Mr Harrison said "We are struggling, there is no [bus] surplus right now". AT's only response could be to try to reallocate the largest buses to routes with the highest demand, and advise the passengers who could, to avoid the morning and evening peak periods.

AT also has a new chief executive, Dean Kimpton, who has publicised a desire for patronage to return to pre-pandemic levels - 100 million per year - 25 per cent higher than the expectation of 80 million for this year, while the agency is also undertaking an 8 per cent cut to its direct workforce for the new financial year as part of budget cuts to close a budget shortfall. *STUFF.CO.NZ* (2) (3) (4), *DOMINION POST* (2) (3), *RADIO NEW ZEALAND*, *NZ TRANSPORT AGENCY*

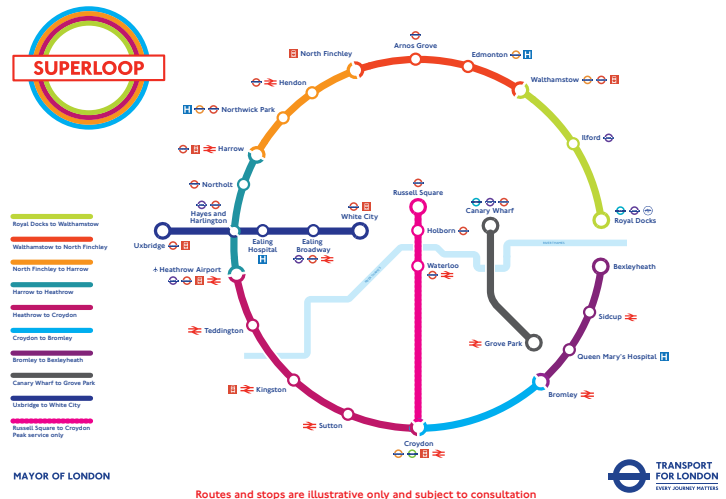
INTERNATIONAL

London: Superloop

A new express orbital bus network, called Superloop, is being developed to connect key outer London town centres and stations. The planned map of routes is provided below.

The first route is planned to be between Harrow and North Finchley (to be numbered X183), with community consultation ongoing at the time of publication. Current plans are for X183 services to operate every 12 minutes Mondays to Saturdays and every 15 mins on all evenings and Sundays. The introduction of this route would also see a reduction in services on existing route 183 (Pineer-Golden Greers) to a bus every 10 mins (rather than every 7.5 mins) Mon-Sat and every 12 mins on evenings and Sundays (rather than every 8 mins). Route I25 (Colindale-Winchmore Hill) would continue unchanged.

Further routes would be progressively added over time, while regular bus fares would be charged on these services. *TRANSPORT FOR LONDON*



ENDS

FERRY & SHIP NEWS

NEW SOUTH WALES



Sydney: F10 disruption

F10 Blackwattle Bay ferry services did not operate 8-12 May due to maintenance works.

Transport for NSW advised that L1 light rail as well as 370 and 431 bus services on Glebe Point Road and Leichhardt Street were alternatives during this time. *TRANSPORT FOR NSW*

VICTORIA



Free Geelong-Melbourne ferry

With the disruption on the Geelong rail line

between 11 April and 3 May, Port Phillip Ferries were contracted to provide a fare-free ferry service between Geelong's Steampacket Pier and Melbourne's Harbour Esplanade. Two trips were timetabled per weekday - departing 07:00 ex Geelong and 17:30 ex Melbourne - for a roughly 90-minute trip.

The ferry was additional to planned replacement coaches and shuttle buses along the line. *VIC GOVT*

ENDS

AIR NEWS



Rex reduces flights

Regional Express has cut some flights from its timetable effective immediately, citing labour and parts shortages. The cuts impact 10 of its routes.

While the Mildura-Adelaide route has been suspended until further notice, nine other routes have had flight reductions including **Bamaga-Cairns** (4 weekly flights, down from 12), **Ceduna-Adelaide** (7 - down from 10) and **Port Lincoln-Adelaide** (37 - down from 41) commencing 1 May.

The other affected routes are **Sydney-Broken Hill**, **Broken Hill-Adelaide**, **Sydney-Wagga Wagga**, **Melbourne-Wagga Wagga**, **Mt Gambier-Melbourne** and **Whyalla-Adelaide**. Some other routes have also reportedly had adjustments made to some flight times.

