



AUSTRALIAN TIMETABLE ASSOCIATION

# TABLE TALK

AUSTRALASIAN TIMETABLE NEWS

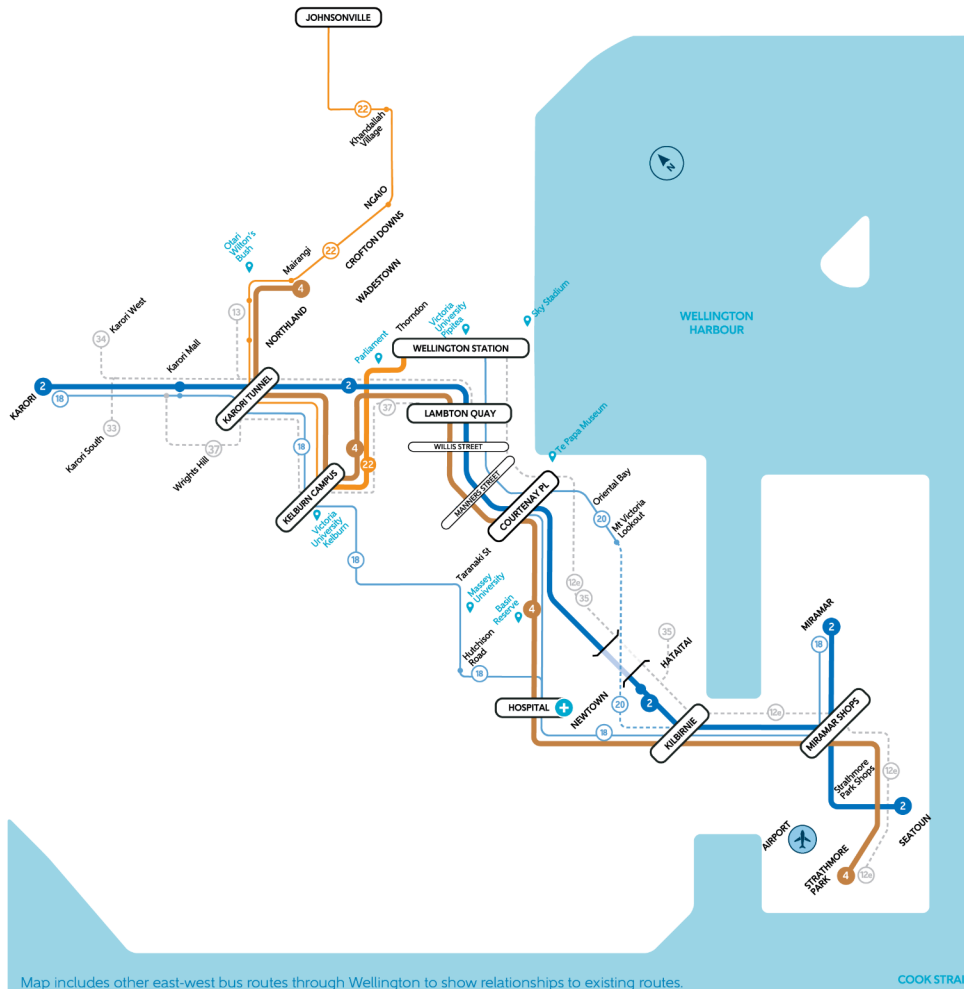
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**4** Mairangi - University - Wellington - Newtown - Strathmore  
Runs seven days a week, including every 15 minutes during the daytime on weekdays.



# RAIL & TRAM NEWS

## QUEENSLAND



### Dedicated rail replacement bus fleet

The state government has announced its \$134 million investment in building 200 new buses that will be dedicated to providing rail replacement bus services.

The fleet will have 165 Volvo Euro 6 Volgrens and 35 Scania Euro 6 BusTechs with delivery between March and December this year. They will be managed by the state's Department of Transport and Main Roads.

Transport and Main Roads Minister Mark Bailey said "These buses will play an important role in keeping South-east Queenslanders moving during the next few years while major projects such as Cross River Rail and Logan and Gold Coast Faster Rail are integrated into the existing train network".

Volgren chief executive officer Thiago Deiro said "This project is a game-changer for Volgren's Eagle Farm production facility. It will support hundreds of current and new jobs in Brisbane, and create & retain essential skills for the upcoming Zero Emission Bus transition from 2025. After facing challenging years, during and post-COVID, long-term projects with visibility will allow the industry to invest in local jobs, training, and providing opportunities for the communities. *ABC MAGAZINE, VOLGREN*

### AirTrain stalls Airport public transport options

AAP reports that the federal transport minister has written about concerns over transport options in and out of Brisbane Airport in the lead-up to the 2032 Olympic Games in Brisbane.

Federal transport minister Catherine King expressed concern over the ability for customer demand to be met whilst AirTrain Holdings has its exclusive public transport contract for travel in and out of the Airport until 2036, with buses barred from the terminals, and the only other options being taxis, rideshare and private driving modes all needing to cater for future demand until the completion of the contract.

The state's existing Deputy Premier, Cameron Dick, said the state government needed to revisit the monopoly contract with AirTrain, while also saying they would welcome investment from the federal government to improve public transport access into the airport.

The state government and AirTrain held unsuccessful talks across 2022 and 2023 to negotiate an early exit, while demand is set to increase by 50 per cent over the next decade.

Brisbane Airport Corporation spokesperson Stephen Beckett said last year "Forty per cent of the morning peak

on the road coming into the airport is actually workers going to work. What we have is passengers and workers all fighting for the same space. It can become quite congested and it's going to get worse as we go from 20 million passengers through Brisbane airport terminals last year to 30 million by 2032, and from 20,000 employees to 30,000 employees". He also said that 97 per cent of people travelling into the airport currently do so by car.

1997 projections made as part of the initial agreement estimated that 16.5 million annual trips would be made on the line by 2035.

The 8.5 kilometre airport line was constructed between the airport and Eagle Junction at the turn of the century for about \$200 million, while the Universities Superannuation Scheme, a pension scheme for UK higher education staff, has owned 99 per cent of AirTrain since 2013 (the asset manager, CP2 Limited, owns the remaining 1 per cent). Both parties have a similar partnership in Sydney's AirportLink company. *AAP/MSN NEWS, THE BRISBANE TIMES, QUEENSLAND GOVERNMENT*

### New Sunshine Coast timetable

ATA member Dennis McLean reports that a new Sunshine Coast public timetable has been published, the first in quite a while, and is effective from 27 November 2023. *Map on page 15. DENNIS McLEAN, MICHAEL MARSHALL*

## NEW SOUTH WALES



### Sydney Trains: SWTT update

Sydney's next Standard Working Timetable (SWTT) update comes into effect on Saturday 3 February. Designated as version 12.30, the update includes minor reliability and internal operational adjustments.

The departure times for some trains at Bargo, Douglas Park, Kings Cross and Martin Place have been adjusted by one minute.

One significant change of interest is the removal of the practice of T3 Bankstown line trains changing their run number at Sefton Park Junction when operating to/from Lidcombe. Despite the change in practice, whole train rosters have not been renumbered to maintain consecutive lettering between trips. This means that for now, T3 Bankstown line trains terminating and commencing trips at Lidcombe now skip two letters in the cycle so that T3 trains running through the City Circle maintain the same run number as before the update.

Meanwhile, ongoing works along the Bankstown line have finally culminated in all stations between Bankstown and Sydenham being wheelchair-accessible for the first time. The line reopened on Friday 26 January after a month-long closure. *TRANSPORT FOR NSW, RAIL EXPRESS*

## Sydney: Rail Timetable Solution

Transport for NSW (TfNSW) says that it is working on transforming the Transport cluster's timetable production capability to deliver a technologically-advanced future-proof program set to remove manual, lengthy and outdated processes.

By replacing up to ten individual tools with one integrated system, the Rail Timetable Solution (RTS), is expected to improve connectivity and optimise work output across TfNSW's timetable production team, and the Sydney Trains operating agency's train planning team while simultaneously supplying data to the upcoming Digital Solutions Program.

In 2022, TfNSW conducted an open tender, settling on a German system. RTS is planned to be commissioned later this year. Sydney Trains operates Sydney suburban services under contract to TfNSW, with Intercity services and selected Regional services to be taken over by Sydney Trains later in the year. **SYDNEY TRAINS, NSW GOVT**



## New Years Eve 2023 arrangements

Public transport was free for all passengers from 18:00 Sunday 31 December until 06:00 Monday 1 January.

The arrangements from PTV are detailed across pages 4-6. **ROSS MORRISON, PUBLIC TRANSPORT VICTORIA**

## Alstom maintains maintenance contract

A new \$1.5 billion ten-year contract has been awarded to Alstom to maintain the V/Line fleet consisting of VLocity and older locomotive+carriage sets.

At this stage, Alstom is due to produce another 31 VLocity sets for the V/Line network out of its Dandenong facility.

As part of the contract, Alstom will establish a fleet control centre in South Dynon. **INT'L RAIL JOURNAL**

## Fisherman's tram off course

The University of Melbourne has backed off, now pushing for trams to run through to the Fisherman's Bend redevelopment in the medium-term. The University bought a 7.2 hectare site there back in 2019 from the state government for its new campus under the presumption the government would deliver its 2018 plan for the tram line to run across a new bridge over the Yarra River by 2025.

