

Author name: D. Caldwell

Date of submission: Thursday, July 23, 2015

Submission: Hi, I am both Chairman of Engineers Australia's Rail Technical Society in NSW, and a Senior Engineer in Parsons Brinckerhoff in Sydney, but I am submitting in a purely personal capacity to the Inquiry.

I wish to submit an article of mine published in 2008 in "Transit Australia",

It is excellent that IPART is considering a range of options. However I sense, I hope erroneously, an effort to mischaracterise the potential approaches and weaknesses of multimodal time-zone systems. Specifically, it appears that all of the zone based examples your report cites are concentric type systems, focused on a single CBD (e.g. like London, Brisbane or Perth). As per my submission below, I would propose you should be examining a "cellular" type approach which better marries with the land-use concept of Sydney being a "city of cities". Zurich and Hamburg are particularly good examples of this.

Sincerely,

David Caldwell

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Features

- A Ticketing Revolution Part 4
- Tasmania Passenger services Review
- The Essen O-Bahn
- Kerang Level Crossing Accident

Plus Regulars



contents

Features

A Ticketing Revolution Part 4	99
Review of Passenger Services In Tasmania	106
Around the World - Hong Kong	120
The Essen O-Bahn	124
Kerang Level Crossing Accident	125

Transit Newsfile

Dewirements	98
National	109
Australian Capital Territory	109
New South Wales	109
Queensland	110
South Australia	115
Tasmania	115
Victoria	117
Western Australia	118
New Zealand	118
South East Asia	118
Singapore	118
Industry	118

Regulars

As We Were	126
Contributors	127
Services Directory	127
AETA Notices	127

Photographs in TA

In order that TA is able to maximise the supply of information to its readers all photographers are requested to provide, with the submission of any photo, some basic information about the subject matter. TA requires details of the type of vehicle (either manufacturer or class of vehicle, including, for buses, the chassis type and bodybuilder), fleet number, set number or registration number, location of the photo and the destination of the vehicle(s) and any information relating to special or unusual workings.

Front Cover

On 20 January Derek Rogers photographed a Tangara set departing Chatswood on a Down North Shore line service as it crossed Help Street, which is being heavily rebuilt as part of the major reconstruction of Chatswood Station in connection with the Epping to Chatswood Railway. The high rise buildings in the background give the atmospheric appearance of a modern Asian city. This issue has a special photo feature by Derek of surface scenes along the Epping to Chatswood railway.

Rear Cover

On 13 January Gordon Bennett photographed V/Line Sprinter 7007 in its brand new livery as it arrived at Broadford with an Up service from Seymour.

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DEWIREMENTS

Under Sydney Buses on pages 52 and 54 of February TA in the report on Routes 546, 623, 624, 628 and 629, it should be noted that Route 546 bus was diverted to run via Brickfield and Isabella Streets direct instead of via Bellevue Street outbound thus operating via the same route as the inbound busses to Parramatta. Route 552 actually operates via the old Route 546 and was brought into operation after complaints about the removal of services along Bellevue Street and in parts of Oatlands.

The Lane Cove Bus Interchange did not open in January and an opening date is still awaited.

A Ticketing Revolution Part 4

- Fair Fares for NSW Public transport

David Caldwell outlines a plan for rationalising NSW public transport fares so that an integrated fares system is introduced and all public transport travellers are equal. Many industry observers believe that Tcard failed because an integrated ticketing system must be preceded by an integrated fares system. One means of introducing an integrated ticketing system can be through smartcard technology.*

Background

Eight years after the New South Wales Government's announcement of the Integrated Ticketing project¹, and after the expenditure of approximately \$95 million, the contract has been terminated². According to the NSW Government, the system supplier, ERG, had consistently failed to meet contract deadlines. ERG cited complex fare structures as one of the key causes of their difficulties³. ERG has identified its losses on the contract as \$250m.⁴

Throughout the course of this debacle, there has been a single-minded focus on technology, with no regard for how fare structures might be reviewed or improved in concert with new technology.⁵ My November 2003 TA article detailed the complexity and inconsistency of the current fare structures, and proposed that a simplified multimodal system based on zones should be implemented as a first priority, before implementing new technology.⁶ This is not a new proposition. The first multi-modal integrated ticketing system was developed by the Hamburger Verkehrsverbundes (HVV) in the late 1960s for these very reasons. It was proposed for Sydney in the 1974 Sydney Area Transport Study; "It will permit the transfer of passengers between public transport modes without fare penalties [and] the method of fare payments and ticketing will be greatly simplified"⁷. Zone based multi-modal fare structures were again proposed as necessary precursor for integrated ticketing by the NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) in their major 1996 Inquiry; "Practical integrated ticketing... requires zone fares.... Smart cards are not a substitute for ticket integration, but are a convenient way of buying tickets"⁸. The Bus and Coach Association of NSW has, in their February 2008 Bulletin, also put a clear proposal to the Government for implementing a zone system before new technology; "it would seem that fares policy will only be addressed as an afterthought with the Sydney Integrated Ticketing project continuing to work within an antiquated fare structure"⁹.

Strangely, the NSW Ministry of Transport (the Ministry) and its associated agencies (such as the Transport Coordination Authority), have never sought to address concerns that the Tcard would not bring integrated ticketing. As both lobby groups¹⁰ and the supplier themselves have observed, there has been silence from the Ministry on the subject of reviewing fare structures and very real practical problems with their Tcard specification.

This article is not going to cover again the content of my 2003 article, and is not going to examine the entrails of the Tcard wreckage inquiring on what went wrong. Instead, this article will describe a specific way forward and the reasons for it.

Really the ticketing discussion should not be starting with technology at all. In fact, it shouldn't even start with fares. Transport pricing should be driven by three main principles; land use policy, infrastructure and operating cost recovery, and practical workability. With respect to land use, the ticketing discussion starts with the question- how do you price this service of moving people in the way they want to move? i.e. between the land uses that are, or will be, established.

Development of fare pricing structures requires a consideration of how real travel is undertaken in the context of land use. It also requires an understanding that different modes of transport have different characteristics (with regard to capacity, distance between stops,

average speed, capital cost, operating cost, susceptibility to externalities etc) and that these different characteristics suit them to different roles, often within the same journey.

With the exception of Wollongong and Newcastle, the contract areas outside Woy Woy, Richmond, Emu Plains, Menangle Park and Waterfall do have different characteristics to the metropolitan areas which need to be addressed in a detailed non-metropolitan plan.

What Sydney Deserves

Sydney's current system of distance-based bus and rail fares were devised more than fifty years ago, when travel demands were very different from those today. Today's travel is much more complex, and a system of fares based on going-to and returning-from a single destination on one bus or train no longer does the job. Sydney deserves better.

When travelling, people want the flexibility to break their journey, to stop at the shops or walk the kids to school, without being charged another fare to complete their journey. Particularly in today's larger, more dispersed urban areas, passengers need the flexibility to stop at various places en-route between home and work. This flexibility is afforded by car and public transport has to rise to the challenge of providing similar flexibility. It stands to reason; it doesn't cost the service provider any more if the passenger breaks their journey, so why charge the passenger another flag-fall?

The trick is to change the way travel is priced. Rather than price public transport on a per-ride basis, it can be priced on a time and geographic-zone basis. This revolution in transport fare structures started with the HVV in Germany in the late 1960s¹¹. By the 1980s it was spreading throughout Western Europe with noteworthy examples including Zürcher (Zurich) Verkehrsverbundes (ZVV) in Switzerland, and parts of London Transport. These systems defined zones around main areas of activity and main transport corridors. The tickets in such a system then allow travel for some period of time within the passenger's selected zones. This makes fares both simpler and more equitable.

Sydney's TravelPass zone system was implemented for the inner-metropolitan area in the early 1980s, but has only ever been available for time periods ranging from a week to a year. A ticket based on a week's travel is fine if you are commuting five days a week in the same zone, but just isn't worth it if you work part time, or have several jobs in different places, or go to a place of education in one area and work in another. In the complex, busy lives of people today, the weekly ticket is becoming less and less relevant. This is why there is a need for 2-hour and 1-day zone tickets.

The Sydney Central Business District, though the place of work for some 200,000 people, is not the only CBD in the metropolitan area. Centres such as Parramatta, Blacktown, Liverpool, Macquarie Park and Norwest/ Hills some with over 20,000 workers are also very important, and some are growing much faster than the Sydney CBD, but the present zones do not cover travel to these centres. Many people want to go to Parramatta without wanting to pay for going to Sydney; for this reason new regional centred zones are required. This will provide people whose activities are centred around work, shops and schools in outer-metropolitan centres with the same flexibility in public transport use that inner-Sydney residents will have. The new zone system will complement the growth of Sydney's satellite commercial and business centres.

Existing per-ride based fares are inequitable. A person who has to take two buses to get to their desired destination has to pay about 50% more fare¹² than someone covering the same distance on a single bus, even though they have the additional inconvenience of changing

TICKETING REVOLUTION PT 4

buses. Changing between buses, trains, ferries and trams, for whatever reason, should not cost the passenger more.

The existing fare system is complex and unwieldy. The different TravelPass colours and zone combinations are obscure, and are not easily available. At present there is a quagmire of mode-specific ticket products, some can only be used on buses, others only on trains. Finding the right ticket for the journey can be a chore, and it shouldn't be. There needs to be a rationalisation of existing zones, an abolition of all ride-based fares and all public transport tickets should be valid for all modes in the applicable zones.

In both Government and Private served areas, new geographic zones can be defined to provide for 2-hour and daily TravelPasses to replace existing ride-based fares in the Sydney metropolitan area. The current time-based system in Newcastle could be retained, and a similar system should be implemented in Wollongong.

Eliminating additional fares associated with modal transfer will also free-up transfers at major hubs like Circular Quay and Central. In conjunction with a Circular Quay to Central Light Rail system, this would allow greater utilisation of ferries and the express train terminating platforms at Central. Passenger transfers would be seamless in the true sense: at grade, without delay, and without additional fare, straight to the middle of City streets.

Implementation

While the current ticket technology remains in use, TimeTen tickets, similar to those presently used in Newcastle could be issued through all present distributors as well as street vending machines at main bus stops. This system, long proved in Newcastle on existing ticket

machines, will enable passengers to purchase ten two hour journeys for the first two zones in which the passenger travels.

Building from the existing Sydney zones, zones can be defined around major regions of activity. While the exact demarcations would have to be defined with consideration for boundary effects, a representative zone map is shown in figure 1 opposite.

This system will rationalise the vast array of currently available metropolitan fares to six time denominations: 15-minute (bus only), 2-hourly, daily, weekly, quarterly and yearly tickets, for two zones, three zones, four zones or all zones. An example of how full-fares might be structured is shown in Figure 2.

All current concessions could be rationalised, and uniformly applied as half-fares. The Pensioner Excursion arrangements would remain.