In a statement, Rex's network strategy manager said the cuts were caused by skills and parts shortages related to its fleet of 61 Saab 340 Turboprop planes.

The operator declined to reveal the longevity of these cuts, but it said that it does hope to reinstate these services in the future. *ABC NEWS, SEVEN NEWS*

WA regional airfare zone cap

Since July 2022, the WA state government has provided a 'regional airfare zone cap' for regional residents travelling to/from Perth in partnership with five airlines. It has now confirmed an

additional \$21 million to be spent for the initiative until June 2024, as announced in its 2023/24 Budget.

The cap is set at \$199 (under 1,000km from Perth) or \$299 (over 2,000km). The five airlines are Qantas, Virgin Australia, Regional Express, Airnorth and Skippers Aviation.

Usage figures provided by the government were:

- Jul-Sept 2022 - 28,439
- Oct-Dec 2022 - 39,692
- Jan-Mar 2023 - 40,531
- Most popular routes (first 9 months):
 - 1. Karratha-Perth (26,825)
 - 2. Kalgoorlie-Perth (14,637)
 - 3. Port Hedland-Perth (14,164)
 - 4. Broome-Perth (12,356)
 - 5. Esperance-Perth (9,929)

WA GOVT, WA DEPT OF TRANSPORT

Bonza

Bonza says that it has now completed its initial rollout of routes. Its route network is as follows:

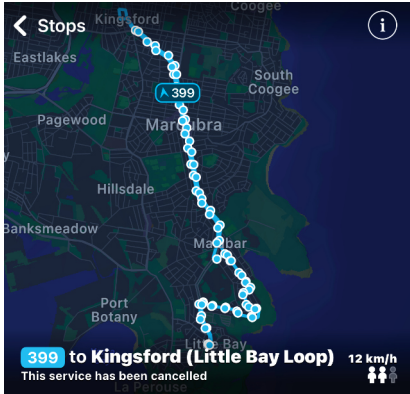
- Melbourne-Gladstone (Mon & Thu)
- Melbourne-Mackay (Tue & Sat)
- Melbourne-Bundaberg (Wed & Sun)
- Melbourne-Mildura (Mon, Wed & Fri)
- Melbourne-Port Macquarie (Mon & Thu)
- Melbourne-Tamworth (Tue & Fri)
- Melbourne-Toowoomba (Mon, Wed, Fri & Sun)
- Melbourne-Rockhampton (Tue, Thu & Sat)
- Melb Avalon-Sunshine Cst (Tue, Thu & Sat)
- Toowoomba-Whitsundays (Mon & Fri)
- Toowoomba-Townsville (Wed & Sun)
- Sunshine Coast-Melbourne (Mon, Thu, Fri & Sun)
- Sunshine Coast-Mildura (Tue & Sat)
- Sunshine Coast-Albury (Mon & Fri)
- Sunshine Coast-Coffs Harbour (Thu & Sun)
- Sunshine Coast-Tamworth (Tue & Fri)
- Sunshine Coast-Newcastle (Tue, Thu, Sat & Sun)
- Sunshine Cst-Cairns (Sun-Wed daily & Fri)
- Sunshine Coast-Rockhampton (Mon, Wed & Fri)
- Sunshine Coast-Townsville (Mon, Wed, Fri & Sat)
- Sunshine Coast-Mackay (Tue, Thu & Sat)
- Sunshine Cst-Whitsundays (Sun, Tue & Thu)
- Sunshine Coast-Pt Macquarie (Wed & Sat)
- Cairns-Rockhampton (Mon & Fri)
- Cairns-Mackay (Wed & Sun)
- Rockhampton-Townsville (Mon, Wed & Fri)
- Newcastle-Whitsundays (Thu & Sun)

FLYBONZA

ENDS

ODD SPOT

With recent reports of Sydney private bus operators preferring to cancel trips, rather than run them late, it was interesting to find one such trip of route 399, which appeared to be initially cancelled, instead eventually ran around 70 minutes late whilst other scheduled trips ran on-time trips (only partial trip shown adjacent).