The Fishermans Bend redevelopment project, billed as "the nation's largest urban renewal project" and on a former industrial area twice the size of Melbourne's CBD next to the Port of Melbourne, was launched in 2012 by the then-Coalition state government. In October 2018, the Fishermans Bend Framework was released by the

Andrews Labor government. The framework said the tramline would be built along Turner Street through the northern residential and employment districts, connecting with Collins Street in Docklands via a new bridge across the Yarra, all by 2025.

The state government is planning for 80,000 people living and 80,000 people working in Fishermans Bend by 2050, but so far residential and commercial investment has been slow to take off. In the meantime, the property industry threatens projects may not go ahead until developers are sure the tram or underground train lines to the narrow peninsula will be built - "Without the proposed tramline... developers are having a hard time making their projects stack up" despite the precinct's "enormous potential" for well-located and affordable housing, said Cath Evans, Victorian executive director of the Property Council of Australia.

On the state government's part, it intends to bill developers up to \$34,635 per dwelling and \$286 per square metre of non-residential floor space to fund local infrastructure and flood mitigation across the precinct, while developers will be able to build up if they agree to add more public space - what it calls an "open space uplift".

Specialist government adviser Infrastructure Victoria continues to back the tram line to be built by 2026.

The university has now moved its position to instead push for new express bus services in the "short-term", according to Freedom of Information documents secured by the newspaper. The tram line is now a "medium-term priority", to be aligned with the university's second stage campus works from 2031.

The buses include an extension of the 401 bus route, which links its Parkville campus to North Melbourne station - to Fishermans Bend and improved cycling and pedestrian routes.

The university is set to break ground this year on its \$400 million first stage for its new engineering and design campus at the old General Motors Holden factory. It is set to open gradually from 2026, while both the university and state government hope design and test facilities such as high-pressure wind tunnels will attract industry research partnerships and turn the area into an advanced manufacturing and innovation precinct.

The university's chief operating officer, Paul Axup, said in a June letter to the Department of Transport and Planning "Strong future transport links to Fishermans Bend was a key factor in the university's decision to choose this location for a new campus. When fully developed, the Fishermans Bend campus is expected to be used by around 12,000 people, likely more."

He said the university's purchase of the site was predicated on the state government building a tramline - and eventually the Melbourne Metro 2 underground rail line - "Services linking Fishermans Bend to the north either through, under or around the CBD will be vitally important" so students and staff could travel there from the university's Parkville and Southbank campuses. It says the Melbourne Metro 2 - a proposed underground train line from Clifton Hill to Newport, with a stop at Fishermans Bend will be needed in 15 years for the precinct to be a success.

For its part, the state government said through a spokes-person that it had increased bus services to

*Continues page 6.*

## Victoria: New Years Eve altered arrangements

Metropolitan trains, trams, buses, and regional town buses and trains were free once again on New Years Eve (NYE) 2023 from 18:00 until 06:00 the next day. Additionally, the first V/Line service on each line departing Melbourne on New Year's Day was also free – even if such service departed after 06:00.

Metro Trains Melbourne and Yarra Trams lines were scheduled to run all night (except Routes 78 and 82).

On New Year's Day, most services ran to the Saturday timetable.

### Metro Trains Melbourne (MTM)

Access to CBD stations during New Year's Eve - Stations will operate as normal.

At Flinders Street station, from 18:00, the exit via Northbank was closed, with an alternative exit (until 22:00) available via the Flinders Street concourse or Elizabeth Street underpass, or (after 22:00) via the Elizabeth Street underpass only.

City Loop stations (Parliament, Flagstaff and Melbourne Central stations) were closed from 23:45.

#### Train operations:

On New Year's Eve, services ran to the Sunday timetable.

From 19:00 until 01:45, Burnley group trains ran via the City Loop to Flinders Street then out direct.

From prior to midnight, normal Sunday services operated to Flinders Street station.

From 6pm to 10pm, additional services will be operating via CBD Stations and terminating at Flinders Street Station.

Before midnight, scheduled additional trains to Flinders Street Station departed:

- Belgrave/Lilydale/Alamein/Glen Waverley lines: From Glen Waverley at 19:18, 19:39, 19:49, 20:06, 20:18, 20:38, 20:48, 21:08, 21:18. From Ringwood at 19:02, 19:06, 19:27, 19:49, 19:59, 20:19, 20:29. From Upper Ferntree Gully at 18:30. From Lilydale at 20:05, 20:43. From Belgrave at 20:20.
- Craigieburn/Sunbury/Upfield/Werribee lines: From Craigieburn at 19:05, 19:47, 19:55, 20:16, 20:25, 20:55. From Sunbury at 19:05, 19:28, 19:36, 19:59, 20:25, 20:58, 21:09. From Upfield at 19:53, 20:22, 20:52, 21:23. From Broadmeadows at 20:56, 21:35. From Watergardens at 20:48. From Werribee at 19:39, 19:58, 20:19, 20:39, 20:58, 21:18.
- Frankston/Sandringham/Cranbourne/Pakenham lines: From Frankston at 18:07, 18:29, 18:49, 19:09, 19:29, 20:09, 20:29, 20:49. From Dandenong at 18:43, 19:04, 20:05, 20:34, 21:03. From Pakenham at 17:54, 18:47, 19:09, 19:58, 20:24. From Sandringham at 18:47, 19:07, 19:27, 19:47, 20:07, 20:27, 20:47, 21:07, 21:27.
- Mernda/Hurstbridge lines: From Eltham at 19:49, 20:01, 20:22, 20:55. From Mernda at 19:19, 19:38, 19:58, 20:08, 20:29, 20:38, 20:59, 21:08. From Greensborough at 19:19, 19:42, 20:39, 20:59.

Then on New Year's Day, from 00:15-01:45, all services were scheduled on an approximately 5-to-15-minute frequency. From 01:45-02:45, all services were scheduled on an approximate 30-minute frequency. From 02:45, all services were scheduled on an approximate 60-minute frequency until first regular service for Monday morning.

After midnight, additional scheduled trains departed Flinders Street station (unless otherwise excepted below) to:

- Belgrave/Lilydale/Alamein/Glen Waverley lines: To Glen Waverley at 00:25, 00:35, 00:45, 00:55, 01:05, 01:15, 01:25, 01:35, 01:49, 02:19, 02:45, 03:13, 04:13. To Lilydale at 00:25, 00:45, 01:05, 01:25, 01:45. From Ringwood to Lilydale at 02:57, 04:26, 04:38. To Belgrave at 00:35, 00:55, 01:15, 02:15, 03:43. From Ringwood to Belgrave at 02:27, 03:28. From Camberwell to Alamein

at 01:01, 01:31, 02:01, 02:31, 03:02, 04:00, 05:46. To Ringwood at 03:07, 03:27.

- Craigieburn/Sunbury/Upfield/Werribee lines: To Craigieburn at 00:29, 00:39, 00:49, 01:39, 02:09, 02:45, 03:47, 04:47. To Sunbury at 00:45, 00:55, 01:05, 01:15, 01:25, 01:35, 01:45, 02:15, 02:45, 03:33, 04:44. To Upfield at 00:32, 00:47, 00:59, 01:09, 01:19, 01:29, 02:03, 02:32, 03:15, 04:12, 05:13. To Werribee at 00:25, 00:35, 00:45, 00:55, 01:05, 01:15, 01:25, 01:35, 01:45, 02:09, 03:07, 04:07, 05:07. From Newport to Williamstown at 01:37, 02:07, 02:37, 03:30, 04:30, 05:29.
- Frankston/Sandringham/Cranbourne/Pakenham lines: To Sandringham at 00:27, 00:37, 00:47, 00:57, 01:07, 01:17, 01:27, 01:37, 01:47, 02:17, 02:47, 03:17, 04:17, 05:17. To Pakenham at 00:20, 00:25, 00:30, 00:35, 00:40, 00:45, 00:50, 00:55, 01:00, 01:05, 01:10, 01:15, 01:20, 01:30, 01:35, 01:40, 01:45, 02:15, 02:45, 03:23, 04:23. To Frankston at 00:29, 00:39, 00:49, 00:59, 01:09, 01:19, 01:29, 01:39, 01:49, 02:19, 02:49, 03:17, 04:17. From Dandenong to Cranbourne at 01:12, 01:59, 02:30, 03:00, 03:31, 04:09.
- Mernda/Hurstbridge lines: To Eltham at 00:32, 01:20, 01:44. To Mernda at 00:00, 00:28, 00:36, 00:44, 00:52, 01:00, 01:08, 01:16, 01:24, 01:32, 01:40, 01:48, 02:21, 02:51, 03:12, 03:51, 04:46. To Hurstbridge at 00:48, 01:04, 01:36, 02:14, 02:45, 03:21, 04:30. To Greensborough at 00:42, 00:56, 01:12, 01:28.

### Yarra Trams

On New Year's Eve, services ran to the Sunday timetable.

From 16:00-03:00, shuttle services, service changes and altered frequencies applied on Routes 1, 3, 3a, 5, 6, 16, 19, 48, 57, 58, 59, 64, 67, 70, 72, 75, 78, 86, 96 and 109. From 03:00 to the first normal service on Monday, Night Trams ran every 30 minutes on routes 19, 67, 75, 86, 96 and 109.