This system will make public transport fairer and easier to use by;

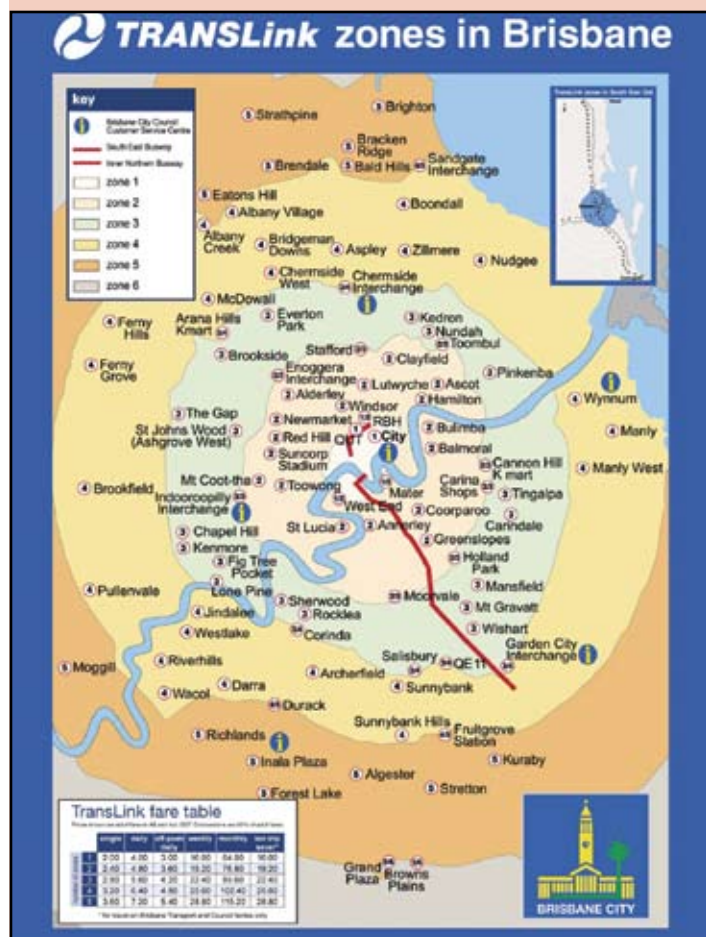
- Eliminating the additional fare for stopping-off part way through your journey
- Getting rid of multiple flag-fall components for journeys that need more than one mode
- Providing flexible time periods for use
- Providing flexibility to transfer to different services and speed up journeys
- Focussing zones on major urban centres outside the Sydney CBD
- Complementing modern patterns of land use and travel
- Simplifying a complex and confusing fare system
- Providing tickets more conducive to off-vehicle sale and quicker bus transit time

BELOW LEFT:

Figure 4: TRANSLink zone system (Brisbane TRANSLink website)

BELOW RIGHT:

Figure 3: Sydney Area Transport Study proposed zone system (State Planning Commission NSW, 1974).



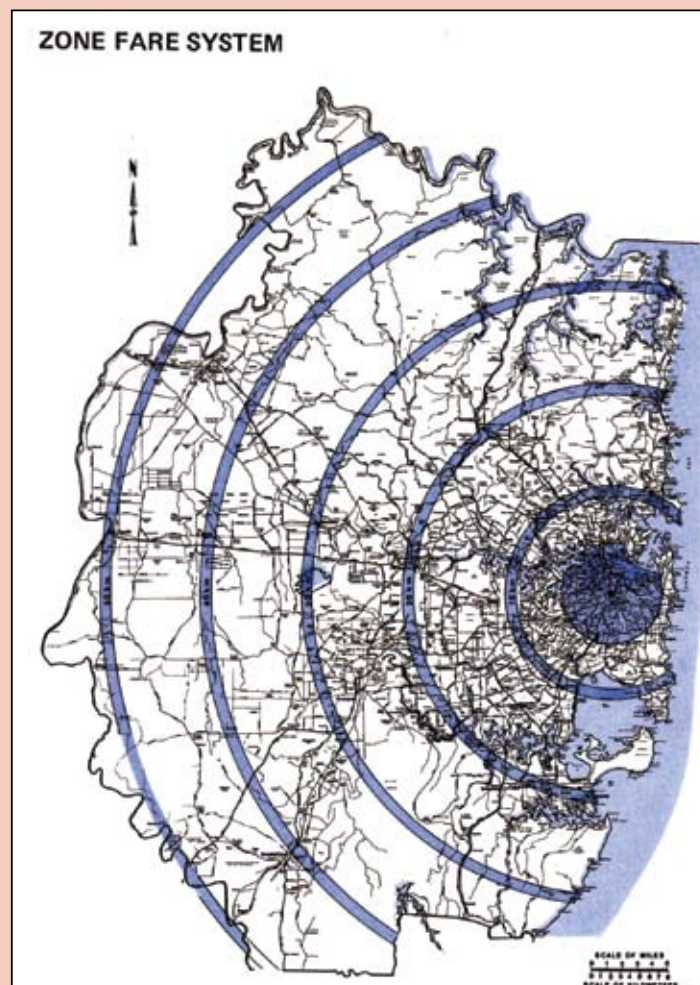
OPPOSITE PAGE:

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Figure 1 - Proposed Sydney Zone Map- Background map Crown Copyright

BOTTOM:

Figure 2 - Metropolitan Sydney Full fares - Example only



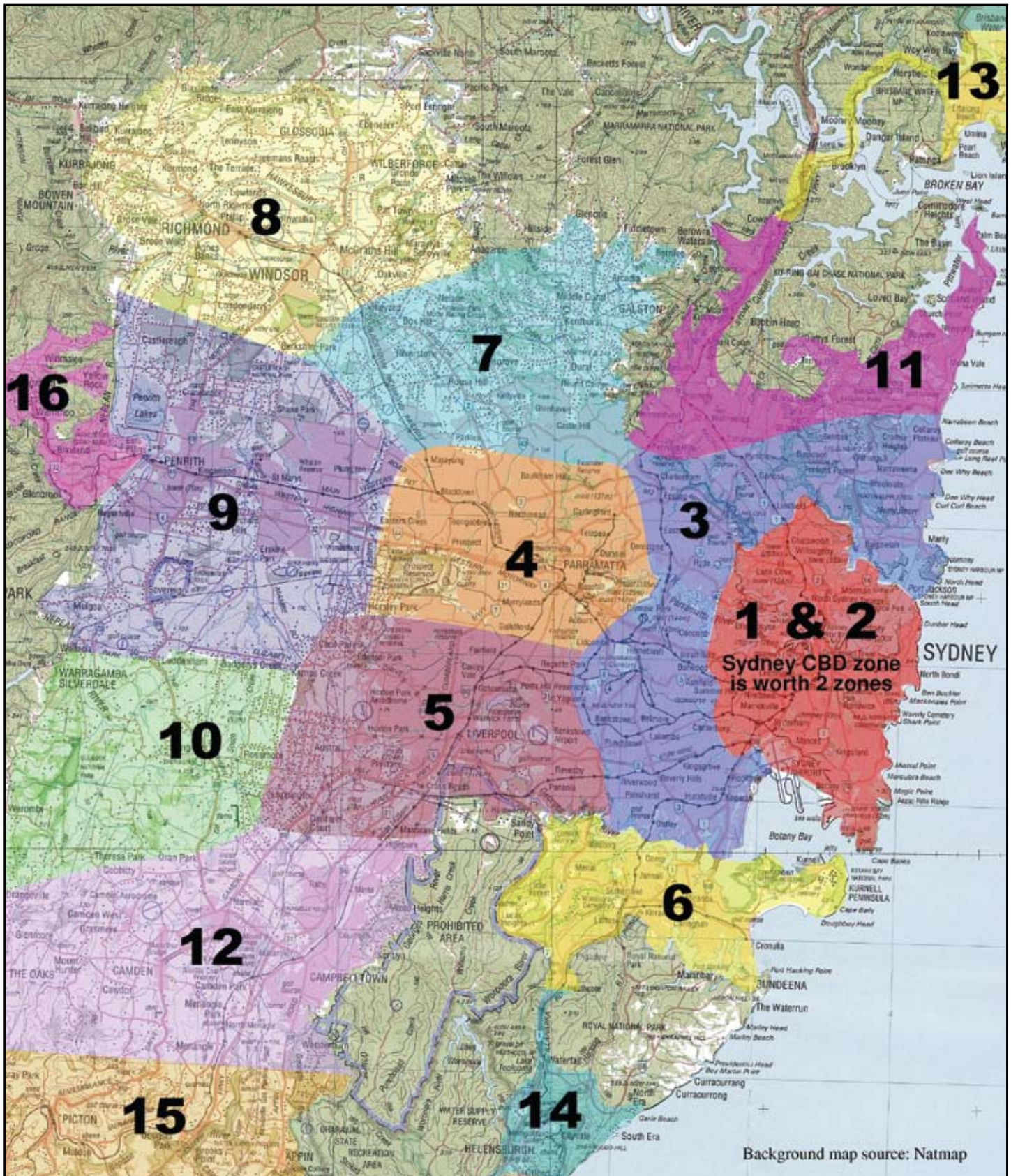


Figure 2 Metropolitan Sydney Full fares - Example only

	15 mins	2 hour	daily	10 x 2 hr	weekly	quarterly	yearly
1-2 zones	\$2.00	\$4.00	\$8.50	\$40.00	\$34.00	\$374.00	\$1360.00
3 zones		\$5.50	\$11.00	\$55.00	\$44.00	\$484.00	\$1760.00
4 zones		\$7.00	\$13.50	\$70.00	\$54.00	\$594.00	\$2160.00
all zones		\$8.00	\$15.00	\$80.00	\$60.00	\$660.00	\$2400.00

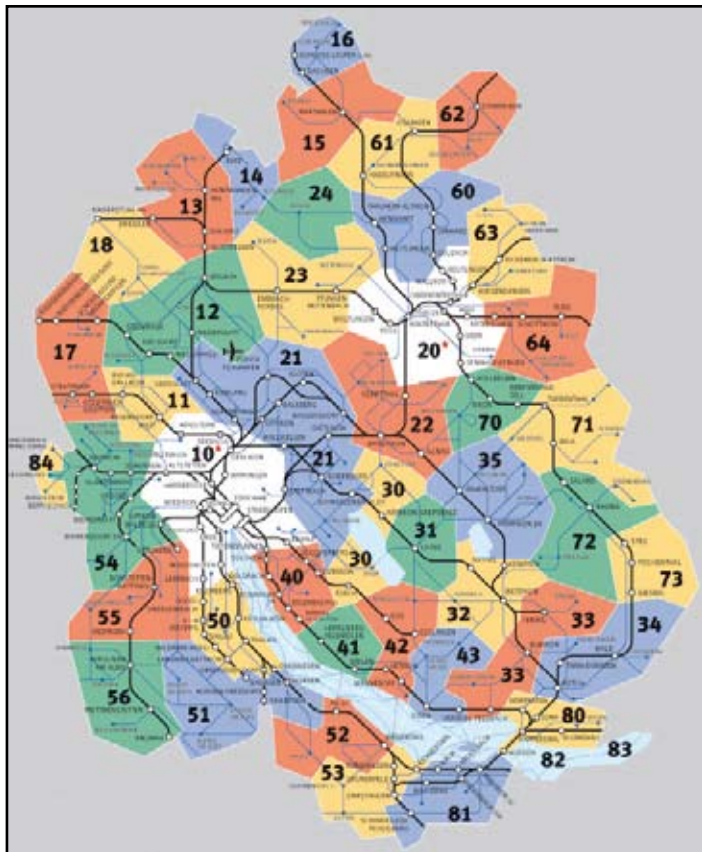


Figure 5: Map of Zurich Tarif Plan (Fare Zones)

This system can be implemented now. The current ticketing equipment can perform what is required and, in fact, with a zone based system even less complex equipment is required than exists at present. Because the system is simplified, it is easier to understand, and so reduces unwitting fare evasion. Zone systems have long existed on plain old cardboard tickets¹³, and Brisbane in 2004 rolled-out the new TRANSLink zone ticketing system on technology this basic. It is only after four years of bedding down the zone system that the "go card" is now being rolled out in Queensland.

