

TRANSIT NEWS AND VIEWS

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The Newsletter of the Public Transport Users' Association Incorporated.
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The Public Transport Users' Association

The PTUA is a voluntary non-profit organization of public transport users. It has no political affiliations.

Its function is to lobby the Government for a modern, adequate, efficient public transport system. Our plan for improved public transport calls for optimum use of trains, trams and buses in the interests of our scarce fuel resources, and protection of the environment. It also calls for the incorporation of the advantages of the various modes of transport in the most cost-efficient and energy-efficient manner.

The PTUA prepares briefs and submissions, liaises with transport managers through regular meetings, makes representations to the Transport Minister on suggestions, complaints and the like. It conducts media interviews, speaks at public meetings, prepares articles and letters to the press, and publishes and distributes leaflets.

The PTUA is affiliated with Transport 2000 International, a federation of like organizations in other countries.

Meetings

Members are invited to attend PTUA Council and annual general meetings.

The PTUA Council meets on the first Wednesday each month (except January) at the YWCA, room 10, Level 3, 489 Elizabeth Street, city at 5.30 pm.

The Annual General Meeting is usually held in July. The business segment of the meeting includes election of office-bearers and the presentation of annual reports.

Membership

Membership includes regular issues of our informative newsletter for the basic subscription of \$6 annually (\$10 for two years). A concession membership is available for \$4 a year (\$6 for two years). Those who can afford to are invited to become Donor Members at \$15 per year (\$25 for two years), or to make donations towards the cost of printing, postage, hire of halls and so on. All members have equal status.

Newsletter

Transit News & Views is published by the PTUA primarily for its members. The intended readership also includes members of parliament and the press, radio and television. The content of *Transit News & Views* is often of a different kind from what one might normally find in a newsletter. Articles may be informative and/or opinionated and/or have a distinct lobbying bent.

Members are encouraged to contribute articles to the newsletter. Members may like to assist in its preparation on a regular or casual basis.

Articles

Articles submitted for inclusion in the newsletter must be **double-spaced**, whether typed or hand-written. Articles should, wherever possible, be typed.

Because a great deal of manual labour is involved in preparing each issue of *Transit News & Views*, mistakes occasionally occur. If you should receive a faulty copy of the newsletter, ring [redacted] for a new copy.

TRANSIT NEWS-N-VIEWS

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Typsetting:

Proofreading:

Robin Vowels

Robin Vowels

Ray Walford

We'd like to be able to acknowledge in the same issue those tireless workers who assemble the Newsletter and prepare the mailing out, but that isn't possible because the Newsletter is printed first. Instead, we include the names of those who have assisted in recent issues, and without whose help none of this would be possible.

John Alexopoulos, Peter Brownbill, Margaret Pullar, Robin Vowels, Ray Walford.

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Ray Walford.....

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Address subscriptions and payments for discount tickets to Hon. Treasurer PTUA, [redacted], Rosanna 3084.

CLOSURES: THE NEW SPECTRE

Readers of *Transit News & Views* will be aware of the unprecedented number of rail lines being closed by the Government. Fifteen country lines were closed in 1986. In 1987, the important freight line from Bairnsdale to Orbost was closed, and services on the Vineland were curtailed.

Even more savage cuts are proposed — worse than the draconian recommendations of the 1980 Lonie Report.

What one needs to be aware of is the very subtle means and methods being used to effect these cuts.

It is not an exaggeration to suggest that public opinion is being manipulated, and people are being tricked into thinking that planned schemes of the Ministry bureaucrats are an advantage, whereas in fact they are very costly mistakes.

A typical example of this is the St Kilda and Port Melbourne light rail "improvements". Based on surveys with fraudulent conclusions, the real effect of this scheme is only now being realised as plans of closure of the 10/12 and 15 tram services and of the 201 bus route are becoming a reality.

Investigation by members of the Association has revealed that timetables are not being printed, lines are being let fall into such a state of disrepair that their condition is dangerous, and services are deteriorating to such a degree that patronage is declining.