On NYE afternoon and evening, shuttle services operated along the following corridors:

- St Kilda Road between Windsor (Stop 20 Park St/St Kilda Rd) and ANZAC station (Stop 20 Park St/St Kilda Rd) running every 10 mins (17:00-18:30), every 5 mins (18:30-01:00) and every 15 mins (01:00-03:00).
- Melbourne University between Melbourne Un (Stop 1 Melbourne Uni/Swanston St) and State Library (Stop 10 Melbourne Central station/Swanston St) running every 10 mins (17:00-03:00).
- Collins St between Elizabeth St (Stop 5 Elizabeth St / Collins St) and Victoria Harbour (Stop D18 Victoria Harbour) running every 8 mins (22:00-01:00).
- Flinders St between Elizabeth St (Stop 4 Flinders St station/Elizabeth St) and Flinders St West (Stop D6 Flinders St West) running every 15 mins (16:00-03:00).
- Footscray Park between Footscray station (Stop 64 Footscray station/Leeds St) and West Rd (Stop 48 West Rd/Raleigh Rd) running every 15 mins (21:00-22:30).

On Swanston Street, from 16:30 to 03:00, the following service changes applied:

- Route 1 operated in 2 sections: East Coburg-State Library and South Melbourne Beach-Stop 116 City Rd
- Route 3a operated as a East Malvern-St Kilda Junction via Fitzroy St short-working.
- Route 5 operated as a Malvern-Stop 20 Anzac Station short-working.
- Route 6 operated in 2 sections: Moreland-State Library and Glen Iris-Stop 22 Toorak Rd.
- Route 16 operated as a Kew-St Kilda Junction short-working.
- Route 64 operated as a East Brighton-Stop 20 ANZAC station short-working.
- Route 67 operated as a Carnegie-St Kilda Junction short-working.

- Route 72 operated as a Camberwell-Stop 22 Toorak Rd short-working.

From 16:30 to 03:00, trams on routes 1, 3a, 5, 6, 16, 67, 72 ran every 10 mins (16:30-22:00), every 8 mins (22:00-01:15), every 15 mins (01:15-02:00), and every 30 mins (02:00-03:00). On route 64, trams ran every 20 mins (16:30-01:15) and every 30 mins (01:15-03:00).

On William Street, from 16:30 to 03:00, route 58 ran to its full normal route, running every 10 mins (16:30-22:00), every 8 mins (22:00-00:15), every 5 mins (00:15-01:15), every 15 mins (01:15-02:00), and every 30 mins (02:00-03:00).

On Elizabeth Street, from 16:30 to 03:00, routes 19, 57, and 59 operated shortened routes with no trams between Melbourne Central (Lonsdale St/Elizabeth St) and Flinders St station/Elizabeth St.

From 16:30 to 03:00, route 19 ran every 10 mins (16:30-21:15), every 8 mins (21:15-00:15), every 6 mins (00:15-01:15), every 15 mins (01:15-02:00), and every 30 mins (02:00-03:00).

From 16:30 to 03:00, routes 57 and 59 ran every 10 mins (16:30-21:15), every 8 mins (21:15-00:15), every 6 mins (00:15-01:15), every 15 mins (01:15-02:00), and every 30 mins (02:00-02:45).

On Collins Street, from 16:30 to 03:00, the following service changes applied:

- Route 11 operated as a West Preston-Stop 7, 101 Collins St short-working.
- Route 48 operated as a North Balwyn-Stop 7, 101 Collins St short-working.
- Routes 12 and 109 were scheduled to divert via La Trobe St between Spring St and Spencer St.

These services were to operate every 10 mins (18:30-21:15), every 8 mins (21:15-00:15), every 5 mins (00:15-01:15), every 15 mins (01:15-02:00), and every 30 mins (02:00-03:00).

At Docklands (Harbour Esplanade), from 16:00 to 03:00, no trams were scheduled along Harbour Esplanade. The following service changes applied:

- Impacting Flinders St, route 70 operated as a Wattle Park-Stop 6 Russell St/Flinders St short-working, and route 75 only operated as a Vermont South-Stop 6 Russell St/Flinders St short-working. These routes ran every 10 mins (16:00-22:00), every 7 mins (22:00-00:15), every 5 mins (00:15-01:15), every 15 mins (01:15-02:00), and every 30 mins (02:00-03:00).
- Impacting Bourke St, route 86 operated as a Bundoora Terminus-Stop 119 Spencer St/La Trobe St short-working. Route 96 operated to its normal timetable until 17:30, then every 10 mins (17:30-21:15), every 8 mins (21:15-00:15), every 6 mins (00:15-01:15), every 15 mins (01:15-02:00), and every 30 mins (02:00-03:00).
- Impacting La Trobe St, route 30 operated every 20 mins between La Trobe St/Spencer St and St Vincents Plaza from 16:00 until last service.

City Circle (Route 35) services did not operate on NYE.

In exception to the first line, from 18:00 until last tram, route 78 ran to the Saturday timetable.

From 03:00, the below routes reverted to the Night Tram network running every 30 mins until first service on Monday morning:

- 19 (Elizabeth St/Flinders St to North Coburg)
- 67 (Melbourne Uni via Swanston St & St Kilda Road to Carnegie)
- 75 (Central Pier Docklands via Flinders St to Vermont South)
- 86 (Waterfront City Docklands via Bourke St to Bundoora RMIT)

- 96 (St Kilda Beach via Spencer St to East Brunswick)
- 109 (Port Melbourne via Collins St to Box Hill)

## Metropolitan Buses

No additional services were scheduled in the city on NYE. Buses ran to the Sunday timetable, while Night Network buses were also scheduled.

To assist patrons in travelling to/from NYE festivities in Melbourne, the following Night Network bus routes ran to the Saturday timetable overnight into New Year's Day:

### 24 hour bus routes

- Route 150 Williams Landing Station – Tarneit Station
- Route 180 Werribee Station – Tarneit Station
- Route 190 Werribee Station – Wyndham Vale Station
- Route 250 City – La Trobe University
- Route 357 Wollert West – Thomastown Station
- Route 386 Mernda Station – Bundoora RMIT
- Route 406 Keilor East – Footscray
- Route 410 Sunshine Station – Footscray
- Route 420 Sunshine Station – Watergardens
- Route 630 Elwood – Monash University
- Route 670 Ringwood – Lilydale
- Route 693 Belgrave – Oakleigh
- Route 703 Middle Brighton – Blackburn
- Route 788 Frankston – Portsea
- Route 833 Frankston Station – Carrum Station
- Route 900 Stud Park SC (Rowville) – Caulfield
- Route 901 Frankston – Melbourne Airport
- Route 908 City - The Pines SC

### Operate after midnight on weekends

- Route 941 Sunshine Station – Watergardens Station
- Route 943 Watergardens Station – Melton
- Route 947 Footscray – Newport Station
- Route 949 Williams Landing Station – Altona Meadows
- Route 951 Brunswick Station – Glenroy Station
- Route 953 Broadmeadows Station – Craigieburn
- Route 959 City – Broadmeadows Station
- Route 965 Lilydale – Healesville Loop
- Route 967 Glen Waverley – Bayswater
- Route 978 Dandenong Station – Clayton Station
- Route 979 Clayton Station – Dandenong Station
- Route 981 Dandenong Station – Cranbourne
- Route 982 Dandenong Station – Cranbourne

The following services operated to a 30-minute frequency:

- Route 207 City – Doncaster Shopping Centre
- Route 905 City – The Pines SC
- Route 907 City – Mitcham

## V/Line

Services ran to the Sunday timetable on NYE.

Night Coach services operated in the early hours of New Year's Day, departing at 01:00 and 02:00 from Southern Cross Coach Terminal.

On the Geelong Line, additional trains departed Waurn Ponds for Southern Cross at 18:30 and 19:26. Additional trains departed Southern Cross to Geelong at 01:00, 01:20, 01:40 and 02:20. An additional Night Network coach service departed Southern Cross to Lara and Deakin University/Waurn Ponds at 02:15.

On the Ballarat line, additional trains departed Southern Cross to Wendouree at 00:50 and 02:10. Additional Night Network coach services departed Southern Cross to Ballarat at 01:10

and 02:10.

On the Bendigo line, the last scheduled train departed Southern Cross for Bendigo at 18:43. Additional Night Network coach services departed Southern Cross to Bendigo at 01:10 and 02:10. A special New Years Eve coach was scheduled to depart Southern Cross at 01:00, stopping as required from Clarkefield to Bendigo.

On the Seymour line, the last scheduled train departed Southern Cross for Seymour at 21:45. An additional Night Network coach service departed Southern Cross to Puckapunyal at 02:00. A special New Years Eve coach was scheduled to depart Southern Cross at 01:00, stopping as required to Seymour. *Continues top-right*

Fishermans Bend over the past two years and was “continuing planning work for longer-term transport links, including the feasibility of high-capacity transport options to ensure we can meet the precinct’s needs for decades to come”.

The decision on whether building the light rail will stack up commercially will come amid a difficult construction environment. The North East Link blew out by \$10 billion last year, with the state citing price increases for concrete, steel and asphalt as high as 19 per cent since 2020, while Victoria’s net debt is forecast to hit \$177.8 billion by 2027, a \$6.4 billion increase on the May budget forecast. *THE SUNDAY AGE*

## Yarra Trams: Aus Open

With the Australian Open tennis on again in Melbourne between 14 and 28 January, Yarra Trams are operating some extra services.

Two free services operate, both designated **route 70a**:

- Flinders St West-John Cain Arena until one hour after the end of play each night, and
- Melbourne Park-Camberwell Tram Depot after the end of play each night.

There is no change to regular route **70**.