Why not concentric zones?

The Bus and Coach Association has recently put forward a proposal for a concentric zone system. There can be no doubt that the BCA proposal would be vastly superior to the current fare structures in Sydney. Concentric zones were the basis of the 1974 Sydney Area Transport Study proposal (figure 3), and also formed the basis of Brisbane's new TRANSLink system (figure 4).

However, things have changed significantly since 1974, particularly with regard to regional centre growth and general dispersion of land use. For this reason zones should not be based purely on Sydney CBD-centric journeys, but rather on the significance of regional attractors.

Non-concentric zones form the basis of both the highly successful ZVV and HVV systems, although the HVV zones are arranged in a radial pattern working out from the central Lake Alster region.

Key considerations for defining the new zones should be;

- Evolution from existing key Sydney TravelPass zones;
- Independent zones (i.e. you should not have to buy access to the Sydney CBD zone if you want to travel from an outer suburb to a regional centre)
- Placing zone boundaries as close to major trip-attractor "water sheds" as can be achieved;
- Minimise boundary effects by ensuring that boundaries do not inappropriately intersect routes or have more than three boundaries converge to a point; and
- Minimise boundary effects by not having any one-zone tickets.

Costing and Funding

This is a revenue neutral proposition. On first inspection this may appear to be the impossibility of "something for nothing," but in fact is simply the abolition of complications and limitations that need not exist. Some fares will slightly increase, but the vast majority will decrease, particularly for travel to outer-Sydney centres, where multiple buses are used, and where passengers want to break their journey for whatever reason. The reduction in fares does not mean a reduction in revenue; nor does it necessarily mean increased burden on stretched capacity (and commensurate service requirements).

Brisbane in 2004 experienced the shift from distance-based to zone based tickets with the implementation of TRANSLink. Echoing the experience of systems all over the world Brisbane experienced a 10.7% increase in patronage and an 11% increase in revenue within two months of implementing their zone system. Most importantly, the strongest growth was in services outside the inner city, a consequence of increased convenience¹⁴. On an ironic aside, SmogBusters and the Brisbane Institute, who lobbied furiously for integrated ticketing in Brisbane, drew support for their zone fares case and implementation strategy from the recommendations of the major 1996 NSW IPART Inquiry¹⁵.

One of the key considerations for implementing a zone system is revenue sharing arrangements between the operators within the scheme. In Sydney's case, particular attention will be required to ensure revenue neutrality during transitioning of the RailCorp system. The exact pricing of zone bands will be heavily influenced by RailCorp's travel statistics and revenue requirements. The transition has however been achieved in Brisbane, and the much more complex Hamburg, in which there are several very significant independent rail operators sharing revenue.¹⁶

Conclusion

No doubt the turn of events in NSW will also lead other transport administrators to look behind the facade of flashy technology to examine whether their systems have at their base sound engineering, economic and urban-planning principles. It is only in coming to terms with these first-principles considerations, as in ZVV, HVV and now TRANSLink (amongst others), that the technology can be properly formed, including the necessary and sound problem simplifications. Dr Paul Mees' words provide a particularly apt closing consideration;

"It is planning and politics, including the professional politics of transport planners, and not urban form, which have prevented Melbourne and other Australian cities from having European-style public transport... Infrastructure and technology fetishism will have to be abandoned... the most necessary change is not to public transport itself, but to transport politics"¹⁷

With RailCorp, Sydney Buses and Sydney Ferries already sharing revenue from the TravelPass systems, and clear support for a zone system from private bus operators represented by the BCA, there is no practical impediment to making the change to integrated zone fares across Sydney now. As demonstrated by the cities that have made the change, restructuring transport pricing into a zone based system will increase flexibility, lead to a growth in modal share, reduce road congestion, and increase urban transport efficiency.

** After practicing for three years as a transport consulting engineer in WorleyParsons and TMG International, David is currently working on an unrelated IT project.*

He holds an honours degree in Mechanical Engineering from UNSW and jointly won the Rail Technical Society Australia (IE Aust) award for his 2004 thesis on how to improve performance and safety of the Sydney metropolitan railways. He has written numerous papers on transport and logistics including "Generation of Optimised Signal Layouts with Computer Simulation" which won the Institution of Railway Signal Engineers (Australasia) 2006 award for the best paper by an engineer under 35.

Sites to have a look at:

www.hvv.de/en/about-us/organization/

www.zvv.ch/preise_zonenplan.asp

www.TRANSLink.com.au/qt/translin.nsf/index/ti_zone

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¹Scully, C (Minister for Roads, Minister for Transport), 17/07/1999, Media Release, *Integrated Ticketing Shortlist Announced*

²Alexandra Smith, 24/1/2008, Sydney Morning Herald, *\$95m down the drain, and transport card is years off*

³"At no stage since the contract commenced in 2003 has any member of ERG's senior management or Board been permitted to discuss the communication and fare structure difficulties of the project with the Minister or senior bureaucrats." ERG, 24/01/08, press release *ERG Responds to Tcard termination*.

www.erggroup.com/news/details.asp?newsid=33 (retr 14/02/08).

⁴ERG, 30/01/08, Press release *ERG considers \$250 million claim on Tcard*. www.erggroup.com/news/details.asp?newsid=35 (retr 14/02/08)

⁵Fare product development was actively stalled by transport authorities; "Setting Fares is not part of this project. The statutory Independent Pricing Regulatory Tribunal makes determinations and recommendations on fare levels." (Transport Coordination Authority brochure *Smart Card Q & A* 10/4/2003). Note that the Ministry ignored advice on shifting to zone fares made in 1996 by IPART in its capacity under Section 5.11.b of the IPART Act 1992. The General Manager Finance and Business services of the State Transit Authority also observed "...we took a conscious decision some several years ago now to put on hold any further product development because then the integrated ticketing project was imminent" (IPART public hearings transcript, *Fare determinations* 10/5/2002, p63 lines 24-31).

⁶Caldwell D.R, 2003, *The Need for Integrated Fares*, Transit Australia, November 2003 Vol 58 No 11

⁷State Planning and Environmental Commission of NSW, May 1974, *Sydney Area Transportation Study – (A Transport Plan for Sydney ~ 2000)*. Note a more detailed explanation was given by the SPEC transport manager Caldwell J. R., 1977, *Zone Fares – a new approach*, Truck & Bus Transportation July 1977.

⁸NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal, March 1996, *An Inquiry Into Pricing of Public Passenger Transport Services- Interim Report No. 4- Fare Structures for Public Transport*, Section 5.7 Practical Integrated Ticketing would require Zone Fares.

⁹Bus & Coach Association NSW *Bulletin*, Jan/Feb 2008, *Sydney Metropolitan & Outer Metropolitan Fares Policy*

¹⁰"The travelling public is not being involved as a true stakeholder. There have been many "consultations", but they have all been along the lines of "This is what we are going to do. Any questions?" instead of "Please help us design the system the way you would like it." There is no commuter consultative committee involved in the planning", Action for Public Transport, 28/2/2006, news item Tcard concerns.

¹¹Dr Ing F Pampel (Mitglied des Direktoriums des Hamburger Verkehrsverbundes), 1969, *The Hamburg Transport Community, an Example of Coordination and Integration in Public Transport*, presented before the Symposium for Public Transport Policy Makers.

¹²As of 2 January 2008, a Sydney buses 2 section (miles) ticket is \$1.80, a 5 section \$3.00. If one is to break a 5 section ride, one 2-section fare (for say 2 sections) and one 5-section fare (for 3 sections) cost \$4.80, being 60% more expensive than had the journey not been broken.

¹³A major motivation of the zone scheme in Hamburg was that it overcame the urgency for automatic fare collection equipment (Pampel, Ibid). Sydney, Melbourne, Perth and Brisbane have all had (and some remain) time-zone paper based integrated ticketing systems with varying degrees of extent.

¹⁴Paul Lucas, 27/09/04, Media Statement Transport & Main Roads, Queensland: EXTRA 2.3M PASSENGERS TAKE SEQ PUBLIC TRANSPORT - Qld.

¹⁵The same Interim report No.4 footnoted in this article was referenced in support of integrated zone based ticketing in Brisbane Institute and Smog Busters material such as *A ticket to Ride: Getting passengers on-side and on-board with Integrated Public Transport Tickets- A SmogBusters Queensland Vision Statement December 2001*

¹⁶HVV member rail operators include AKN, DB, Hochbahn, Metronom, NOB, S-Bahn, in addition to many bus operators. See www.hvv.de/en/about-us/public-transport-operators/ for details (retr 17/2/08).

¹⁷Paul Mees, 2000, *A very public solution*, Melbourne University Press



A photograph of a page from the now historic Tcard manual as photographed by Gordon Bennett showing the drivers module as fitted to Kingsgrove Depot buses for the abortive trial.



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Review of Core Passenger Services in Tasmania

Ian G Cooper

Introduction

The Tasmanian Government released the Final Report of the Review of Core Passenger Services on 11 December 2007 – a process which completes the most comprehensive review of scheduled bus and coach services in Tasmania since Mr M S Wilson's Report on Tasmanian Transport Problems was presented to the Tasmanian Government on 30 August 1938, which resulted in the creation of The Transport Commission. The 2007 report is monumental in every respect. The main document is over 200 pages in length, excluding appendices, and contains 120 recommendations for the improvement of scheduled bus and coach services in the State.

The subject matter is complex because of the ad hoc development of the regulation and operation of bus and coach services in Tasmania. Many State Government agencies have had varying levels of interest and control over the provision of such services: the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER), the Transport Commission, the Education Department and two bus operators owned by the State Government; the Transport Commission and the Metropolitan Transport Trust, neither of which had any jurisdiction over the other.

The review found the provision of bus and coach services in 2007 to be uncoordinated, inadequate in meeting the needs of communities, inequitable to users as a result of fare structures and inequitable to the bus operators as a result of contract payments which are not necessarily related to the cost of service delivery, and with many services provided by buses which were inadequate for the task.

What bus services were reviewed?

Service Type	State Government Budget Expenditure 2007-8
• Metro bus services in Hobart, Launceston and Burnie	\$27,670,000
• Merseylink "metro-style" bus services in Devonport	\$ 1,540,000
• "Free to User" school bus services providing free transport for school students to and from schools across Tasmania	\$ 24,250,000
• Conveyance allowances to parents to assist in the transport of students in isolated areas	\$ 830,000
• Private fare paying bus services comprising two main types where the fare paid to the operator by the passenger is topped up by the State Government	\$ 9,990,000
General access services:	
• linking the major cities (eg. Hobart and Launceston)	
• linking regional communities to major urban centres	
• linking the urban fringe areas to the city centres (eg. New Norfolk and Sorell to Hobart; George Town and Longford to Launceston)	
Student only services:	
• transporting school children from the urban fringe to schools within the city centres	
• transporting children to and from schools within smaller regional centres such as Ulverstone, Rosebery, Scottsdale and Sorell; and	
• transporting children to and from school within Hobart, Launceston, Devonport and Burnie.	