Anzac Pde opp Pine Av Little Bay	07:26 Cancelled
Anzac Pde After Little Bay Rd Chiffley	07:27 Cancelled
Anzac Pde Near Nyan St Chiffley	07:27 Cancelled
Anzac Pde At Kenny Av Chiffley	07:28 Cancelled
Bilga Cres After Anzac Pde Malabar	07:28 Cancelled
Bilga Cres Before Karoo Pl Malabar	07:29 Cancelled
Bilga Cres At Calga Av	07:29

Route 399 Transdev John Holland Buses		Kingsford Anzac Pde at Hayward St	
Accessible service Many seats available Mercedes OC500LE Custom Coaches CB60EVO2 Bus location updated at 08:54:21		08:43 67m late	09:00 68m late
Little Bay (dep) Anzac Pde opp Pine Ave	08:32 66m late	08:45 68m late	09:02 69m late
Chiffley Anzac Pde after Little Bay Rd	08:33 66m late	08:48 70m late	09:10 71m late
Chiffley Anzac Pde nr Nyan St	08:33 66m late	08:48 69m late	09:11 71m late
Chiffley Anzac Pde at Kenny Ave	08:34 66m late	08:48 69m late	09:12 71m late
Malabar Bilga Cres after Anzac Pde	08:34 66m late	08:49 69m late	09:13 71m late
Malabar Bilga Cres before Karoo Pl	08:35 66m late	08:49 69m late	09:13 71m late
Malabar Bilga Cres at Calga Ave	08:35 66m late	08:50 69m late	09:15 71m late
Malabar Bilga Cres opp Woli Pl	08:36 66m late	08:51 69m late	09:15 71m late
Malabar Bilga Cres before Eucla Cres	08:37 66m late	08:51 69m late	09:16 71m late
Malabar Bilga Cres after Prince Edward St	08:38 66m late	08:52 69m late	09:18 72m late
Malabar Nix Ave after Bilga Cres	08:39 66m late	08:54 70m late	09:18 71m late
Malabar Nix Ave opp Adams Ave	08:39 66m late	08:55 70m late	09:18 71m late
Malabar Zions Ave at Prince Edward St	08:40 66m late	08:56 70m late	09:19 71m late
Malabar Prince Edward St nr Howe St	08:40 66m late	08:57 70m late	09:19 71m late
Malabar Prince Edward St nr Napier St	08:41 66m late	08:58 70m late	09:19 71m late
Malabar Prince Edward St after Raglan St	08:43 67m late	08:58 69m late	09:19 71m late
Malabar Prince Edward St at Ireton St	08:43 67m late	08:58 69m late	09:19 71m late
Malabar Ireton St at Austral St	08:45 68m late	08:58 69m late	09:19 71m late
Matraville Anzac Pde after Lawson St	08:48 70m late	08:58 69m late	09:19 71m late
Matraville Anzac Pde at Hillary Pde	08:48 69m late	08:58 69m late	09:19 71m late
Matraville Anzac Pde at Kain Ave	08:48 69m late	08:58 69m late	09:19 71m late
Matraville Anzac Pde opp St Spyridon College	08:49 69m late	08:58 69m late	09:19 71m late
Matraville Memorial Reserve, Anzac Pde	08:49 69m late	08:58 69m late	09:19 71m late
Maroubra Anzac Pde at Murray St	08:50 69m late	08:58 69m late	09:19 71m late
Maroubra Anzac Pde at Wade St	08:51 69m late	08:58 69m late	09:19 71m late
Maroubra Anzac Pde after Fitzgerald Ave	08:51 69m late	08:58 69m late	09:19 71m late
Maroubra Hope Uniting Church, Anzac Pde	08:52 69m late	08:58 69m late	09:19 71m late
Maroubra Pacific Square, Anzac Pde	08:54 70m late	08:58 69m late	09:19 71m late
Maroubra Bowen Library, Anzac Pde	08:55 70m late	08:58 69m late	09:19 71m late
Maroubra Anzac Pde at Storey St	08:56 70m late	08:58 69m late	09:19 71m late
Maroubra Anzac Pde at Snape St	08:57 70m late	08:58 69m late	09:19 71m late
Kingsford Anzac Pde at Fischer St	08:58 70m late	08:58 69m late	09:19 71m late
Kingsford Anzac Pde at Broadbent St	08:58 69m late	08:58 69m late	09:19 71m late
Kingsford Anzac Pde at Botany St	08:59 68m late	08:58 69m late	09:19 71m late

Front Cover: June 2023 route map for Perth's 577, 584, 585 and 586 (courtesy Transperth).

Route 161 Image: Courtesy of The Times editor Geoff Lambert.

Route 399 images above: Courtesy TripView and NextThere from Transport for NSW data.

About Table Talk

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