Meanwhile, route **12** trams are truncated to only operate between St Kilda/Fitzroy St and Southern Cross station during the tournament. *ROSS MORRISON, PTV*

## Yarra Trams disruption

Route 78 services were replaced by buses between North Richmond and Balaclava from 14:30 on Saturday 13 January until end of service on Thursday 18 January due to a building in danger of collapse causing local road closure along Chapel Street in Windsor. *ROSS MORRISON*



## Adelaide: Woodlands Park

A \$4.5 million refurbishment of Woodlands Park railway station has led to the closure of the station between

On the Traralgon line, the last scheduled train departed Southern Cross for Traralgon at 21:27. An additional Night Network coach service departed Southern Cross at 02:00.

The normal Saturday timetable operated on New Year’s Day.

## Regional Coach

The normal Sunday timetable operated on NYE, while the normal Saturday (Public Holiday) timetable operated on New Year’s Day. No Night Coach services were scheduled for New Year’s Day.

Monday 22 January and a date in late April.

With the station an interchange location between Seaford and Flinders line train services, throughout the closure, Edwardstown will be the interchange station, with a shuttle bus also operating between Edwardstown and Woodlands Park stations.

A total line closure for both lines occurred across the Australia Day long weekend (from 21:00 Thursday 25 to end of Sun 28 Jan). *ADELAIDE METRO*

## NEW ZEALAND



## Auckland: Rail Network Rebuild

Eastern line services resumed normal operation on Monday 15 January after nine months of Rail Network Rebuild stage two works. It should be noted that services commenced and finished from The Strand as Britomart did not reopen until Monday 22 January due to City Rail Link works, when the station also reopened with revised platform numbers. Replacement buses operated between The Strand and Britomart during that week.

The next stage, dubbed stage 3b, sees the Southern line endure rolling weeknight evening and weekend possessions between Puhinui and Papakura from Friday 26 January until at least Thursday 7 March (see map below).

From early March, stage 3a sees the Western line endure a closure for track work between Avondale and Morning-side with a mixture of late night/weekend possessions & some weekdays with a reduced service during the day.

Additional Southern line works follow between Papakura and Pukekohe from late May until late June, which is already closed for track work.

Meanwhile, public transport fares rise for the second time within 12 months on 4 February, with an average increase of 6.2 per cent, which Auckland Transport (AT) attributed to helping “meet significant and sustained operating cost increases”. The increase is expected to generate an extra \$5.8 million in farebox revenue. AT says the average adult fare will increase by between 6 and 40 cents per journey as a result. The 2023 batch of

fare increases was delayed by two months until April.

AT also says it continues to hold a 2024 date for the introduction of contactless bank payments to pay fares on the network. **AUCKLAND TRANSPORT, 1 NEWS, STUFF**

### Wellington: Cancellation warning

The Wellington suburban rail network is under threat by a looming \$120 million funding squeeze on infrastructure investment and maintenance.

The issue was raised in a report for Greater Wellington Regional Council, which cited chronic underinvestment and inaction on rail renewal that threatened to force a reduction in services on some lines within 1-3 years.

Council chairperson Daran Ponter said "We are going to get to a point, relatively soon, where we are advised by [rail corridor maintainer] KiwiRail that we cannot run as many trains, we cannot run them as fast as we would like, etcetera, and that will have a chilling effect on the network."

The report provided a "worst-case scenario" for impacts to service delivery, which could include a 66 per cent reduction in peak services on the Hutt Valley and Johnsonville lines and a drop from seven to three trains per hour for the Kapiti line.

Transport committee chairperson Thomas Nash reiterated that there was still time to avoid such moves and they are communicating with government over the issue.

A December report said that the network faced increasing costs to maintain the current level of services while ballooning insurance costs - which had jumped from \$2 million per annum in 2018 to \$11 million in 2023 - were another issue. Council said it is calling on the government to address how unaffordable insurance had become for it, as well as assistance to address the expenditure shortfall.

In spite of the above, Metlink still expects services to increase in 2030 on the Manawatu and Wairarapa lines to provide "metro service frequency" as part of the Lower North Island Rail Integrated Mobility project once the 18 new trainsets have entered service and upgrades to infrastructure are completed. **NEWSHUB, GREATER WELLINGTON REGIONAL COUNCIL**

### Auckland Light Rail cancelled

Prime Minister Christopher Luxon described as "wasteful and unfit for purpose" the proposed 24-kilometre Auckland Light Rail line which was estimated to cost anywhere between \$NZ15 and 29 billion.

The line was to run south from the city centre to the airport with future extensions to North Shore and the northwest districts.

Cancellation of the project after the election of the National Party-led coalition government in October sees \$228 million in costs-to-date sunk without a metre of track laid.

The government said it was focused on infrastructure that improved reliability and resiliency of the transport network to drive economic growth including a rapid transit network and the completion of City Rail Link in Auckland.

Source supplied by - **PAUL BROWN**

Source - **RAILWAY GAZETTE**

## INTERNATIONAL

### UK: New WSMR service

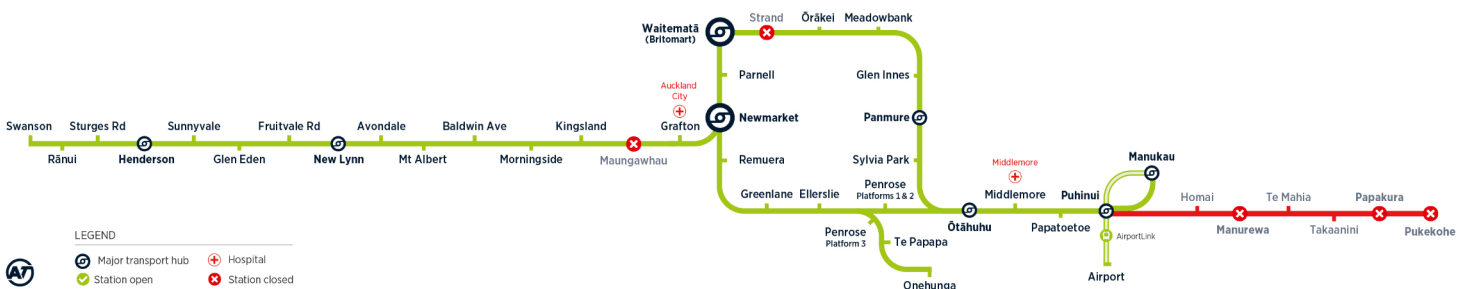
A new open access operator is proposing to commence operating services between North Wales (Wrexham General), Shropshire, the Midlands and London Euston.

The proposal follows in the footsteps of existing open access operators including Hull Trains, Grand Central and Lumo, but does not simply duplicate a previously-shuttered open access service connecting these areas that racked up millions in losses prior to its short notice exit in January 2011.

This proposal calls to use the freight-only line at Sutton Park as well as make stops at Gobowen, Shrewsbury, Telford Central, Wolverhampton, Darlaston, Walsall, Coleshill Parkway, Nuneaton and Milton Keynes with five trains per direction on Mondays to Saturdays then four on Sundays. See purple line on map next page.

**Southern Line**

please signal driver



Auckland: Stage 3b rail network rebuild.

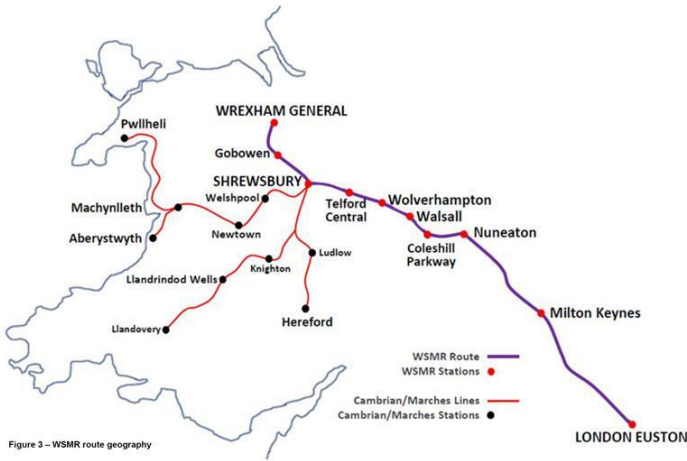


Figure 3 – WSMR route geography

The proposal is funded by SLC Rail who was not involved in the previous incarnation, and who says that it will deliver 'direct connectivity where it is either currently inadequate or does not exist', citing Walsall-London and intra-Midlands links including Walsall-Nuneaton as examples. It also plans to use existing 22x diesel trainsets from East Midlands Railway which would be modified with newer engine technology. **PAUL BROWN, RAILWAY GAZETTE**

## US: Los Angeles light rail

Additional services have been running on the Los Angeles light rail network since Sunday 10 December to increase capacity as Metro seeks to meet increased patronage and cater for customer feedback.

Lines **A** and **E** see increased peak frequency to a tram every 8 minutes (previously every 10 mins), and every 10 mins on weekends 09:00-19:00 (prev. every 12 mins). Two additional trips also operate late night to increase operating hours.

Line **C** has trams now every 10 mins in the weekday intrapeak period and on weekends 09:00-19:00 (prev. every 15 mins).

Line **K** has trams now every 10 mins in the weekday intrapeak period (prev. every 12 mins) with no change on weekends until construction and testing work is completed for the C and K line connection.