As in 1981, the Association has taken the initiative in calling public meetings to alert the media and the public as to the consequences of what is taking place.

This is of particular importance because while the former Minister for Transport caused denials of threatened closures to be made in the press, behind closed doors at official meetings (in November, with the Lord Mayor of Melbourne, and the Mayors of South Melbourne, Port Melbourne and St Kilda) he indicated exactly the reverse.

What is behind the erroneous philosophy of the bureaucrats was so well put by a PTUA council member in a letter to the Age, that its contents merit detailed study.

Writes Ray Walford: "... under the State Government's Robin Hood transport policy — rob the transport-rich to give to the transport-poor — Melbourne's inner city public transport is being heavily pruned to finance new services in the outer suburbs.

"I don't begrudge the outer suburbs their services, but the result of this redistribution of transport services will be a **uniformly mediocre service**. [Editor's emphasis]

"If public transport can be effective anywhere in Melbourne it is surely in the inner suburbs." — Patrick O'Connor

MEMORIES FROM IRELAND

A recent article in the Irish Times concerning the issue of postage stamps bearing color sketches of Dublin's trams, brings back to me nostalgic memories.

When I was a lad, there were comfortable double-decker trams travelling to most suburbs of the city of Dublin.

The most singular of the tram trips was the No. 10. It wound its way along the bay, then climbed the hill of Howth. So beautiful was the view that the top deck was uncovered, and the challenge was to board early so that one could get panoramic views of the bay with its harbour inlets on one side, and the world-famous rhododendron gardens of the Howth Domain — the castle estate of Lord Talbot de Malahide — on the other.

When in the dark ages of the 1940s the entire tram network was closed without a whimper of protest, I travelled on the last tram that ever ran in Dublin, the No. 8 to Dalkey. As an indication of the barbarous values that existed in those days, by the time the tram reached its final resting place, there was hardly a seat or removable article that had not been stripped off.

Buses replaced all tram routes where for succeeding generations they have polluted a gracious Georgian city — Dublin.

— Patrick O'Connor

COURT ACTION ON LIGHT RAIL PROJECT

FURTHER REPORT TO MEMBERS

Much publicity was given by the media to the successful hearing in the Supreme Court action — proceedings initiated by the PTUA against the north-south light rail project.

On 28th September Master Evans of the Supreme Court dismissed an application by the Metropolitan Transit Authority to have the action struck out; he decided that the plaintiffs had legal standing to take the action, and ordered costs of the proceedings to be awarded against the MTA.

On 29th September under instructions from Mr Paul Mees Secretary of the PTUA, Mr T. Santamaria applied to Mr Justice Fullagar in the Practice Court of the Supreme Court. This application was for an interim injunction to have work halted on specific areas of the north-south link pending the full hearing of the action.

On 30th September Mr B. Bongiorno Q. C. and lawyers for the MTA applied to the Practice Court appealing against the decision of Master Evans. The hearings lasted two days, and Mr Justice Fullagar reserved his decision.

Two weeks later (13th October), Mr Justice Fullagar handed down his decision in which he held that the plaintiffs did not have legal standing, and the action therefore could not proceed.

At the time of this writing, lawyers were still awaiting the transcript of Mr Justice Fullagar's decision in order to consider whether further action should be taken by appealing to the full court of the Supreme Court.

— Patrick O'Connor

PRAISE WHERE PRAISE IS DUE

The following letter was sent to the Premier following the successful public transport arrangements for the opening of the tennis centre in Flinders Park.

Honorable J. Cain,
Premier of Victoria,
2 Treasury Place,
Melbourne 3000.

Dear Mr Premier,

TRANSPORT FOR TENNIS CENTRE

The Public Transport Users' Association is very pleased that, on the initial day of the tennis centre, the transport service ran so much more smoothly, and that large numbers of people were better serviced than in the case of the tall ships.