The Report's 120 recommendations focus on six key outcomes:

Outcome 1: Consistent Urban Bus Services

Consistent urban bus services that provide consistent student fares and consistent levels of service for similar trips can be achieved by re-aligning contracting arrangements.

The Review found that a number of bus services operating wholly within the urban areas of Hobart, Launceston, Devonport and Burnie charge inconsistent fares (especially student fares) and offer inconsistent levels of service for similar trips due to differing contracting arrangements.

There are many overlapping and duplicated services.

[It may surprise some readers to learn that Metro does not have a monopoly in providing school bus services in Hobart and Launceston. The report identified five private operators in Hobart and six operators in Launceston who are contracted to provide school bus services wholly within their respective urban areas]

To reduce overlap and duplication, and improve the consistency of urban services the Review recommends that there be a re-alignment of Metro and private operator services with all services charging a standard urban student fare. The definition of urban areas has also been reviewed and amended and the boundary changes will be taken into account when preparing new contracts.

Further it is recommended that the Metro Service Standards, developed by the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources, be applied to all services operating wholly within the identified urban areas to establish the appropriate routes and timetables.

One recommendation likely to attract widespread community support focuses on the advocacy that all full time undergraduate University and TAFE students over 18 years of age be recognized as adult concession passengers

There were 24 recommendations in this section.

Outcome 2: Better Connections for Urban Fringe Communities

More efficient provision of services for urban fringe communities resulting in better bus services that provide consistent fares for similar trips achieved through more equitable contracting arrangements.

Overlaps, duplications, inefficiencies and anomalies within the State's bus and coach services are most apparent within the urban fringe areas around Hobart and Launceston and along the North West Coast between Wynyard and Port Sorell. These concerns are more obvious in those communities that have experienced rapid population growth and demographic change in recent times.

The urban fringe includes:

- the towns of Brighton, Huonville, Kettering, New Norfolk, Sorell and Woodbridge on the periphery of Hobart;
- the towns of Cressy, Deloraine, Exeter, Evandale, George Town, Longford and Perth on the periphery of Launceston and
- the towns of Penguin, Port Sorell, Ulverstone and Wynyard on the North West Coast.

Nearly three million trips are made by students and adults travelling from urban fringe communities into nearby urban centres and \$10 million is provided to support these services, of which nearly 90% is spent on student only services. Urban fringe communities have sought improved general access services, particularly during the day and evening and the Review has recommended substantial changes to the provision of bus services in these areas.

The Review recommends that separate student only services would be maintained and such services would operate alongside a monopoly general access service along each urban fringe corridor. All services would be provided on the basis of charging fares that are topped up by the Government replacing the current mix of "free to user" and "top up" basis. It is recommended that standard fares be progressively introduced over a number of years and aligned explicitly to Metro urban fares.

Monopoly providers of general access services in urban fringe corridors would also receive monopoly rights for adult concession travel and support for students carried on the same basis as providers of student only services. The Review Team is hoping that the change in the fare systems (with incentives for operators to improve the efficiency of their services) will cause economies in the provision of urban fringe services resulting in a reduction in the number of buses required to provide the services.



LEFT:
Seen here entering the Hobart Bus Mall on 7 December 2007 is Ansair bodied Scania N113 MET 170 on Route 296 to Opossum Bay, a settlement of about 250 persons and 25.8 kms from the edge of the main part of the eastern shore urban area. The Review has recommended that new, individual contracts be issued to Metro to provide service to such localities as Opossum Bay, South Arm, Cremorne, Seven Mile Beach and Brighton- Ian Cooper photograph.

RIGHT:
Photographed by Ian Cooper in the Elizabeth Street Bus Mall on 5 December 2007 as it departed for Richmond was TassieLink's 69, a NCBC Scania K93. TassieLink took over the Richmond service on 16 April 2007 from Metro's Regional Operator, Hobart Coaches.



In so doing it is recommended that, in developing support arrangements for urban fringe bus services, consideration be given to supporting operators' innovation in service provision to meet changing demographic profiles and travel patterns. DIER wants New Service Contracts for general access services to explicitly provide for operators to establish corridor specific service plans to improve services for each transit corridor over the term of the new contract.

Further, the Review recommends that general access service contractors be given the option of providing one or two general access services each weekday along the corridor plus an additional general access service each Saturday.

There were a total of 34 recommendations in this section, the largest number of recommendations for an individual Outcome (or section) of the report, highlighting the identified deficiencies in the provision of general access and student services in this growing market segment.

Outcome 3: Free Rural School Bus Services

Continued free school bus services for students of rural schools delivered by better buses and a more equitable funding and contracting framework for operators.

Much of the report focused on problems confronting the administrators and customers of rural school bus services. Apart from the multiplicity of fare systems across the state and the inequity of many of the fares charged, one of the most serious challenges facing the State Government is the age of the school bus fleet. Tasmania has the oldest school buses in Australia with an average age approaching 25 years for large buses with several vehicles nearing 40 years of age. As the subject of rural school buses is outside the scope of this journal a detailed examination of this Outcome will not be included in this article.

There were 22 recommendations in this section.

TASMANIA PASSENGER SERVICES

Outcome 4: Meeting Needs in Regional Towns

Supporting bus services for children living in regional towns to get to school.

The primary aim of bus services operating within most of the regional towns is to provide transport for children travelling to school in those towns. Student only services are currently provided in Beaconsfield, Bothwell, George Town, Huonville, Margate, Penguin, Queenstown, Rosebery, Scottsdale, Smithton and Strahan.

Metro provides limited town services for all passengers in Ulverstone and Wynyard as extensions of its general access urban fringe services to and from Burnie. Hobart Coaches provides a limited town service in New Norfolk as an extension of its general access urban fringe service between New Norfolk and Hobart. The Review suggested that Ulverstone, with a population of 10,000 persons, was possibly the only regional town that could support a viable general access town service.

The report states that these services have developed independently of the guidelines that regulate the provision of "free to the user" bus services. All but one of the private services operate as fare paying services with 30c fares being paid by the passenger with a State Government top up. The extent of adult trips on most of these services is very low. The review recommends that these services continue as fare paying services but that the same fare structure as is proposed for urban fringe services be applied in regional towns.

There were 11 recommendations in this section.

Outcome 5: Long Distance or Inter-City Bus Services

Offsetting the disadvantage to students who must live away from home to attend school and to others in the community who are isolated from key services by subsidizing travel into their nearby urban centre.

There were 27 recommendations in this section which is outside the scope of TA.

Outcome 6: Better Buses

Using risk based criteria to target investment in new buses.

As mentioned in Outcome 3, the age of the Tasmanian bus fleet is of considerable concern. However, the Review states that there will be a substantial improvement in the quality of the bus fleet as a result of the implementation of the Bus Cost Model (BCM). Under this model payments for bus capital are suspended when a bus reaches a given age.

For large buses this age is 25 and for small buses it is 10 years. This provides an incentive for operators to continually upgrade the buses used.

The providers of urban fringe bus services indicated to the Review that there was an insufficient return for their businesses to invest in buses that meet Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) requirements. [At present there are no DDA compliant buses operating urban fringe services in Tasmania and that includes the Government owned Hobart Coaches. TA believes that a private bus operator will introduce a low floor DDA compliant bus onto an urban fringe service into Hobart in 2008.]

The Review believes that the recommendations for Urban Fringe Services (Outcome 2) will provide the funds necessary to upgrade the bus fleet providing general access services to city centres to meet DDA standards.

The Review also recommends that the risk criteria developed by Transport Queensland in determining upgrades of school buses be applied in Tasmania. These criteria cover the speed of travel, terrain, condition of road, level of traffic and climate. Funding for the purchase of a new bus may be provided where a route meets the above criteria.

A total of \$15 million over a five year period will be available to fund the immediate needs to upgrade the Tasmanian school bus fleet operating on high risk routes with new seat belt equipped buses.

There were two recommendations in this section.

The full report is available at

www.dier.tas.gov.au/reviewofthecorepassengerservices

The State Government's Response

In releasing the report, The Minister for Infrastructure, Energy and Resources, Jim Cox, advised that the State Government had agreed to support and pursue the Review's recommendations to:

- introduce consistent fares for all passengers, including school students;
- extend access to concession fares for all full-time TAFE and university students;
- upgrade buses and improve timetables on urban fringe services across Tasmania;
- provide funding for operators to buy new seat belt equipped small school buses operating on high risk routes.



MET 243 is the fourth of the batch of North Coast bodied Scania L94UBs in Hobart. This unit, in a Metro bus "go bus" promotional livery was photographed by Ian Cooper loading in the Elizabeth Street Bus Mall on Route 258 for Mornington on 7 December 2007.

TRANSIT NEWSFILE NATIONAL

Infrastructure Australia-Federal Cabinet has approved the establishment of Infrastructure Australia and will introduce establishing legislation during the first session of the new Parliament. Infrastructure Australia will be a statutory advisory council with twelve members drawn from industry and government. There will be five members from the private sector, one of whom will be the chair.

Infrastructure Australia will:

- Conduct audits to determine the adequacy, capacity and condition of nationally significant infrastructure, including transport, water, communications and energy.
- Develop an Infrastructure Priority List to guide public and private investment.
- Provide advice to governments, investors and owners of infrastructure on regulatory reforms that can improve the utilisation of infrastructure networks.

Infrastructure Australia's immediate task will be to audit infrastructure shortfalls and produce an Infrastructure Priority List to guide investment. The first Infrastructure Priority List will be completed within 12 months. In developing the List, Infrastructure Australia will assess projects in terms of specific goals, such as:

- Saving time for commuters battling traffic congestion in our major cities.
- Efficiently moving freight from regional areas to our ports.
- Meeting the challenge of climate change

Infrastructure Australia will also review the extent to which governments can better facilitate infrastructure investment, including through public-private partnerships as well as better planning and approval processes.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY Canberra

Another short pre-intersection bus lane was opened in late December 2007. About 200m of bus lane was marked out on Belconnen Way westbound at the intersection of Caswell Drive and the on/off ramps from the Gungahlin Drive Extension. This is a very useful facility for Intertown buses because the bus lane feeds directly into the right turn lane leading to Hayden Drive, thus providing public transport with a jump start over private transport in this congested area. The new lane complements a similar lane on the eastbound carriageway at this intersection.

Tenders closed on 12 February with the ACT Government for what is described as a "Transport Planning Consultancy for Gungahlin Town Centre Planning Study". Although the population of Gungahlin, Canberra's fourth new town, has passed 30,000 and rising rapidly, the provision of basic facilities for public transport users is very poor. There is one shelter in the town centre with accommodation for about four persons and two seats on the opposite side of the road with no shelter. The ACT Transit Group, a local transport interest group, is not aware of the existence of plans for a purpose built bus interchange or any increase in the number of bus stops with shelters and seats in the town centre. Hopefully this study will lead to an improvement in the provision of basic passenger amenities in Gungahlin Town Centre.