October 2023 was the most patronised month for the public transport network since COVID-19 with an average of 950,000 trips on weekdays. Metro said "Our ridership on weekdays is 79 per cent of Oct 2019. On weekends we're at 92 per cent of Oct 2019 ridership", with 80 per cent of total ridership on the bus network and the rest on tram/metro. **LA METRO**

## US: Maryland light rail suspension

The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) suspended its tram fleet, with buses replacing trams along its Baltimore light rail network (BWI Airport/Glen Burnie-Hunt Valley), from 00:01 on Friday 8 December.

The MTA said there were two issues that needed to be rectified - 1) Six smoke incidents with inter-car connector cables in two years including three in the four months prior to suspension, and 2) a recent inspection following a fire had discovered a risk of a punctured

conduit. Additional inspections have since identified problems as being more "systemic" than previously believed.

The MTA grounded the whole fleet to enable detailed inspection of all railcars, with works underway by Alstom to rectify these issues prior to reintroduction to service, staged as bunches of railcars become available.

Meanwhile, the buses needed to provide a replacement service has necessitated drivers and buses being pulled from existing route services. The MTA said it has also used the opportunity to bring forward several planned maintenance projects while the service is suspended.

MTA Administrator Holly Arnold said at the time the suspension "will mark a considerable hit to a service already struggling to recover from pre-pandemic ridership - 55 per cent of what it was before COVID".

Alstom, which conducted mid-life overhauls on the 53-car fleet between 2013 and 2018, and has recently been doing further work to the trams (all trams entered service between 1991 and 2002), reportedly has been conducting rectification works for the above two issues under their existing works budget.

The network normally operates with 1, 2 and 3-car services along a corridor with both on-road and private right-of-way sections.

*Update: Partial service resumed on Saturday 23 December with 22 railcars available. As a result, the replacement bus service was cancelled. The Light rail service was also made fare-free between 23 Dec and 2 Jan. As at 19 January, 35 cars had returned to service. The MTA also said it had applied for \$225 million in federal government grant money which would be used to procure new vehicles. RAILWAY AGE, MTA*

**ENDS**

## BUS & COACH NEWS

### QUEENSLAND



### Brisbane: Council driver numbers up

ABC News reports that Brisbane City Council had hired 442 new bus drivers between the launch of a new recruitment campaign in April and November.

Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner said that the campaign had seen 442 people recruited out of the over 1,500 applications received.



Meanwhile, with most works completed on Brisbane Metro's depot, council transport committee chairperson Ryan Murphy said Council was looking for limited Brisbane Metro services to commence mid-year with full service operating by December - "People will see the metros out and about on the busway over the next few months undergoing that commissioning process". **ABC NEWS**

## NEW SOUTH WALES



### Sydney: Region 10 update

U-Go Mobility's region 10 bus operation continues to operate to a reduced timetable, while the business has been contributing to the delivery of rail replacement services including on the T3 Bankstown Line. *St George & Sutherland Shire Leader* reports (edited for space):

As one of the thousands of bus travellers affected by the "disastrous" outcome of a new operator taking over services in St George and Sutherland Shire, Theo Mitsios was surprised by the sight outside his workplace next to Sydenham railway station where there is a temporary bus parking bay.

Mr Mitsios observed that, while the Bankstown train line is shut down over the holiday period, many of the replacement buses are provided by U-Go Mobility. He said: "I notice that at times, four out of the five buses waiting here are U-Go buses. I wonder how U-Go could possibly manage to take on this extra job, considering that they are not fulfilling their normal timetables? Indeed, they are still dropping rounds on their normal services. I personally am only affected by the 947 (Hurstville-Kogarah) route.

"Whenever I have enquired about this problem, I have been told that it is because of a lack of drivers, which is somewhat bemusing considering the fact that they are doing the Sydney Trains run from Sydenham to Bankstown."

A Transport for NSW spokesman said U-Go Mobility was one of multiple operators providing replacement buses during the T3 Line shutdown - "During the school holidays, U-Go's buses that are used for dedicated school trips are able to be used more frequently for the T3 Temporary Transport Plan. The exact number of buses from each operator changes each day, depending on the requirements of the public transport network."

The spokesman said the U-Go buses supporting the temporary transport arrangements were provided separately to regular route services - "To bid for Temporary Transport Plan contracts, an operator must show they will continue to meet their existing obligations with TfNSW. As always, we continue to monitor the network and will make changes to ensure regular route services are not disrupted."

The spokesman said U-Go's service delivery performance in Region 10 (St George and the shire) had "stabilised" and, overall, was "delivering reliably against an adjusted timetable" - "Cancellation rates have been close to target since the end of September 2023, along

with on time running performance," he said. "U-Go Mobility continues to work closely with TfNSW to address all customer feedback through focused investigations and/or performance management of staff and detailed responses to passengers. While driver shortages remain a key challenge across the entire Greater Sydney Bus network, U-Go Mobility has made good progress in reducing the driver vacancy rate with a variance of 35 vacancies compared to the number of drivers required to deliver the full operational timetable.

More importantly, the spokesman said that resumption of the "full timetable with zero suspended services is targeted for the first half of 2024."

U-Go Mobility was contacted for comment by *The Leader*. **ST GEORGE & SUTHERLAND SHIRE LEADER**

### Regional contactless ticketing

Littlepay has announced it is the vendor providing the contactless bank card solution under trial by Transport for NSW (TfNSW) looking to expand the capability of passengers using a credit/debit card, mobile or smartwatch to pay their fares for non-Opal route services which are scattered across regional New South Wales.

The trial currently only involves Bathurst Buslines and Dubbo Buslines route services numbered 520-29 and 570-75 respectively (*Table Talk*, January 2023, p. 10). TfNSW says passengers only need to 'tap on' at the start of their trip (i.e.: no 'tap off').

Littlepay says that the promise of a modular ticketing system was delivered by integrating TransportMe validators and Commonwealth Bank merchant services to Littlepay's cloud-based payment platform, while there is also flexibility to add new hardware and payment options in future as required.

It reports that a string of successful open payment ticketing rollouts have already occurred in major metropolitan areas in Portugal, Finland and cities across the United Kingdom and in California (United States), while the company has supplied payment systems for local buses, city networks and national public transport systems in 12 countries across Australia, Europe, the UK and North, Central and South America. **ABC MAGAZINE**

## VICTORIA



### Melbourne: Suburban Loop for bus?

BusVic, an association representing the state's bus and coach operators, has released a new report which calls for the implementation of a "cost effective and demand responsive solution", a Suburban Bus Loop (SBL) service, which would mirror the Suburban Rail Loop (SRL) project whilst the latter is being constructed over the coming decades.

The proposal includes the use of hydrogen fuel-cell electric powered buses to link communities along the proposed SRL with key activity centres and existing rail

corridors. It also says that bus services could be designed to provide similar operating capacities as the proposed SRL corridor, with high-capacity vehicles operating at high frequencies during peak and off-peak periods to offer a 'turn up and go' style service.

BusVic executive director Chris Lowe estimates the SBL would cost "around \$3 billion over 20 years", while service frequency would be set at every five to seven minutes during the peak periods and every ten minutes during off-peak. For the orbital style service, frequency would be at 10 minutes at all times for services running between 05:00 and 01:00 seven days a week to align with the rail network.

BusVic also proposes the SBL to be segmented similar to the structure to the SRL, with key interchanges established along the corridor - including Southland, Monash Medical Centre, Monash University, Glen Waverley, Box Hill, Doncaster, Heidelberg, La Trobe University, Broadmeadows, Melbourne Airport, Werribee and Sunshine.

Meanwhile, another BusVic proposal says that \$32 million in state government funding could deliver key services for the city's areas including Melbourne's outer suburbs.

The association says that "the public transport network needs to be realigned to focus on delivering services that enable people to move effectively and efficiently, regardless of where they live". It says that key changes to accommodate population growth and capacity should include:

- **Western suburbs:** Add Sunday trips for routes 414, 415 & 479, adds more trips to route 461, and extend route 463 down Aspire Boulevard in Watergardens.
- **Wyndham:** Review local bus network due to significant population growth, upgrade bus stop infrastructure in the Werribee area including zero-emissions bus charging infrastructure, and harmonise fare zones to remove disincentives for rail users in using buses.
- **Eastern suburbs:** Increase frequency for route 624 on the weekend and introduce a Sunday service for route 407.
- **South-east:** Upgrade the route 841 frequency to run every 20 minutes, extend routes 791, 795, 796 & 798, and extend route 898 to link Casey Fields to Cranbourne.
- **Manningham:** Increase bus services between Wonga Park and Croydon, expand the service through Wonga Park, and include both Ringwood railway station and Doncaster Park in any expanded routes.
- **Northern suburbs:** Upgrade the route 542 frequency, extend services to Pascoe Vale railway station on Sundays, upgrade frequency and priority for routes 541 & 525, extend the span of operating hours on weekends for routes 536 and 538, extend route 561 to major interchanges at Watsonia and Greensborough, and upgrade the frequency of routes 517, 555, 556, 566 and 567 in order to match train timetables.

Mr Lowe also said "One 'no brainer' service improvement is modifying the 685 so the Chocolateria [in Healesville] is on a bus route. It's the second biggest tourist attraction in the Yarra Valley (after the Healesville

Sanctuary), gets 800,000 visitors per year, has 100 employees and you can't get there by public transport! Route 685 should be deviated, and bus stops deployed there." *AUST'N BUS & COACH MAGAZINE (2)*



## Adelaide: Bus improvements

Adelaide Metro introduced new timetables for routes T840 and 864F effective from Monday 29 January. The agency said the improvements to key frequencies would improve access to public transport in the Adelaide Hills around Mount Barker.