This is a gratifying result for all the time and effort that went into the planning of this event.

Yours sincerely,
Douglas Sherman
Vice-President,
Tuesday 12 January 1988

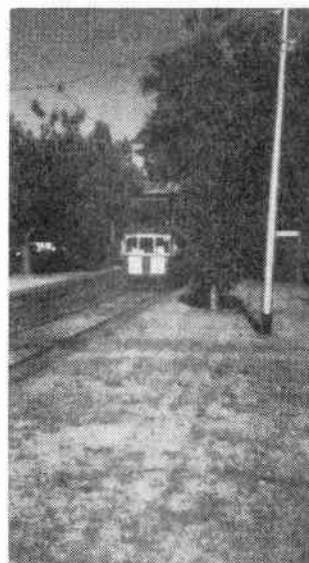
**WE WISH ALL OUR READERS
A GREAT 1988**

THE MELBOURNE TRAM

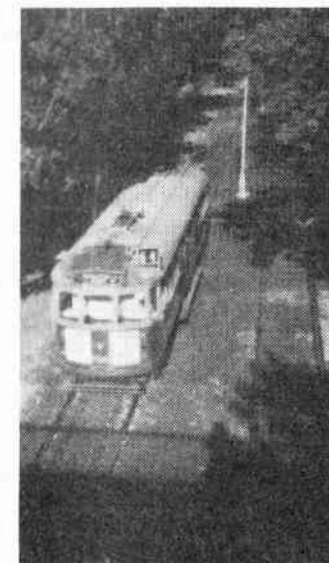
*I think that I shall never scan
A vehicle lovely as a tram.
At once so ample and inspiring
Beneath its webbed electric wiring.
Serving bleak and rain-drenched stops
Outside countless butchers' shops.
More secure than childhood's pram,
That gentle juggernaut, the tram.
Travel near or journey far
(Please move further down the car).
Designed to go in both directions
With little clocks to mark the sections.
Far better than a train or bus
This doyen of the terminus
With its familiar color scheme
Of buttercup and bilious green.
On the zones the crowds await
Their 96 or 48
To take them to their family's bower
At 10 to 15 miles per hour.
Lo, these proud titanic crafts
Regaled by Melbourne's bitter draughts.
While on the roof a fishing rod
Points towards the distant God
And leather pouches full of coins
Jingle on the connie's groins.
Watch the connie's hands so nimble*

*(His thumb within its rubber thimble)
Punching out a shiny snicket
From the two-bob paper ticket.
Fascination never ceases
At those small confetti pieces
Falling to the butt-strewn floor
Or wafting out the windswept door.
One is always thrilled or awed
And never, never Tramways Board
And when you've travelled hills and dales
And want to stop it in its rails?
As you near the place you dwell
Just tug the cord to toll the knell.
I cannot understand the fuss
About the double-decker bus
Which both coming and departing
Fills the air with diesel farting.
Nor should steam's malodorous engines
Provoke such sentiment and legends.
Keep your toffy Rolls and tumbrel
I'm happier to join the humble
Who, twice daily, fight to cram
Themselves on a Melbourne tram.
So let's salute the Morris ploy
The tram is the transport of joy
And cities that have trams no more
Are up the creek without an oar.*

— Anon.



... better than a train or bus ...



...on the roof a fishing rod...



...of buttercup and bilious green.

WHAT YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR: THE GREAT TRAIN STRIKE (RATED AO)

For more than four months, travellers suffered the indignities of threats to their train and tram services, snap strikes, the longest rail strike in 37 years during the most critical time of the year — the Christmas shopping period — not to mention gross overcrowding on trams and buses.

From the commuters' point of view, the biggest problem was one of uncertainty as to whether trains would run or not. Time and time again, commuters' confidence in the system was put to the test.