The Chief Minister announced on ABC Radio on 15 January that all ACTION buses were now fitted with CCTV security cameras.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Tcard – On 23 January the New South Wales Government terminated the Tcard contract with Integrated Transit Solutions Limited (ITSL), saying that it failed to deliver the system it had promised in 2003. The Government seized a \$10 million performance bond lodged on the signing of the contract and is looking at further legal action to recover outgoings of \$95 million. The shares of ITSL's parent ERG were soon suspended on the Stock Exchange, at ERG's request, and threats of legal action were coming from both sides. The resultant shock waves produced reaction from as far away as the US state of Washington, where ERG is also involved in a late running project.

The Public Transport Ticketing Corporation (PTTC) will work with an expert group from across Government to begin scoping out the steps for a new system and report in mid 2008. The group will comprise officers from the Department of Premier and Cabinet, the PTTC, Treasury and an independent advisor.

The PTTC worked to minimise disruption as a result of the decision, announcing: the T-card bus trial was to cease, with the 106 participants in the trial having their balances fully refunded and cards collected, and for Term 1, 2008, there was to be no change for school children who will continue to travel on the buses using their T-cards and existing paper bus passes.

The NSW Opposition has issued a policy discussion white paper that calls for the creation of an overall coordinating body for NSW public transport. Under the plan, the Ministry of Transport, the Public Transport Ticketing Corporation, the Rail Infrastructure Corporation and the Transport Infrastructure Development Corporation would be abolished and the new authority would take over the role of all agencies.

The Opposition hosted a forum in Parliament House in late February to discuss the plan.

Sydney Sydney Trains

The new Public Private Partnership trains are to be officially "A-Sets". In early February a mock-up of one of the A-Sets was displayed at Clyde for various interest groups to inspect.

CityRail is preparing for World Youth Day in July which may generate passenger loads similar to those during the Sydney Olympics. RailCorp has called for administrative and clerical staff to perform customer contact roles as "CityRail Guides" during the event.

On the night of 31 January severe storms in the Blacktown area

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TRANSIT NEWSFILE

disrupted the rail power supply and signalling, resulting in part of the Richmond Branch service being operated by buses on the morning of 1 February. Also on the night of 31 January there were service disruptions and bus replacement between Waterfall and Wollongong and on the Southern Highlands for the same reason.

From the first week in February there were trials of new platform procedures on some platforms at Town Hall and Wynyard, aimed at managing passenger flow and train dwell time to help improve peak running. An earlier first step required the removal of several seats on platform 3 at Wynyard in order to create extra standing space for passengers. Now the trial has been expanded with extra station staff, under the control of a "dwell manager" encouraging passengers to spread out along the

selected platforms at Town Hall and Wynyard. The aim is to reduce dwell time on the platforms by encouraging a more organised passenger flow and directing passengers to use more lightly-loaded cars at the outer ends of trains. There may be further changes as the trial progresses.

QUEENSLAND South East Queensland



The smartcard roll-out began on 28 January for the Sunshine Coast, Caboolture, Pine Rivers and Redcliffe, with other areas to follow. The Gold Coast area is proving a problem because of a disagreement with NSW over cross border bus services and smartcard use.

Brisbane Brisbane Buses

The Queensland Government is to increase annual funding for bus purchases for South East Queensland and this will include paying for some existing Brisbane City Council (BCC) bus orders and will increase delivery rates. BCC said some of the improvements these new buses will provide will include upgrading Route 330 Bracken Ridge to a high frequency service running every 10 minutes in the peaks, introducing a new rocket service from Aspley and increasing the frequency of Route 140 from Browns Plains. Since TransLink was introduced in July 2004 all new services in Brisbane have been funded by the State Government and the bus fleet across south east Queensland has expanded from 1,493 buses to 1,934 buses.

Brisbane Ferries

On 2 February Brisbane City Council opened the new Apollo Road Ferry Terminal at Bulimba, with services commencing from 4 February. At the same time the latest CityCat was unveiled.



RIGHT:

State Transit's 3030, a Ryde Depot based Mercedes Mark 4 O305, was photographed by Derek Rogers on 28 January adjacent to the East entrance to Macquarie Park Station. The architecture of the station entrance is typical of the other stations along the line.

BELOW:

A 20 January view, with fewer obstructions, showing the station entrance at Delhi Road photographed by Derek Rogers.

This directional sign is for those navigating around the Chatswood interchange and was photographed by Derek Rogers on 20 January.

As part of the Chatswood Interchange project the two lane Help Street is being converted into a four lane road under the railway and progress as at 20 January is shown by this Derek Rogers photograph.



LEFT:

On 20 January State Transit 1553, a North Sydney Depot Volvo B12BLE with Custom Coach body, was working a Route 545 service to Parramatta when it was photographed by Derek Rogers. Just passing out of view was State Transit's 1114, a Ryde Depot based Mercedes O405NH, a natural gas powered bus.

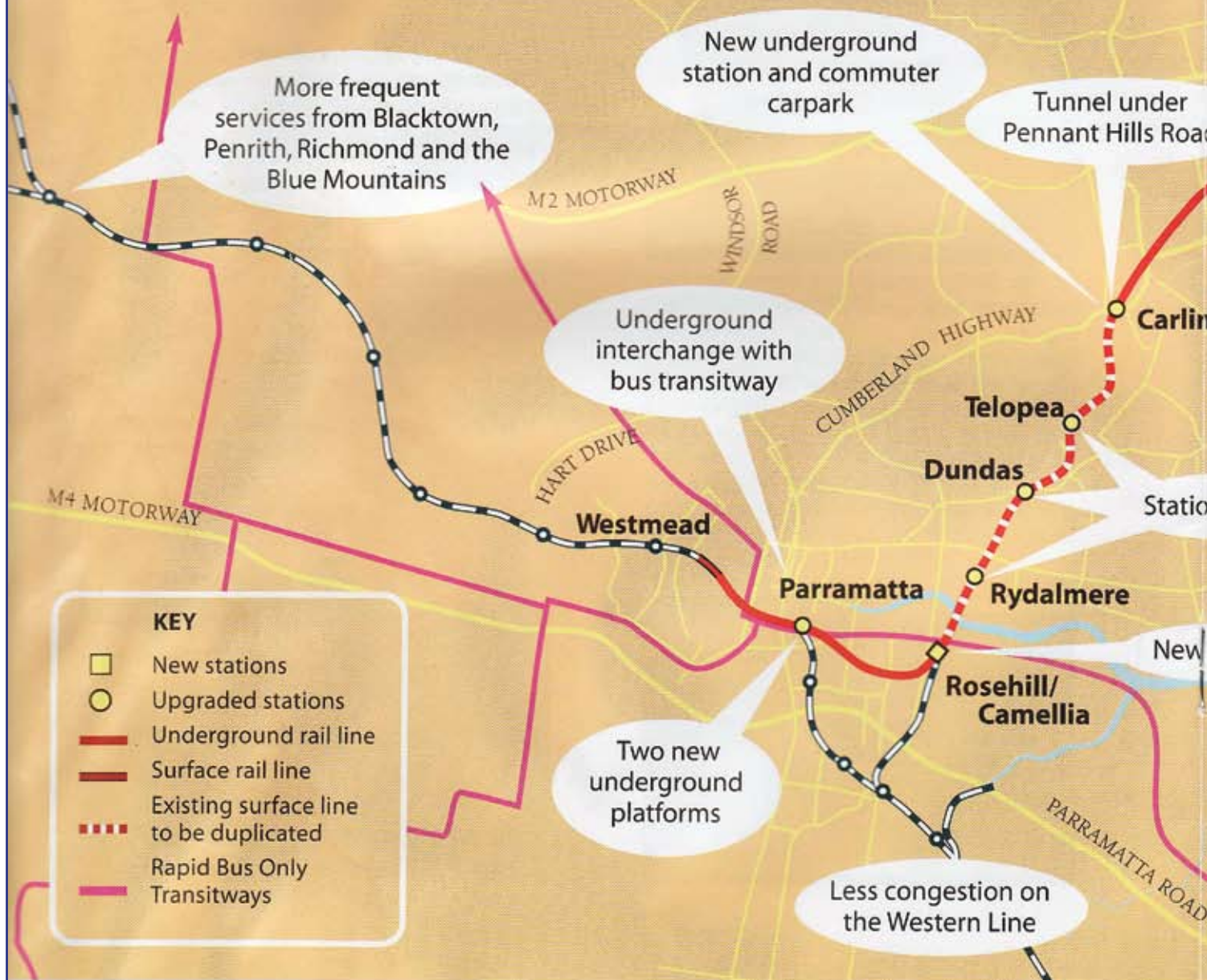
As it might have been

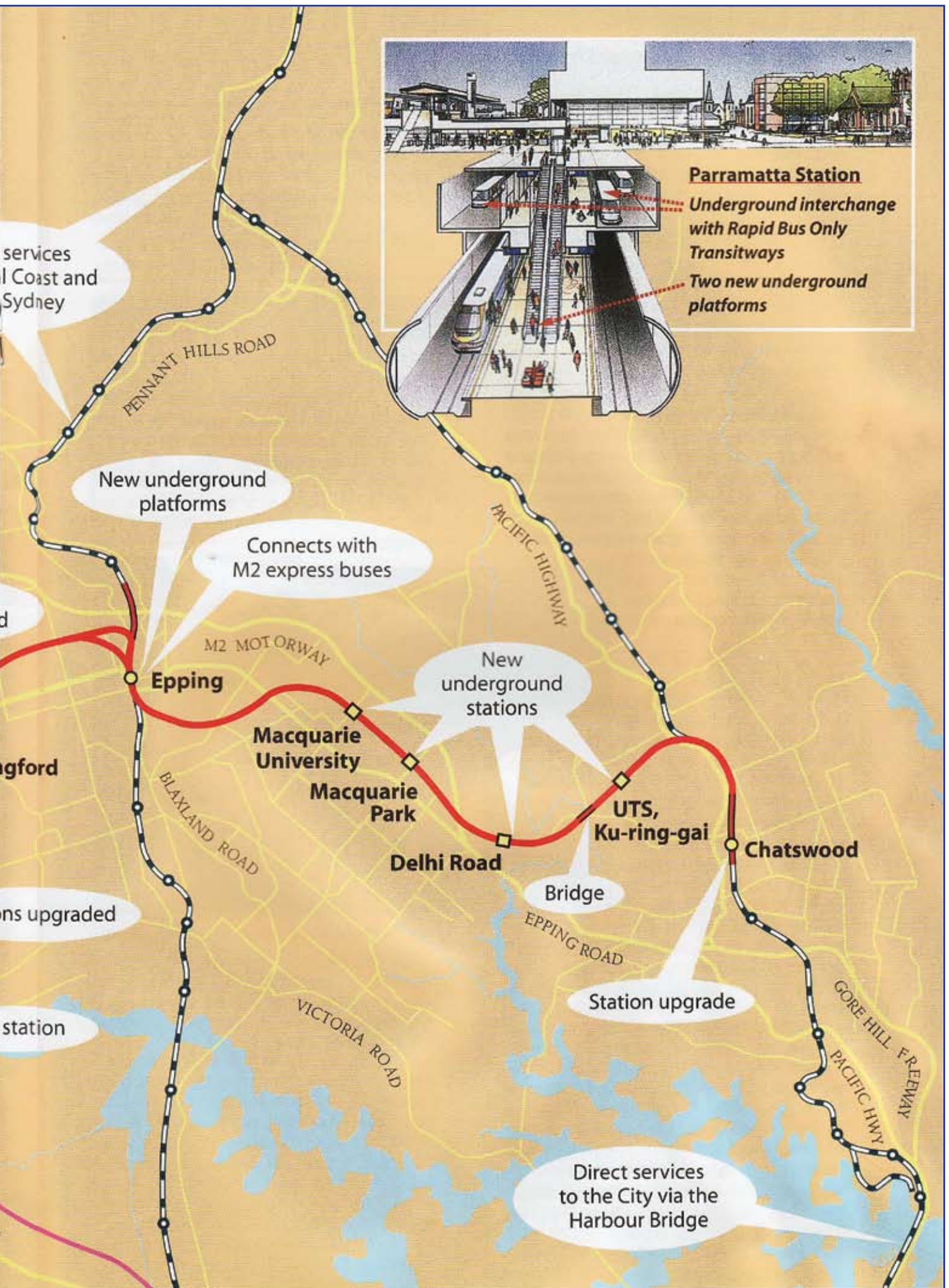
Ross Willson and Randal Wilson have supplied this interesting scan of a leaflet of Chatswood to Parramatta Railway as originally proposed.