**T840** has an extra 36 trips each weekday interpeak to deliver a 15-minute frequency, while **864F** has an extra 26 trips on Sundays to provide an average 30-minute frequency throughout the daytime, and duplicate the Saturday frequency.

Meanwhile, Adelaide Metro also advised that the delivery of 15 new hybrid-powered buses later in the year as part of state government commitments would enable a new Go Zone route to run along the South Eastern Freeway for the Hills community.

Other revised timetables also come into effect from 29 January. Route **100B** 15:40 trip has been withdrawn, while bus stop and timepoint adjustments have been incorporated into new timetables for routes **W90, W91, 147, 170, 172, 542, 556, 557, 559, 820, 821, and 822**. The **823** timetable has now been added to the **865/866** booklet. A number of school trip time adjustments also occur to various North South, Outer South, East West and Outer North region routes from this date. *ADEL METRO*



## Perth: January adjustments

Various changes come into effect from Sunday 28 January.

Transperth advises that numerous routes also have selected trip time changes, including **24, 27, 28, 34, 51, 221, 228, 230, 233, 251, 252, 253, 321, 322, 353, 388, 423, 425, 442, 441, 460, 518, 519, 530, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 561, 574, 584, 585, 586, 600, 907, 908, and 990**.

A number of routes have adjustments to trip deviations, generally to cater for local schools around their start and finish times, including the addition, removal or even

changing which scheduled trip does the deviation. Impacted routes are 233, 321, 322, 353, 519, 530, 544, and 600.

Extra and removed trips are as follows:

Route	Days	Trips withdrawn
221	Weekdays	Reduction in AM peak trips ex Armadale station due to poor patronage.
251	Weekdays	One AM peak trip withdrawn.
388	Weekdays	04:34 ex Warwick station now truncated to run 04:38 ex Wanneroo Rd near Beach Rd due to poor patronage.

Route	Days	Trips added
24	Weekdays	07:07 ex East Perth.
27	Weekdays	16:19 ex East Perth.
28	Weekdays	07:13 ex Mooro Dr/Carmelia Ave; 08:12 (school days only) ex Claremont station; and 15:05 (school days only) ex Shenton Park station.
95	School days	08:05 ex Glendalough station; and 14:55 ex Subiaco station.
228	Weekdays	07:30 ex Maddington station; and 08:33 ex Gosnells station.
245	Weekdays	16:51 ex Kelmescott station.
252	Weekdays	An additional weekday AM peak trip.
253	School days	Some additional trips between Jarrahdale and Armadale station.
353	School days	15:05 short-working ex Kiara College.
425	School days	08:40 ex Warwick station.
442	School days	15:12 ex Carine Senior High School.
	Weekdays	16:31 ex Warwick station.
460	Weekdays	17:07 ex Whitfords station.
502	School days	(Trial) 07:53 ex Bull Creek station.
518	School days	08:02 ex Livingstone Marketplace.
519	School days	14:57 ex Harrisdale Senior High School.
530	School days	15:10 ex Emmanuel Catholic College; and 15:26 ex Cockburn Central station.
543	Weekdays	15:54 ex Kwinana station.
544	Weekdays	16:04 ex Kwinana station.
930	Weekdays	Additional peak trips.
990	School days	07:44 ex Perth Busport.
998	School days	14:57 ex Shenton Park station.
999	Weekdays	08:06 ex Stirling station.

Transperth says that the two additional trips in the above table across 998 and 999 “will initially be untimetabled to allow Transperth to monitor effectiveness and modify if required”.

Some adjustments are under “trial”, meaning that Transperth says it needs sustained demand to retain the services past the trial period. This includes the extra school day trip on route 502 which has been created in response to “increasing patronage at Melville Senior High School” as well as new route 249 (Hilbert-Armadale station) which Transperth says provides “basic travel opportunities for students attending schools within the immediate Armadale region”.

New 249 provides three weekday services in the peak running direction, departing 07:08, 07:28 and 07:45 ex Hilbert and 15:25, 15:45 and 17:35 ex Armadale station. The agency adds that more services may be added “over time as resources allow”.

Route 253 has extra trips on school days courtesy of “changes to the Perth Public Transport Area and corresponding changes to orange school bus services”.

Route 307 has an adjusted route path along Helena Valley Road while 322 deviations and extensions into Helena Valley have been temporarily withdrawn due to “Water Corporation road closures” (Hazelmere and Helena Valley pipeline construction, see image below) with a combined seven bus stops no longer serviced by either route. The alteration necessitates passengers interchanging between routes 307 and 322 to now do so at Midland station. Transperth advises that “due to short notice and printing limitations, these changes will be effective as of Sunday 28 January”, but the new print timetables are “dated Sunday 4 February”.



Helena Valley pipeline adjustments impacting local bus services (source: Water Corporation).

Route 517 has a permanent route path change in Southern River with the completion of road works to now operate via the new section of Balfour Street rather than Newmerrie Street, with two bus stops relocated.

Route 544 has a more consistent evening peak service as a result of the 15:54 trip ex Kwinana station now instead departing at 15:44.

Victoria Park Transfer Station has also been renamed to Causeway Bus Station, to be reflected on all transport material. **TRANSPERTH, WATER CORPORATION**

## NEW ZEALAND



### Wellington: Service restoration

Across Summer, Metlink has progressively restored 113 Tranzurban bus services that had been suspended since late 2022 due to driver shortages.

From **Monday 18 December**, 59 weekday trips were resurrected, while from **Sunday 28 January**, 54 weekend trips were resurrected. The only service that remains suspended is route 85x, with its status to be reviewed through the Regional Public Transport Plan later in the year.

Greater Wellington Transport Committee chairperson Thomas Nash recently said that “Metlink bus patronage is now at 100 percent of pre-COVID levels, whereas patronage in most of the world’s major cities has only

bounced back to about 80 percent”.

Metlink explained that driver vacancy rates had dropped, with just 25 vacant positions on 1 November out of the 685 required to provide the full bus timetable. It said while recruitment campaigns and a relaxation in skilled migration requirements by the government had enabled drivers from the Philippines and Fiji to be brought in, a total of 73 per cent of recruits since February had been from within New Zealand. **METLINK**

## Wellington: Service adjustments

Metlink implemented a number of service improvements effective from Sunday 28 January. ATA member Hilaire Fraser reports that all suspended Transurban services are reinstated, and a full timetable run on Wellington routes 1, 7, 23, 24, 25, 29, 32x, 39 and HX and Porirua routes 210, 220, 226, 230 and 236 (see previous article).

- **New route 4** (Mairangi-University-Wellington-Newtown-Strathmore Park) : Combines previously route 12 Wellington Station-Newtown-Strathmore Park (30-minute frequency Mondays to Saturdays and 60-minute frequency Sundays) and route 22 Wellington Station-University-Mairangi (20 mins Mondays to Fridays, 30 minutes Saturday and 60 minutes Sunday). The new route 4 is designated a high-frequency route to operate every 15 minutes weekday daytime and every 30 minutes weekends. As from 28 January, route 22 still operates but as a weekday shuttle between Wellington Station and the University with a 15-minute frequency, once-an-hour a service extends to Johnsonville.
- Route **20** (Courtney Place-Mt Victoria-Kilbirnie) extended to Wellington railway station.
- Karori bus services have additional morning peak trips on routes **2**, **33** and **34**.
- Route **18** (Karori-Kelburn-Newtown Miramar) off peak weekday frequency increased from 60 minute to 30 mins with some trips to accommodate for local school start/end times.
- Route **12e** (Wellington station-Hataitai-Strathmore Park) peak service has two additional morning trips and one additional evening trip.
- Routes **13** (Lambton Central-Glenmore St-Mairangi) and **33** (Lambton Central-Karori South) have minor timetable changes.
- Route **26** Lambton Central-Khandallah peak service has frequency increased from 60 minute to 30 minutes.
- Route **35** (Wellington Station-Hataitai) has additional morning peak trips.
- Route **230** (Porirua-Whitby) has four additional weekday daytime trips. This increases the off-peak frequency from 60 minutes to 30 minutes.
- Route **236** (Whitby-Porirua) has an additional weekday morning trip at 09:30.

Report by **HILAIRE FRASER**, source **METLINK**

## Christchurch: High demand

Environment Canterbury chairperson Peter Scott says Christchurch will need many new buses to cater for

peak demand over the coming decade.

In November, the council agreed to fund the purchase of five new electric buses for route 7. The council plans to upgrade the service level on the route by the end of the year, expected to see a bus operating every 10 minutes between Queenspark and Halswell. Council says it has no spare buses left, leaving any future improvements to be directly reliant on extra funding.

Council reported that patronage in the year to October 2023 was up 25 per cent in Selwyn and up 21 per cent in Waimakiriri compared to pre-COVID.

Metro implemented a simpler passenger fare structure last July as part of a two-year trial. It includes flat Metrocard fares - \$2 for adults, \$1 for concession per trip, as well as \$4 daily and \$16 weekly travel caps (half for concessions) to travel across greater Christchurch's bus network. **1 NEWS, METRO CHRISTCHURCH**

## Palmerston North: Network changes

Significant network changes come into effect for the North Palmerston bus network from early March.

From Monday 1 January, a new zonal fare structure was implemented, with registered Bee Card users getting access to a weekly fare cap (calculated Monday to Sunday). Bee Cards are also free to purchase until the end of February, when a set price is then expected to be charged for the smartcard.