The rail strike action and unrest has been over two issues:

- (1) the Government's plans to eliminate 1400 railway jobs, including the positions of most guards; and
- (2) a second-tier pay increase of 4%, an increase which would normally be granted only if a corresponding increase in productivity was achieved. Two unions — the Australian Railways Union (ARU) and the Amalgamated Metal Workers Union (AMWU) — would not agree to the productivity increases required by the Government.

The issue of the train radios was merely a catalyst to the central point of eliminating guards. Guards saw the testing of train radios as the means to do away with their jobs. [Earlier this year, guards had gone on strike because they *didn't* have radios!]

This is how the unrest escalated until there were calls — for the second time in a year — to close down the entire public transport system.

11/9/87 Train services to the Show could be disrupted on Thursday 17th. The unrest was over redundancies. *Age*

12/9/87 Threatened industrial action was deferred over the weekend. *The row is over Government plans to axe 1400 jobs.* *Age*

15/9/87 Threat averted. *Age*

21/9/87 Peak-hour trains disrupted from today as a result of union bans. Three trains per day had been taken out of service. Seventeen trains did not run on Friday 19th September. *Sun*

30/9/87 Suburban and country rail services were disrupted for several hours while rail unions held stopwork meetings to discuss progress of their second-tier wage claim. *Age* [The rail union concerned is the ARU; drivers — members of the AFULE — have already won an increase.]

1/10/87 Talks continued in the Arbitration Commission in an attempt to avert a 48-hour rail strike from midnight on Sunday 4th. *Age*

2/10/87 Talks continued. *Age*

3/10/87 Guards imposed bans. There were no trains to Flemington Racecourse. Buses were used instead. There will be no trains on Monday and Tuesday. *Age* 3, 5/10/87

5/10/87 "V/LINE replaces trains with buses. "More bans loom", says the *Age*.

5 & 6/10/87 A two day train strike. Additional trams are put on in the inner city area on 6/10 because of overcrowding on previous day. *Age* 6/10/87

7/10/87 The ARU will not guarantee services because they considered statements by the Minister of Transport to be provocative. *Age* Bans in the freight division were losing \$1 million a day in revenue. \$3 million in freight revenue was lost in the first three days of the week commencing 5/10. *Age* 8/10/87

Sabotage accounted for thousands of dollars' worth of damage done to 8 freight wagons at Tottenham yards. The saboteur(s) were expert in the operation of the train system, according to the then Director-General of Transport Mr R. Ingersoll. The union denied any complicity. *Age* 8/10/87

Three suburban rail lines were closed before the evening peak, after two signalmen at South Kensington Signal Box were stood down for refusing to carry out normal duties.

Around 12,000 passengers on the Werribee, Williamstown, and St Albans lines had to find other ways to get home.

The Sydney Express was delayed for one hour. Passengers on the Overland were transferred to buses for their trip to Adelaide.

Other bans caused delays to most suburban services. (ibid)

9/10/87 Services in the next week were threatened when bans were put on a new timetable to be introduced on Sunday 10th. *Age*

9/10/87 Inner-city rail services were shut down from 10.30am owing to a dispute involving Metrail area controllers.

The Government sought to stand down ARU members if they failed to perform their duties, but the Arbitration Commissioner adjourned the application to Monday 12th. *Age* 10/10/87

10/10/87 There have been no services since 8/10 on the western lines.

Not all freight services operated over the weekend, because of continuing bans at the South Kensington Signal box.

The Fast Track system — considered to be the last chance for V/LINE's freight division — was in jeopardy because of the disruptions. *Age*

12/10/87 Train services are guaranteed today. *Age*

15/10/87 Talks continue . . .

19/10/87 Metropolitan and country rail services were halted for several hours for a stopwork meeting. Union members threaten further action if demands over wages are not met. *Age* 20/10/87

Despite 12 weeks of negotiations between the Government and the ARU and AMWU, agreement still had not been reached over productivity increases related to the second-tier wage rise.

Partial agreement saw the Government moderate its demands for \$12 million productivity improvements from the ARU, and a further \$12.7 million from the AMWU.