Parramatta Rail Link

The \$1.4 billion, 27 km Parramatta Rail Link will connect Parramatta and Chatswood via Epping. Seventy per cent will be underground in a tunnel. It will be open by 2006.

- Travel times for residents in western, south-western and north-western Sydney will be cut by 25 minutes.
- Five new stations will be built and the rest upgraded with improved security and easy access.
- Connections will be added to the 90 km Rapid Bus Only Transitways now under construction.







RIGHT:
On January Scott Mitchell photographed Metro Light Rail car 2105 turning from the Railway Colonnades ramp into Hay Street on a Lilyfield service whilst displaying a striking overall advertising colour scheme.

LEFT:
On 28 January Derek Rogers photographed the East and West entrances of Maxquarie Park Station facing each other across a busy roadway.

RIGHT:
The West entrance of Macquarie University Station, surrounded by construction material was photographed by Derek Rogers on 28 January.



LEFT:
Again on 28 January the other entrance was photographed by Derek Rogers with the Cinema complex at Macquarie Centre in the background.



SOUTH AUSTRALIA Adelaide



TransAdelaide General Manager Bill Watson resigned on 17 January 2008.

Adelaide Trams

The new South Road overpass is to have an elevated platform with lifts and a bike/walking ramp with some themed protective screens along with a small interchange with the various bus routes along South Road.

TASMANIA



Following a number of serious assaults on drivers a trial of safety screens will commence this month. Although Metro employs a number of transit police who ride buses on troublesome routes, the number of attacks on drivers appears to have increased last year.

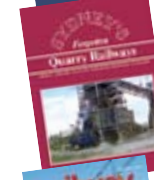
Fares: Metro simplified its fare structure on 27 January. There are now only three cash fares and three 10-trip fares for non-concession adults compared with five such fares previously. As a result two fares in this category have been reduced by 10 or 20 cents and three have been increased by 10 or 20 cents. There are no changes to the section boundaries. The simplification of the fare structure and the types of tickets available to passengers was recommended by the Government Prices Oversight Commission in 2006.

Metro has claimed that fares for 99% of adults will also be in whole dollar amounts; \$2.00 for one to four sections and \$3.00 for five to ten sections. There is a charge of \$4.50 for 11 plus sections. A new All-Day Rover with no restrictions on its use on the day of issue will be sold for \$6.00 on the bus.

A number of important changes have been made to the fare structure for concession passengers. Prior to 27 January Metro had different fares for adult concession passengers, tertiary students and seniors and the ticket options for these groups also differed. Adult concession passengers, full time university or TAFE students are now eligible for all Metro Concession Fares and have access to the same ticket options. Fares for the standard concession trip (any distance) increased by 10c to \$1.80 and the price of the off-peak day ticket, the Day-Tripper, increased by 20c to \$2.80.



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Two new tickets for concession passengers have become available. A concession monthly, providing unlimited travel for a calendar month is sold for \$57.60 and an All-Day-Tripper, sold on the bus, is available for \$3.40 with no restrictions on the time of use.

There were no changes to the fares or ticket types available for primary and secondary students or child passengers.

The new fares apply to all Metro urban services and there were increases on the Bothwell country service. However there were no changes to the fares on the regional services to New Norfolk and the Channel.

A very clear explanation of the Metro fare structure and ticket types appears on the Metro web site: www.metrotas.com.au



LEFT:
This composite panoramic image by Harold Winthrop shows the scene at North Melbourne station on 4 January. Major work is underway to construct a new concourse at the city end of the station to assist transfers between V/Line and metropolitan trains running 'direct' to Flinders Street and those accessing the City Loop. From the beginning of March a new high-frequency bus service links North Melbourne station to Royal Melbourne Hospital, the Women's and Children's Hospital and Melbourne University.

OPPOSITE PAGE:
On 18 January Gordon Bennett photographed SW6 884 as it approached the La Trobe Street bridge running Special out of the Docklands, with a very colourful building in the background.

Launceston

In a commendable development of its ever improving relationship with the community, a full page Metro advertisement was published in The Examiner on 26 January summarizing the performance of the massive 25 November 2007 changes and, in particular, summarizing the feedback from customers. Initial patronage growth is very encouraging, especially when one takes into account that most University and TAFE passenger traffic had ceased for the year when the new route structure and timetables were introduced. Overall patronage has increased by 8% with quite spectacular results at weekends. Passenger numbers are up 20% on Saturdays and 50% on Sundays. With the return of tertiary students, patronage on the night time buses is likely to increase further. The high frequency corridor to Mowbray (every 10 minutes on weekdays) and the direct Henry Street route from City to Ravenswood have been particularly well supported.

Metro outlined the fine tuning it had already undertaken on the network since November such as introducing extra Saturday trips to Alanvale and Mayfield and an early morning bus to Prospect. In its advertisement Metro promised to undertake reviews in six other areas over the next few months: Youngtown (services to Bluegum Road, Alma Street and Myrtle Road); Riverside (Pomona Road North); Ravenswood (to City via Vermont Road); Waverley (Emita Parade/Kigoma Street); Westbury Road via Tyler Village and Waverley to Newstead on Saturdays.

It is not surprising that most of the complaints received by Metro about the revised services focused on the elimination of a large number of route diversions. For example, prior to November Metro operated seven route diversions of the main routes in Riverside, an extremely difficult area in which to provide public transport because of the mountainous terrain resulting in small pockets of residential development and a low population density. In restructuring the service three of the diversions were deleted because of very low passenger numbers. Metro has received requests to re-instate the diversions, especially the diversion to Pomona Road North. A further review has been promised.

It was also revealed in the Metro advertisement that the operator intends to progressively introduce new format colour timetables in Hobart and Burnie, based on a modified design of the latest Launceston timetables. Although some diversions of base routes, as depicted on the 25 November Launceston timetables, remain a little confusing, the new format schedules are a vast improvement on what was previously produced for Launceston passengers.

VICTORIA



Long periods of very hot weather in both December and January resulted in major problems with on time running for both V/Line and Connex because of speed restrictions for potential track problems..

A contract was awarded in late January for the installation of "rumble strips" on the road approaches to 180 level crossings.

A Transport Legislation Review is reviewing the Transport Act 1983 to ensure it provides a co-ordinated framework to support and continue to implement transport improvements into the future. The review aims to develop improved objectives for transport decision making by government agencies and improving integration between transport and land use planning. There have been 77 public submissions to the discussion paper which will be used as part of the next step in the review. Many people have participated in workshops, forums and briefings on the proposed objectives for the legislation.

Melbourne

Travel to major events may become easier under a new arrangement that offers event tickets which include public transport travel. Event organisers can apply to Metlink to provide event ticket holders with unlimited travel on public transport on the day of an event. The cost will be incorporated into the overall ticket price.

Platform names for regional trains at Southern Cross Station changed from 1 February. Platforms are no longer referred to as N (north) and C (central), instead they are A or B. Platforms with an A (e.g. 4A) are located between Collins Street and Bourke Street Bridge. Platforms with a B (e.g. 4B) are located north of the Bourke Street Footbridge. The only exception is platform 8S now known as platform 8 South. See:-

www.vline.com.au/ufr/home/news/1196-1.gif

Patronage on public transport is again expected to exceed forecasts for the third financial year in a row, with an anticipated 10 million extra journeys.

The myki Smartcard ticketing system is now running about two years late, with full operation not likely until early next year.

Melbourne Trains

In mid January work to relocate signalling and cables started as part of a project to upgrade Cranbourne Railway Station and construct a new train storage area.

In March, Eltham received an experimental bicycle storage cage which holds up to 18 bicycles. Under the new system, people will register to use the cage and be issued a swipe card after paying a deposit. The cage is similar to some being tested in Perth.

On 22 January work commenced on the \$52 million project to build a second track between Clifton Hill and Westgarth which includes a new bridge for the second track over the Merri Creek. The first stage of works at Clifton Hill involves relocating signalling and cables. The project is scheduled to be completed in 2010.

Connex has increased security on trains after changing the way it patrols and polices the network. From 3 February "Intelligence Based Tasking" sees Authorised Officers target "hotspots" on the network that have been identified through long term analysis of police and Connex data in partnership with Transit Police.

Melbourne Trams

As part of the Think Tram campaign, an advertisement is reminding motorists to keep clear of tram lines.

On 7 February it was officially announced that 5 Citadis trams have been leased from Mulhouse in France. The trams are surplus to requirements in Mulhouse where the building of two short extensions has been deferred. The 5 trams will be allocated to Route 96 from East Brunswick to St Kilda Beach and will release a number of other trams for use elsewhere on the network. The first was due in mid February and all are expected to be in service by September. There will be minor modifications to the new trams at Preston workshops to make them suitable for Melbourne's conditions, including boosting air-conditioning. The lease will run until December 2011.

Regional Victoria

In late January work started on a \$700,000 upgrade of Lara station. The project includes: a new bus interchange; a larger waiting room; a new kiosk; a new staffroom/meals area; new toilets for staff and customers; structural improvements to the building; painting and landscaping improvements. While the work is carried out, a temporary ticket office, waiting room and toilet facilities are situated in the car park. The project is scheduled to be completed by the middle of the year.

Signalling problems on Connex's Pakenham line led to the cancellation of some of V/line Gippsland services for some weeks until testing allowed reopening on 29 January.

Metlink have announced that from 31 January services between Seymour and Albury are taking up to 30-45 minutes longer because of "the condition of the track between Seymour and Wodonga. ... Plans to undertake significant maintenance work between Seymour and Wodonga are pending a Government decision about the future of the line." Locomotive hauled passenger trains have had their speed restricted to 80 km/h. There has been a persistent rumour for some time that the broad gauge line is to be closed with portions of it converted to standard gauge "passing lanes" with all passenger services operating on standard gauge.

From 28 January Colac local bus services were increased under the Regional Bus Improvement Program with 114 weekly services instead of 20. There is one new route and extended service on two existing routes. The Colac City Bus Service provides: three bus routes (West, East and South); 21 services per day from 0800 to 1800 on weekdays; 9 services on Saturday mornings. The new services will be reviewed after 18 months.