Initially planned to commence on Monday 19 February, the new network coincides with a new transport brand “Connect” and a new fully electric-powered bus fleet. It was announced on 24 January that the implementation had been delayed by a fortnight due to “international shipping issues” causing delays in delivery of new electric buses from China. The council said “options to run the new network on either a reduced timetable or with older buses were not viable”.

*“Tranzit was informed by our international shipping partner that the delay was a by-product of global shipping issues caused by shipping delays at the Panama Canal which have subsequently added to congestion to the Suez Canal and congestion in other ports. Our New Zealand family-owned bus and coach company had been prepared to receive the final tranche of electric buses in early January, but the shipping delay has pushed this time frame out by several weeks.*

*“Other options were considered - running the new network without 15-minute frequency at peak times, or sourcing diesel buses from around the country to cover the shortfall in vehicles. Both those options are not ideal. Running 30-minute frequency all day could reduce frequency at peaks for some users, while buses from elsewhere would not have correct ticketing technology and be branded with other regions' public transport networks. Both options would likely cause confusion, difficulty and frustration for passengers.”*

*Tranzit general manager of bus & coach Jenna Snelgrove*

The new network consists of **seven urban routes** (101-107), which start from one suburb then run through the city centre to another suburb across town; **three Massey complimentary routes** (121-123) similar to previous Massey routes but adjusted for coverage and connectivity purposes; and the **Ashhurst-Palmerston North route** (114 Ashhurst Connector) with no route change but an increase in daily services.

The new urban routes are timetabled to run every 15 mins during peak periods (07:00-09:00 and 15:00-18:00) and every 30 mins in off-peak during operating hours which have been enhanced to 06:30-21:00 seven days a week.

The new network has a substantial increase in services.

	Previous timetable	New timetable
<b>Weekdays</b>	324 daily trips	610 daily trips
<b>Saturdays</b>	107 daily trips	428 daily trips
<b>Sundays</b>	77 daily trips	428 daily trips

The new network has been structured with more direct and frequent services, with expected criticism from some community members over the need to travel further to reach bus stops. Numerous streets change to limited or no direct bus coverage, while others have buses run along them for the first time. Bus infrastructure will be upgraded over the coming months, according to Council.

On criticism, a council spokesperson said public consultation in 2021 had provided two options for people - more direct routes with increased services or routes going down more streets with less services, with feedback "from 571 people, as well as groups we talked to directly (including groups dedicated to the elderly), was in favour of more direct routes. The 571 responses represented at that time the best engagement Horizons had achieved on a public transport matter. We have also heard consistently for many years people wanted easier-to-understand, direct and frequent bus services."

The council spokesperson did say that it was still taking on feedback "and we are already looking at options to add service to areas like Roslyn", which it said also required consultation with Tranzit and New Zealand Transport Agency.

Two of the new electric buses have been operating on the network since 19 January, with a total of 43 to commence and operate the new network, according to operator Tranzit Coachlines, which continues to operate these services under a new nine-year operating contract which commenced from March 2023. Tranzit confirmed it had a full roster of drivers ready to operate the new timetable. The new network has been made fare-free for the first month of operation. **HORIZONS REGIONAL COUNCIL, NEW ZEALAND HERALD**

## New Plymouth: Patronage or coverage?

Local transport advocates in New Plymouth fronted Taranaki Regional Council in December pushing for a change in bus network layout from the current "coverage network" to a "patronage network", which they say has become "best practice" and subsequently led to climbing patronage in other cities including Whanganui, Hamilton, and, shortly, Palmerston North (see previous article).

They explain that having more frequent buses on the most popular routes would give people more options to appeal to more users. An example provided was Whanganui where introduction of "The Tide" service earlier in 2023, which runs every 20 minutes six days a week, was a "game changer" and has led to a spike in patronage there.

Anthonie Tonnon from Whanganui District Council said "In the most recent months we have data for public transport use, that has doubled against the same

months last year, and half of that is coming from that one route. What they [Taranaki Regional Ccl] are planning [only minor changes] is out of step with best practice and the big network changes happening in cities like Palmerston North and Nelson," he said. **TARANAKI DAILY NEWS**

## ENDS

# FERRY & SHIP NEWS



## River Derwent ferry success

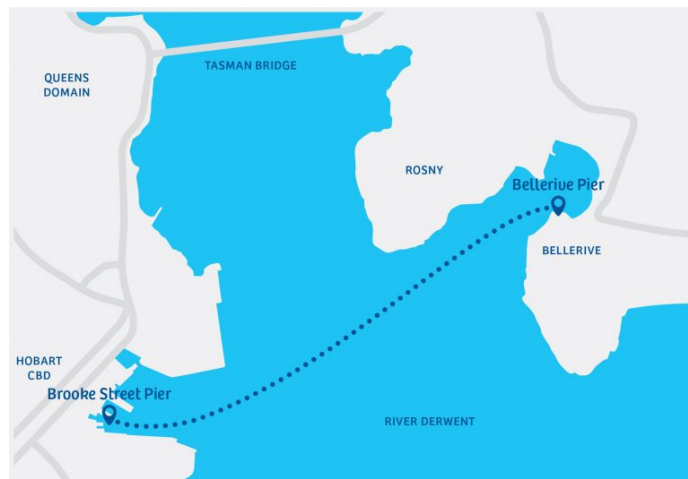
The state government has confirmed the success of the trial F2 River Derwent service, which commenced in July 2021 as an initial \$2 million one-year trial (see *Table Talk*, September 2021, p. 14-15).

The first year saw a reported 110,000 trips made by passengers. Since August 2022, passengers have been charged fares equivalent to the Metro Tasmania bus fare.

ABC News reports that patronage is sitting at around 500 people per day across 15 trips. The trial has since been extended until 2025.

State transport minister Michael Ferguson said mid-last year that other terminals are being considered, with a total of 30 locations under consideration along the river.

November's draft Tasmanian Transport Master Plan released in November had narrowed the list down to six, including Regatta Point, Sandy Bay, Wilkinsons Point, Howrah Point, Lindisfarne, and Kingston Beach (below). **TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT, DERWENT FERRIES, ABC NEWS (2)**



River Derwent ferry route (source: Derwent Ferries).



Proposed river extension locations (source: ABC News).

**ENDS**

## AIR NEWS

### DOMESTIC



#### Virgin Aus expansion

Virgin Australia has inked a new codeshare agreement with regional operator Link Airways commencing from 18 January.

Flights through 17 new regional codeshare services operated by Link are now for sale through Virgin agency partners and will become available for sale on Virgin's ticketing website from March. Velocity Frequent Flyer points and credits will also be able to be accumulated on these services.

The routes are:

- Brisbane - Coffs Harbour (BNE-CFS)
- Brisbane - Bundaberg (BNE-BDB)
- Brisbane - Biloela (BNE-ZBL)
- Brisbane - Inverell (BNE-IVR)
- Brisbane - Narrabri (BNE-NAA)
- Brisbane - Dubbo (BNE-DBO)
- Brisbane - Orange (BNE-OAG)
- Brisbane - Tamworth (BNE-TMW)
- Brisbane - Armidale (BNE-ARM)
- Brisbane - Wollongong (BNE-WOL)
- Sydney - Narrabri (SYD-NAA)
- Sydney - Inverell (BNE-IVR)
- Melbourne - Dubbo (MEL-DBO)
- Melbourne - Orange (MEL-OAG)
- Melbourne - Wollongong (MEL-WOL)
- Canberra - Hobart (CBR-HBA)

- Canberra - Newcastle (CBR-NTL)

Virgin Australia's chief strategy and transformation officer Alistair Hartley said "Together, our networks will be operating up to 365 daily flights across Australia, offering 42 domestic destinations for guests to explore, all while ensuring guests can enjoy seamless connectivity and loyalty benefits under our award-winning Velocity Frequent Flyer program when they travel".

Source supplied by - ROSS MORRISON

Source - VIRGIN AUSTRALIA

#### Domestic loading

The rear cover shows the latest monthly data for the domestic aviation market. The load factors of domestic and regional flights in late 2023 continues to average in the 80s. Data from Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics (BITRE) shows that domestic flights had an average loading of 82.6 per cent across October 2023.

The top routes continue to be in the SYD/MEL/BRI triangle with (1) Mel-Syd 687k; (2) Bri-Syd 381k, and (3) Bri-Mel 301k. Other top routes were Gold Coast-Sydney (219k), Adelaide-Melbourne (206k), Gold Coast-Melbourne (196k), then Melbourne-Perth (175k).

Looking at the routes with the most seats used, Gold Coast-Melbourne was on top (92.2 per cent) followed by Adelaide-Gold Coast (91.5), Melbourne-Sunshine Coast (90.4), then Cairns-Melbourne (90.0). At the other end of the list were Newman-Perth (57.0), Brisbane-Moranbah (58.4), and Armidale-Sydney (59.5). **BITRE**

### INTERNATIONAL



#### Turkish Airlines comes to Australia

Turkish Airlines says it will commence flying into Australia from March, operating on the Istanbul-Melbourne route with a 90-minute stopover in Singapore, with the federal government having granted approval.