The unions, on the other hand, had agreed only to \$8.219 million, or about one-third of the Government's demands.

In spite of the lack of agreement, the Arbitration Commissioner awarded the two rail unions their 4% wage increase, and appointed a former commissioner to liaise with all parties in an attempt to negotiate further cost offsets in order to pay for the wage increase. *Age* 23, 26/10/87

6/11/87 A stopwork meeting was held at South Melbourne tram depot to discuss action against the light rail project. *Herald* 10/11/87

25/11/87 Suburban trains halted for several hours while guards held a stop work meeting to discuss Government plans to phase out their jobs. *Age* The Government plans to cut the number of guards from 600 to about 200. *Herald*

2/12/87 Another stopwork meeting puts suburban trains off for several hours while guards discuss the operation of driver-only trains. *Age*

8/12/87 Train services again threatened over the testing of train radios (which the ARU requested). All train services were halted from 8pm. *Channel 10 News*

9/12/87 There are no trains today. They are expected to be out all week. *Herald* In fact, they will not run until 20th.

10/12/87 No trains today. On 11/12 *The Age* says that trains will be out to next Monday (14th); on 12th, it says they will be out until next Tuesday (15th).

"The second long train strike in four months is costing the state millions of dollars in Christmas trading, absenteeism, wages, and lost fares." *Herald* 11/12. The strike is costing the Met almost \$1½ million a day. *Age* 12/12. City traders are losing \$15 to \$20 million a day in trade. By 16/12, the losses were estimated to have increased to \$20 to \$25 million a day. *Age* 17/12/87.

16/12/87 A total shutdown (including trams and buses) is threatened. *Age*

18/12/87 The PTUA held a minor rally at Princes Plaza, at 12.30 pm. Traders — who had been complaining of losses — did not attend.

Guards voted to return to work on 20/12, after 12 days without trains. The Government backed away from the dispute, agreeing to conduct radio tests (a catalyst in the dispute) only with the consent of the ARU.

[We are at a loss to understand why guards were so stubborn as not to commence duties on Saturday 19th — whole-day trading as well as the last Saturday before Christmas.]

The dispute is estimated to have cost hundreds of millions of dollars in lost retail trading and wages. *Age* 19/12.

Although the guards' strike did not affect country and interstate passenger services, V/LINE experienced a massive drop in freight business because of uncertainty of services. (ibid)

Undoubtedly some customers could not afford to have their freight delivered after Christmas.

Meanwhile, even though the Government agreed on 18/12 to cease the testing of train radios, the MTA called for tenders for expressions of interest to supply train-mounted mirrors and platform mirrors, deliveries to commence from 1st of March 1988 — another device aimed at eliminating guards. Age 21/12/87 Placement of the advertisement could have been construed by the guards as provocative.

The echoes of their words had scarcely time to die away when the Government announced plans to conduct radio tests on Saturday 26th December, despite its recent assurance that it would not do so without agreement with the ARU. Herald 23/12. An ARU spokesman opined that such a move could take out the train system again.

GEELONG TRAIN OVERCROWDING: VICTORY AT LAST

For the past three years we have highlighted the disgraceful travel conditions on the 5.41pm Melbourne to Geelong train.

This train used to consist of the old blue carriages which were dirty, had broken doors, filthy interiors, and were overcrowded, with as many as 50 to 100 passengers forced to stand or sit on the floor for the entire journey. The train frequently ran late, and often passengers had to bear with the rowdy behaviour of loons and hooligans who travelled — unchecked by the rail staff.

PTUA officials David Bowd and Patrick O'Connor accompanied me on a check of the train at Spencer Street Station on 22 October 1987, and met commuters on the train.

On 10th November, I arranged with the Geelong Advertiser and the Melbourne Sun to have their reporters travel on the train. Peter Begg from the Advertiser and Rosanne Michie from the Sun, travelled on this train, and their reports in their respective papers brought further public attention to this problem.