Similarly, Portland has an increase in services from 28 to 70 per week from 11 February. The two existing routes have been extended and are operated by a low floor vehicle. Saturday services are offered for the first time.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA Regional Western Australia



Should Perth and Bunbury have a high-speed intercity passenger rail service built between them and if so, when? These are the two questions to be answered by a feasibility study into a potential new fast rail service from Perth to Bunbury. The study will look at a modern diesel train that would use the new electrified line from Perth to Cockburn Central and then proceed down the median of the Kwinana Freeway and the new Perth to Bunbury Highway. The new and more direct route could reduce travel time by at least a third, to about one and a half hours, based on train speeds of up to 160 km/h. The study is expected to be completed in the first half of next year.

Perth Perth Trains

A long term plan has been announced to build a new oval at Subiaco with up to 70,000 seats. Part of the plan includes changes to rail facilities at the site.

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

Auckland Buses

North Shore bus commuters are the first to use the Auckland Regional Transport Authority's first step towards the introduction of a single transferable ticket, the Northern Pass.

Auckland Trains

From 29 January commuters transferring at Newmarket between the western line and the southern line have to take a 10 minute walk. From that date western line trains were able to use a new curve instead of the reversing into or out of Newmarket Station. Two temporary stations have been completed at Newmarket. One is at Kingdon Street and is called Newmarket West for western line services and the other on Remuera Road, called Newmarket South, for the southern line. Ontrack says the temporary stations reduce disruption to services while the new station is built and gives a large, safe, construction area.

A special train from Auckland to Helensville ran on 23 February as part of the promotion for the new Helensville to Auckland commuter service starting in July.

Wellington

Wellington Trains

All of the electric locomotives of the EO class that formerly worked through the Otira Tunnel in the mountains of the South Island are now to be returned to traffic in the Wellington suburban area.

SOUTH EAST ASIA

REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE

Singapore

After five years of construction, the Kim Chuan Depot is now ready to provide maintenance support for the soon to open Circle and Downtown Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) Lines. The underground structure will provide stabling of the trains, maintenance and operational control of the two rail lines. Kim Chuan Depot is 17 m underground and covers 11 hectares. 16 trains have arrived at the depot so far with another 24 to be delivered by the end of this year. The depot can hold 77 trains. The depot has a central warehouse for the Circle Line, storing three to five years worth of materials and spare parts.

Singapore is to build two new MRT lines at a cost of SGD 20 billion. One will run from Marina Bay and end at Woodlands parallel to the present North-South route adding new townships like Sin Ming, Kebun Baru, Thomson and Kim Seng. The other will mirror the eastern portion of the East-West Line, running through Tanjong Rhu, Siglap, Marine Parade and Bedok South. By 2018 and 2020, respectively, the 18-station Thomson Line and the 12-station Eastern Region Line will be completed. There will also be extensions to the existing lines to be completed by 2015. The North-South Line will be extended to Marina South to take commuters to the upcoming Gardens by the Bay and the Marina Barrage. And workers at the Jurong Industrial Estate will be able to make use of the five-station Tuas Extension to get to work. The Government will also open the Thomson and West Coast stations along the Circle Line by 2012, reversing a 2003 directive to defer their opening because of projected low activity in the vicinities. By 2020, the number of MRT stations will almost double from 110 stations to 210. The rail network density, including the Light Rapid Transit system, will increase from 31 km per million persons to 51 km per million persons, passing Tokyo and Hong Kong. People who live, work or visit the CBD will, on average, be 400 m from a station.

In February 83 additional trips per week were added to the network.

INDUSTRY

Connex Melbourne has appointed Jonathan Metcalfe, former Chief Executive Officer of Great North Eastern Railway in the United Kingdom, as its new Chairman.



TOP:
On 17 February Scott Mitchell was at a publi9c exhibition in Adelaide of Adelaide Council's new Designline built solar powered bus. For further details see the Transit Newsfile item in the March 2008 issue of TA.



CENTRE:
Glen Balcombe photographed Perth's new MAN NG313 CNG articulated bus at the Malaga depot at Morley on 24 January, before it was ready to enter service.

BELOW:
On 12 December 2007 Hugh Ballment photographed B2 class tram 2008 in the street outside Hawthorn Depot. Note the mix of trolley bus and tram type overhead with the long hangers and twin pull-offs which is the current Melbourne style of overhead.



Around the World - Hong Kong

All photos by Alan Mortimer



ABOVE:

On 5 March 2007 at Central on Hong Kong Island Star Ferry *Northern Star*, built in Hong Kong in 1959, was working the service between Central and Kowloon on the mainland. Note that the pier and terminal at Central are now in the form of a new “traditional” structure opened in 2006. Another Star Ferry was arriving as *Northern Star* was about to depart.

LEFT:

This photograph was taken at Tsim Sha Tsui East in Kowloon on 5 March 2007 and shows the platform with a train waiting to depart for Lo Wu. Note the platform doors fitted throughout underground stations in Hong Kong on the MTR. Later in 2007, the Mass Transit Rail Corporation (MTR) and Kowloon Canton Rail Corporation (KCRC) operations were merged into one company.



LEFT:

At Tin Hau on Hong Kong Island on 8 March 2007 Tram 22, built in 1954, stops at one of the typical stops, squeezed in between the tracks and the roadway. 22 is one of many with an all over advertising livery. Travel by tram is slow, but it carries a flat fare of HKD 2, 32 cents in Australia, cheaper than the buses and the MTR over equivalent distances.

RIGHT:

At Un Long in the New Territories on 9 March 2007 LRT 1017 (Comeng) and trailer 1203 (Kawasaki) are seen in the main street heading for the new KCRC Station terminus. Note how the two LRT lanes with stations have been fitted in to the existing environment. It can be done! Also, the lack of private cars and kerbside parking is a big advantage for the frequent bus services. Public transport is the way to travel in the New Territories.



LEFT:

On 10 March 2007 at Kowloon Tong in Kowloon a 12 car (refurbished Metro Cammell) KCRC train arrives at Kowloon Tong on the 34 km line between Tsim Sha Tui East and Lo Wu at the Chinese border. Kowloon Tong is one of two stations with a direct passenger link with the MTR. Trains run frequently, every 2 to 5 minutes and on time.



OPPOSITE PAGE

LEFT:

At Wu Kai Sha in the New Territories East on 6 March 2007 is the interior of one of the trains on the Ma On Shan Line, built by Kinki Sharyo and delivered in 2004. These are stark, but functional and typical of other EMUs in Hong Kong and in much of South East Asia.

RIGHT:

At Tin King in the New Territories on 6 March 2007 Comeng LRT 1021 departs Tin King on the Tuen Mun LRT network. The New Territories has many such tower blocks as those seen in the background.

BOTTOM:

On 7 March 2007 at Sunny Bay on Lantau Island a modified MTR train at the platform at the junction station with the Tung Chung line. The 3.4 Km line to Disneyland Resort is automatic and was opened in August 2005. Note the Mickey Mouse silhouette windows.

THIS PAGE:

RIGHT:

Bus stops in Hong Kong apply to each of three companies, resulting in a confusing variety of signs at many bus stops. The queue railings live on from colonial days. While the rail side of things are World class, the bus infrastructure needs much improvement. This photograph was taken in Nathan Road Kowloon on 9 March 2007.

BOTTOM:

This photograph was taken at Admiralty Station on Hong Kong Island on 9 March 2007 which is a major interchange station on the Hong Kong Island line. Waves of people make a cross platform interchange between this and the Tseun Wan Line during peak periods.



The Essen O-Bahn – an explanation

Simon Smiler

I read with interest John Beckhaus' article in TA of December 2007 about the unexpected challenges being faced with sourcing a replacement fleet of low floor articulated buses for Adelaide's O-Bahn. I understand that, although the reasons were different, Essen has also faced a similar challenge. But after trials in September 2007 with a Mercedes/Citaro 'Facelift' low floor articulated bus (which apparently is a new design that had just been introduced to the Citaro range), Essen has now ordered some of these for use on their O-Bahn lines.

Once the initial post war recovery had been completed, Essen, similarly to a number of other West German cities, started to spend large amounts of money relocating its tram systems from congested city centre streets to underground tunnels. It was felt desirable to further increase the benefits of that expenditure by making it possible for bus passengers to enjoy congestion-free journeys underground too.

To this end, in 1979 an agreement was reached between the local transport operator, Essener Verkehrs-AG, and the German Federal Ministry of Research and Technology, whereby the latter would fund the development of a project which would see buses sharing part of the underground tunnel network with the metre gauge tramway. This would entail perfecting two recent German designed innovations in bus transport: the 'self-steering' kerb guided bus and the twin system diesel/electric 'Duo-bus'. The means was a phased program of testing and evaluation over two quiet suburban private rights of way which, if successful, could eventually be linked via the city centre to provide a 'dual-mode-bus' demonstration system.

The first section of busway opened on 28 September 1980. Located in south-west Essen, it featured two sections of trackage separated by a narrow road bridge. One section was an approximately 1.3 km stretch of long abandoned tram right of way alongside Fulerumer Strasse, while a shorter second section, about 350 m in length, was located in the median strip of Wickenburger Strasse. This route is entirely on the surface and the buses were always diesel operated. It is served by Route 147.

The second section of busway was formally opened on 19 May 1983 with regular passenger services commencing 10 days later. This trialled 'track sharing' by metre gauge trams, diesel and duo-buses along a 0.9 km section of reserved track located in the median strip of Wittenberg Strasse, a dual carriageway located in the south of the city. This busway is also still open although nowadays all overhead wiring has been removed. It is served by diesel buses on Routes 145, 146 and tram replacement Route 142.

The third phase was expected to be underground operation but, instead, was the conversion of the tramline serving the north eastern

suburb of Kray. This included a section of segregated tramline located in the median of the A430 Ruhrschnellweg urban motorway. So as not to have to completely withdraw local services from the four intermediate stops this was achieved one track at a time, with tram services ending and partial kerb guided bus services commencing on 29 September 1985. The reason why this line was converted is somewhat bizarre as, apparently, the trams were being blamed for traffic chaos in Kray and instead of either introducing a traffic management system or re-locating the tracks somewhere more convenient it was found that by including this line as part of the dual-mode-bus demonstration system an alternative solution could be found, with someone else paying!

Initially the new services were provided by motor buses. However there were concerns about the negative effects on human health from the buses' diesel exhaust fumes as they passed through Kray's narrow streets, which were frequently thronged with shoppers. Therefore early 1987 saw the duo-buses used on Route 147 travelling through Kray as ordinary driver steered trolleybuses. Nowadays buses on Routes 146 and 147 still use this busway, although trolleybus operation has been discontinued.

Underground operation finally began on 24 September 1988. This involved Routes 145 and 147 both of which used the duo-buses. Route 146, which also operated on two sections of O-Bahn elsewhere in Essen but generally did not travel through the tunnels, mostly continued to use kerb guided diesel buses.

Initially underground bus services worked very well. In 1991 duo-bus services, along with tram services, were extended through a 1.6 km tunnel extension, since the extended bus service called at several stations with central island platforms, the buses were fitted with off-side doors.

After this things started to go wrong as, apparently, the signalling system was unable to cope with the number of services operating through the tunnels. As a result the buses were temporarily banned from the tunnels and replaced by trams operating in multiple-unit mode. Eventually the problem was resolved and for a few years shared bus and tram operation continued with reasonable success.