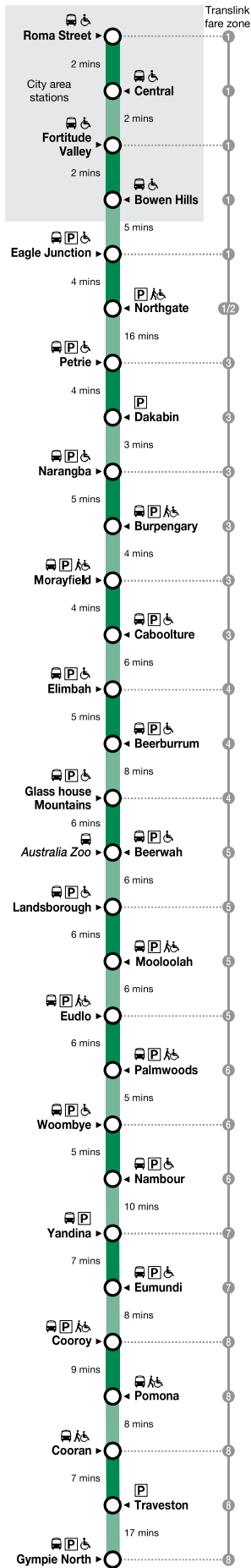
The airline will initially operate three flights per week using 787-9 Dreamliners with a plan for non-stop flights once it acquires its 15 A350-1000s aircraft and possibly daily flights in the future.

Turkish Airlines chairman Dr Ahmet Bolat said "As the airline flying to more countries than any other, we are excited to add Melbourne to our flight network as the 346th destination..., 130th country and sixth continent under our wings".

Jim Parashos, Melbourne Airport's chief of aviation, said "[In December,] Melbourne Airport became the first capital city in Australia to exceed its pre-pandemic international seat capacity, and Turkish Airlines' announcement cements that recovery". **ROSS MORRISON, AUSTRALIAN AVIATION**

**ENDS**

# City to Gympie North line information



Note: Travel times may vary for inbound services.

Ticket type	Where to buy tickets
<b>translink</b>	Selected go card agents and on the translink website
<b>Translink go card</b>	Selected go card agents and on the translink website
<b>Translink single</b>	Selected go card agents and on the translink website

**Translink go card**  
A smart card that stores value for travel on Translink services.

**Translink single**  
One-way ticket to reach your destination (not return). Final transfers must be made within two hours of ticket issue.

### Track your train in real-time with our MyTranslink app.

Also available for bus, ferry and tram.

### ticket types

For up to date public transport information within South East Queensland:

**translink.com.au**

Connect to Translink for:

- bus, train, ferry and tram timetables
- route maps
- fares and ticketing information
- journey planning, and real-time information.

**13 12 30**

Call Translink anytime for public transport information including:

- timetable, route and fare information
- services in your area
- connecting services
- public transport to special events
- accessibility.

### useful information

The Translink contact centre operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The Translink contact centre operates services for non-English speaking callers, and for hearing impaired and speech impaired users.

**How to use timetables**

Use the network map to plan your journey. Then refer to timetables for travel on the Sunshine Coast line or separate timetables for travel on other lines.

Due to unforeseen circumstances, details on this timetable may change.

Download the MyTranslink app for the most relevant bus, train, ferry and tram information in the palm of your hand.

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Printed November 2023

### general information

All customers travelling on Translink services must be in possession of a valid ticket before boarding. For ticket information, please ask at your local station or call 13 12 30 anytime.

While Queensland Rail makes every effort to ensure trains run as scheduled, there can be no guarantee of connections between trains or between train services and bus services.

**Customer feedback**

If you have any comments or queries regarding Translink services, please contact Translink on 13 12 30 anytime.

**Lost property**

Contact Lost Property on 13 16 17 during business hours for items lost on Queensland Rail services. The lost property office is open Monday to Friday 7.30am to 5.00pm and is located at Central station.

**Public holidays**

On gazetted public holidays, generally a Sunday timetable operates. On certain major event days i.e. Australia Day, Anzac Day, sporting and cultural days, special additional services may operate. Christmas Day services operate to a Christmas Day timetable. Prior to travel please visit translink.com.au or call Translink on 13 12 30 anytime.

**Special events**

Contact your local station or Translink on 13 12 30 anytime for special event services.

**Text messaging service for customers with disabilities**

To contact Queensland Rail customers may choose to text 0428 774 636, call 13 16 17, or use the emergency help phone at the station.

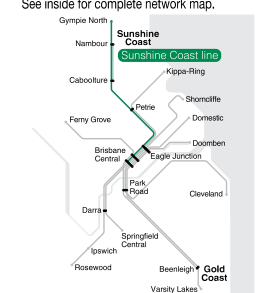
**Customers using mobility devices**

If you require assistance to board please position yourself near the international symbol of accessibility (white wheelchair on blue background) on the platform. Please indicate to staff that you require assistance and let them know how to assist.

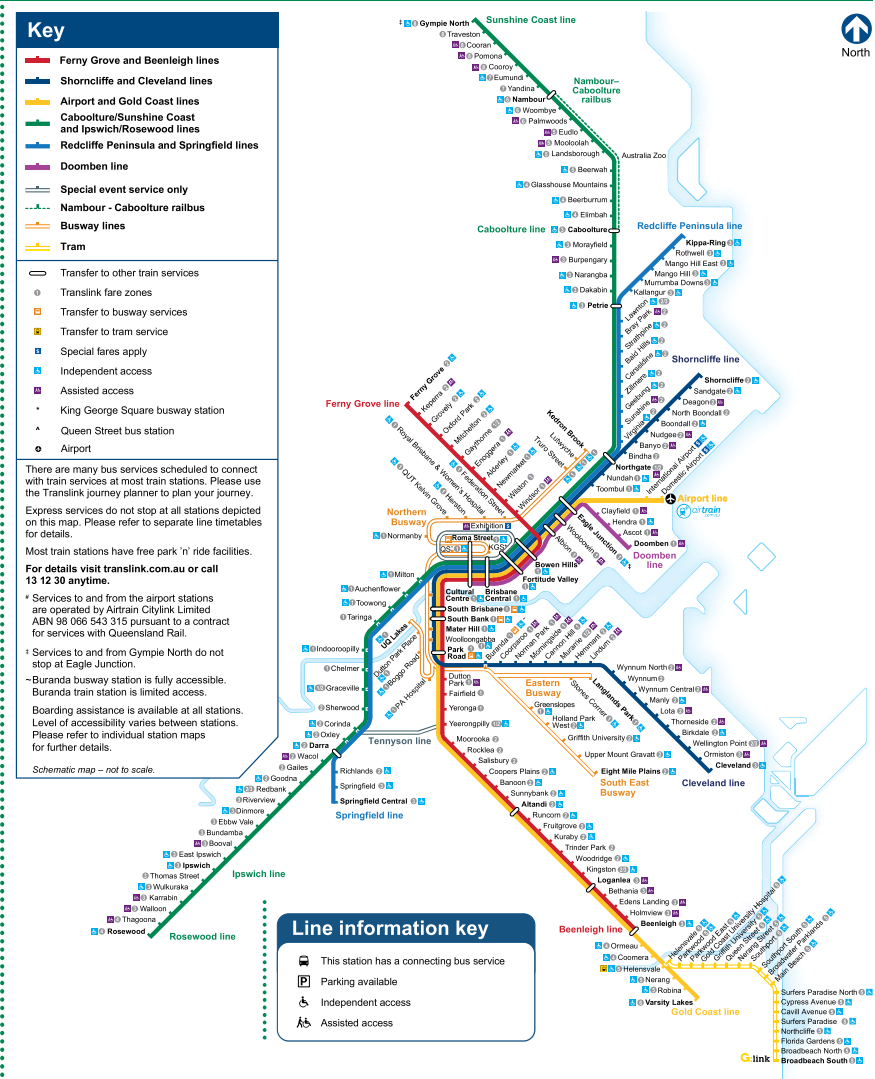
# Sunshine Coast line

Effective 27 November 2023

## translink Queensland Rail mini network map



# South East Queensland train network map



Number of domestic routes reaching selected monthly patronage levels										
	Apr 19	Oct 19	Apr 20	Oct 20	Apr 21	Oct 21	Apr 22	Oct 22	Apr 23	Oct 23
≥ 250,000	3	4	0	0	1	0	3	3	3	3
≥ 100,000	11	13	0	0	7	0	10	10	10	11
≥ 50,000	25	26	0	2	18	2	23	25	24	25
≥ 20,000	42	46	0	11	37	17	41	41	41	42
≥ 10,000	62	64	2	18	52	25	55	57	59	60
Total routes	/65	/64	/28	/23	/56	/28	/56	/60	/61	/63

Monthly load factors of domestic routes grouped by range										
	Apr 19	Oct 19	Apr 20	Oct 20	Apr 21	Oct 21	Apr 22	Oct 22	Apr 23	Oct 23
90 ≥	0	7	0	0	0	0	4	9	0	4
80-89.9	25	31	0	4	3	0	11	28	23	27
70-79.9	21	14	0	8	22	6	22	12	19	16
60-69.9	14	11	0	4	21	8	15	7	12	13
50-59.9	4	0	0	2	8	10	3	4	7	3
40-49.9	0	1	3	5	2	4	1	0	0	0
30-39.9	1	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
20-29.9	0	0	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10-19.9	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
< 10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total routes	/65	/64	/28	/23	/56	/28	/56	/60	/61	/63

There was reduced reporting for routes due to the COVID pandemic. Other routes may or may not have been operating at the time, regardless no data was available for such routes.

**Front Cover:** A map of new Wellington, NZ route 4. See item on the city's bus changes on page 12.

## About Table Talk

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