The excuses given by the rail managers for their failure to resolve this problem were pathetic. They claimed there were no spare carriages to strengthen this train to relieve the overcrowding!

Every competent rail administration has to keep a certain percentage of spare rail carriages for such contingencies and as replacement for defective carriages due for normal maintenance.

We had repeatedly suggested that the train schedules be revised to provide a train consist with the new 'N' cars and an additional carriage for this train.

With their usual lack of concern for the travel needs of their customers, the managers showed no interest in this matter.

However, after the two newspaper articles exposed the travel conditions on this train, the [former] Transport Minister announced that a bus would be introduced from Monday 16th November.

It is pathetic that the Government should be seen to act only when they are ridiculed in the media.

How much more ridicule must be poured on them before they get their performances right on the suburban services?

The PTUA thanks the Geelong Advertiser and the Sun for their interest in this issue.

— Ken McIntyre

Footnote: The PTUA wrote to the Minister requesting that the bus service not be dropped at Christmas, and that it should resume in the new year when normal business resumes.

DRAW YOUR OWN CONCLUSIONS

In early November, the Government introduced a bus to supplement the 5.41pm Melbourne to Geelong train, in order to eliminate overcrowding. Herald 19/11/87

A few weeks later, however, the Government rejected rail union demands for 13 new passenger carriages "which the Government did not need". Herald 26/11/87

[The Geelong line is not the only line which has a shortage of N-class passenger carriages.]

TRAM TRACK DETERIORATES

During the past 12 months or so, it has been observed that track in two of the main trunk routes has been deteriorating.

It is quite clear that not only have track faults occurred, they have gone undetected through, presumably, lack of inspections.

On 5th February 1987, the MTA was advised of broken rails at the corner of Lygon & Elgin Streets in Carlton, and in Elizabeth Street south of Collins Street. (The check rail at the former site had been repaired by 9th February, but it was at least a week before the track had been repaired at the latter site.)

In St Kilda Road, track had fallen into such disrepair that joins had broken and become noisy, the rail had subsided near the joins, and the road surface had broken up. Of the repairs that had been made, most of the short lengths of track that had been spliced in and welded were at a different level from the existing track. The ride has become rocky over some of the bad patches. These defects have existed since at least February 1987.

An inspection on 7th February 1988 revealed track faults as shown in the accompanying table:

Section	faults	
	in-bound	out-bound
St Kilda Junction to High Street	3	11
High Street to Commercial Road	10	6
Commercial Road to Domain Road	8	9
Domain Road to Nolan Street	15	8
Nolan Street to Batman Avenue	12	3

The number of faults seems to have increased since inspections that were carried out during 1987. Indeed, some sections of track have been repaired so badly that there is now continuous increased cabin noise (a low roar) for long stretches of the in-bound track.

In Elizabeth Street between Victoria Street & Haymarket, six broken rails were noted at the end of January 1988 on the outbound track. The track had been in this condition well before Christmas. One particular spot at Queensberry street was so bad in early February 1988 that it sounded and felt as if the tram was going over a crossover. In Royal Parade between the Royal Melbourne Hospital and Park Street Brunswick, some 14 outbound and 11 inbound defects were noted in early February.

In Sydney Road, at Reynolds Street, in December, there was a particularly bad broken rail on the in-bound side, which had subsided about 1cm relative to the next rail.

Apart from being noisy (causing a loud bang when traversed at speed), the repeated concussion causes the road to break up, requiring a more expensive repair when finally the fault is attended to. The fault had been repaired by the end of January, but the track was still noisy and rough.

In a number of instances, inferior repairs have been carried out, resulting in fracture of the rail weld again. This may be the result of welding the rails such that the spliced rail is lower than the original rail. As the tram wheels hit the higher rail, the concussion causes the road surface to break up again, and eventually the welds break up too.

Some second-rate repairs to the North Coburg route had been made by the end of January, but the repairs are not keeping pace with the deterioration. A similar remark can be made about the St Kilda Road trunk.