The dual-mode-bus demonstration system project was officially terminated at the end of 1995. It was this, combined with the consequential inability to tap into Federal Government funding for the replacement of some worn out experimental joint bus/tram trackage within the tunnels, which led to the September 1995 permanent cession of subterranean O-Bahn operation.

Experience gained since the project first began, including the short time that the buses had been using the tunnels, confirmed that both kerb guided operation in itself and the ultimate aim of track sharing between metre-gauge trams and kerb guided trolleybuses/buses did work both on the surface and underground. Essen's system was primarily built for developing, testing and evaluating the technology involved. The only section that has any real operational justification is the route to Kray. However, if the tunnel, the intended end result, were still open to buses, then it also would be of some use, especially at busy times when buses suffer from the congestion the tunnel was meant to solve.

John Beckhaus points out that the history of the O-Bahn in Essen was a problem when he wrote the article on Adelaide. As can be seen above the development and the use of the system in Essen was not straight forward. John attempted to limit what was said about Essen to those parts that related to developments in Adelaide.

On 26 May 2004 in Schonscheid Strasse in Essen John Beckhaus photographed EVAG bus 3765 working on the Essen O-Bahn.



Kerang Level Crossing Accident

In mid February the Chief Investigator, Transport and Marine Safety Investigations in Victoria issued a report into the fatal level crossing accident at Kerang on 5 June 2007,

The recommendations in the report were listed by the several organisations involved -

V/Line Passenger Pty Ltd

1) The location of passenger trains on the Victorian non-urban network is not directly monitored by train control (Control). Following a rail incident, immediate advice to Control is required to be made by the train driver. There is potential for this advice to be delayed because of driver incapacitation or radio malfunctions.

Recommended - That V/Line Passenger Pty Ltd reviews the method by which the location of trains is determined with a view to implementing a system that allows 'real time' location of all trains.

2) During the emergency call from the train driver to Control, train controllers did not determine the location of the incident.

Recommended - That V/Line Passenger Pty Ltd reviews procedures to improve radio protocols and in particular provide a more robust system of obtaining information from train crews in the event of an onboard emergency.

3) Approaching the whistle board the train horn was sounded for a duration of less than half of a second. The length of horn blast at a whistle board is not specified in the Victorian Book of Rules. Horn blasts of such short duration do not provide an adequate warning to motorists or pedestrians of an approaching train.

Recommended - That V/Line Passenger Pty Ltd reviews the use of train horns and prescribes a minimum duration for the horn to be sounded at whistle boards.

4) Following the incident the train driver and conductors commented that the first aid kits were not adequately equipped to deal with some injuries. Also, the train driver was not issued with keys to allow him to un-stow the egress ladder.

Recommended - That V/Line Passenger Pty Ltd reviews onboard emergency equipment provided to train drivers and conductors to ensure that they are adequately able to deal with foreseeable incidents on trains. That drivers and conductors be trained in the use of any new equipment provided.

5) Locomotives operated by some other Australian rail operators are configured so that the ditch lights flash when the locomotive warning horn is activated. This has the potential to make the locomotive more conspicuous to vehicle drivers and pedestrians in the vicinity of some level crossings.

Recommended - That V/Line Passenger Pty Ltd considers configuring locomotives they operate so that ditch lights flash when the locomotive warning horn is sounded.

6) The N class passenger car seating design predates modern crashworthiness standards.

Recommended - That V/Line Passenger Pty Ltd reviews the seating used in N Class passenger cars against contemporary industry crashworthiness standards.

7) A number of passengers suffered glass related injuries.

Recommended - That V/Line Passenger Pty Ltd considers alternatives treatments which have the potential to reduce glass related injury.

VicRoads

1) The maximum vehicle speed over the level crossing on the Murray Valley Highway was 100 km/h. At this speed the time for motorists to react and make a decision on the correct action to take at a level crossing is limited.

Recommended - That VicRoads reviews road vehicle speeds approaching level crossings with a view to limiting vehicle speeds to provide additional decision time for motorists.

2) Unlike the operators of other commercial transport modes, the drivers of heavy road vehicles are not required to be reassessed at regular intervals throughout their driving careers.

Recommended - That VicRoads considers the regular reassessment and education of heavy road vehicle drivers with a view to maintaining their standard of operations and knowledge of their driving environment.

The Department of Infrastructure

Passenger cars are typically not designed to withstand side impact by road vehicles.

Recommended - That the department reviews the adequacy of current crashworthiness standards applied to passenger-carrying rolling-stock in Victoria with particular focus on side impact loading.



On 26 June 2006 Bob Wilson photographed a train crossing the Middleborough Road level crossing at Laburnum, now replaced by a road bridge and cutting.

As We Were

This photograph was taken on the Up Main between Ashfield and Lewisham on a Saturday morning in 1959 by Robert Ashley. The original photograph was an Anscochrome 35 mm slide and seems to have been stored in ideal conditions with very little deterioration.

THE FISH and U SETS Ross Willson

This splendid view of an interurban set displaying a nameboard recalls an episode in the history of The Fish (the Blue Mountains district's business train from Sydney to Mount Victoria).

The source of the name cannot be positively substantiated. Writing in the October 1943 issue of the Australasian Railway and Locomotive Historical Society's Bulletin, "Inquirer" expressed the view that the name of the driver of this train, a John Heron, had been corrupted by the staff at Penrith "... where he was known as "the fish" "his name having been locally corrupted to 'Herring', which nickname was later transferred from the man to the train he usually handled." "Inquirer" pointed out that it seemed likely that Heron's fireman was named Scott and thus anyone claiming otherwise would have to track down the legendary fireman with a fish name who fired for Heron. "Inquirer" concluded with the comment that: "In one way it is a pity to debunk the legend but as it has such a good start with such a widespread following, there will not be many people outside our own circle who will know the true story even if the mythical fireman cannot be located."

Subsection 74(III) of the Government Railways Act, 1888 required the triennial gazettal of a list of railway employees. A perusal of the names of people employed at Penrith and Eskbank so published on 24 June 1891 discloses nobody whose name had avian or piscine associations.

The 80 interurban cars, CF 5001-5040, TF 5001-5020 and ETB 6021-6040 (which were to have been buffet trailers RF 6601-6620), were constructed by Commonwealth Engineering at Granville. They were placed in service between 1958 and 1960 while some had been delivered previously. TF 6006-6009 were hauled to Lithgow by 4625 on 22 June 1957 for the official opening of the penultimate section of the Western line electrification from Mount Victoria to Lithgow. Electric operation between Lithgow and Bowenfels commenced on 18 June 1957 and last operated on 31 August 1973. Notwithstanding that electric operation as far as Lithgow had commenced on 9 June, the Lithgow City Council took the view that electric operation only commenced with the official opening. This municipal attitude has since caused widespread confusion among some commentators.

While some trains, including The Chips, the other named Blue Mountains train, had been electrically hauled as far as Valley Heights since 5 November 1956, electric traction took over from steam on assistant engines from Penrith or Valley Heights to Katoomba on 2 February 1957. Electric haulage of The Fish commenced on 8 February on a test to confirm calculated running times when it was hauled as far as Katoomba by 4612. This train consisted of the 10 car set (SOB 102), a FS corridor car and the DMC dynamometer car for a total of 370 tons. The train was hauled by a standard goods locomotive between Katoomba and Mount Victoria. The last steam hauled Fish operated on 2 March the engine being 3659. Electric operation as far as Mount Victoria commenced on 6 March.

In the timetable of 21 June 1964 The Fish was identified as 57 Express conveying passengers to Springwood and all stations to Mount Victoria returning as number 10 the following day on Mondays to Saturdays. The Chips were 47 and 48 and ran as far as Springwood on Mondays to Fridays.

The operation of the multiple unit cars in ordinary service did not commence until 15 September 1958 in the case of The Fish and 15 December 1958 in the case of The Chips which operated as far as Valley Heights. The elimination of buffet services was a source of much



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discontent as was the loss of the club-like privacy afforded by the side-corridor type wooden carriages.

Writing in The Railway News of April 1996 Peter Neve recorded that the inaugural train consisted of Set U1 (5006, 6009, 6022, 5005, 5008, 6016, 6021, 6008 and 5007) and that the last working from Sydney on 23 February 1996 comprised 5020, 6009, 6031, 5028 (U9) and 5022, 6004, 6025 and 5026 (U5). Single deck trains ceased operation on the Western line on 26 February 1996 ex Mount Victoria.

The electrically heated (since 8 July 1940) steam hauled set (SOB 102) had carried The Fish side mounted name boards with cream cream lettering. In the case of the multiple-unit stock, the painted metal sign shown in the photograph was clipped to the gangways at either end in the case of both of these named business trains.

MEMBERSHIP ENQUIRIES

Membership enquiries are welcomed to the contact person in each Division, as listed below. People in other areas should contact their nearest Divisional Secretary.

NEW SOUTH WALES DIVISION

Meets on the third Friday of each month except December, at Stone Hall, 181 Blues Point Road North Sydney at 8.00 pm. The venue is a short walk from North Sydney Station. Members and visitors are assured of a warm welcome. Contact: Robert Henderson, GPO Box 1017, SYDNEY NSW 2001; Ph. (02) 9486 3828.

VICTORIAN DIVISION

Contact Colin Robertson on (03) 9531 2651, PO Box 155, Flinders Lane, MELBOURNE, Vic 8009.

Meetings are at Ross House, 247 Flinders Lane Melbourne at 7.30 pm – push the button on the west entrance door for admittance. There is a pre meeting gathering at the rear of Australia on Collins Food Court at 6.00 pm.

Meeting: 11 April – Ian Thiele – History of UK trams.

QUEENSLAND DIVISION

Meets on the last Friday of even-numbered months. (for December contact the Secretary). Contact: Neil Douglas, 12/36 Hillardt St., ROBERTSON, Qld 4109; Ph. (07) 3875 1090.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN DIVISION

Normal meetings are held bi-monthly on 4th Friday February to October. Contact either John Clarke (08) 8277 9079 or Roger Wheaton (08) 8331 9043 for details. Postal address PO Box 8162 Station Arcade SA 5000.

Meeting: 27 June – Roger Wheaton – New Zealand.

ACT TRANSIT GROUP

Meets on the second Thursday of each month at the Canberra Club, West Row (near Alinga Street), City at 1830. Contact: Victor Isaacs Ph. (02) 6257 1742; abvi@webone.com.au

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On 16 May 1962 a new fluorescent illuminated headboard with gold lettering on a blue background was introduced on the Mount Victoria train. A view of set U4B including the official party, one of whom was the last Commissioner for Railways (Neal McCusker CBE [1907-1987]), can be found in the July 1962 issue of the Australian Railway Historical Society's Bulletin.

Double deck interurban cars were introduced on the Blue Mountains service on 22 May 1975 to Mount Victoria and 19 November 1978 to Lithgow. The Fish had been formed by new double deck air-conditioned cars since 9 January 1978. The Fish and The Chips designations were last shown in the public timetable book of 21 May 2000 for the Blue Mountains Line, but not in that of 24 July 2004. However, they were restored in that of 28 May 2006 and are included in the version available on

www.cityrail.info