LATE NEWS

During the week commencing 15th February, the MTA "repaired" the Elizabeth Street track between Victoria Street and Haymarket. The "repairs" consisted of electric welding the broken rails in their fractured and subsided position. Thus the track was welded permanently uneven. Because of concussion on the uneven track, the repaired weld at Queensberry Street had broken up again by Saturday 20th February. Going over the track, trams can get up quite a sway.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

TRANSPORT 2000 — World Chairman

In our September issue we incorrectly reported that Harry Gow from Canada was elected as the new World Chairman of Transport 2000.

We apologize for the error, much as we would like Harry in the future to be in that position.

The new World Chairman is John Whitelegg from Lancaster, England, who took over from Dr Pierre Bermond.

John Whitelegg is a lecturer in geography at Lancaster University and, as well as many other things, runs a Transport 2000 group in Lancaster. The enthusiasm and experience John brings to Transport 2000 International is very welcome and we look forward to some exciting work to further the aims of the organization in the years ahead.

Dr Pierre Bermond will continue his association with Transport 2000 International as Honorary President and as Chairman of the European Federation of Transport User Groups.

The PTUA wishes John and Pierre all success in their duties.

— Ken McIntyre

FROM JOHN WHITELEGG IN LANCASTER....

"I am composing this letter as I sit in a public enquiry in Lancaster Town Hall which is sitting to examine proposals to redevelop the town centre and build a new four lane highway through the centre of this city.

The debate and the evidence I am presenting illustrate all the difficulties which we face in trying to bring about a better environment in our cities.

In Lancaster, as elsewhere, the arguments for a bigger shopping centre and more car parking and better motor vehicle access are based on crude notions of economic progress and the inevitability and indeed desirability of car-based journeys. Alternative arguments are dismissed as Utopian or unrealistic and our evidence is fiercely contested by planners, civil engineers and their legal representative who tries to discredit our arguments.

The debate shows that in many ways no progress has been made since the mid 1960s when this sort of thing was very common in the UK. No matter how much progress has been made in Germany or the Netherlands in public transport, cycling provision or plain, sensible land use decisions it is still possible for the proponents of economic growth and large-scale, centralized facilities to dominate the scene and impose bad planning on a largely powerless citizenry.

Under these circumstances it is imperative that organizations like Transport 2000 International get well organized and make their presence felt.

HIGH-SPEED TRAINS AROUND THE WORLD

Here is a list of cities and speeds of inter-city trains from around the world.

France

The TGV: Paris to Lyons — 270 km/h. At this speed, the trip from Melbourne to Sydney could be completed in 2hrs 45 mins!

Japan

Bullet trains: 200 km/h — normal speed 178 km/h.

United Kingdom

High Speed Train (HST) 162 km/h, with speeds of 200 km/h on some sections.

United States of America

Metroliner: New York to Washington 143 km/h.

Canada

Ottawa to Toronto 153 km/h.

West Germany

Hanover to Dortmund 134 km/h. The new Inter City Express has reached test speeds in excess of 300 km/h.

India

The Rajdhani Express 160 km/h.

Plans are afoot for trains running at 200 km/h in Spain, Sweden, Austria and the USSR.

In Australia our major inter city express train speeds are:

Melbourne to Sydney 73 km/h
Melbourne to Adelaide 65 km/h.

— Ken McIntyre

VICTORIAN SNAILS

A survey of 11 countries by Swedish railways has placed Victoria's trains among the three worst for punctuality.

Country	Percentage of late trains	
	more than 5 mins late	more than 15 mins late
Switzerland	7	—
Belgium	8	—
Finland	9	3
Denmark	15	—
France	17	3
West Germany	18	6
Austria	23	9
Norway	26	—
Australia	27	11
Sweden	34	16
Italy	50	26

Herald 4/12/87

CONDUCTOR/GUARDS ON SUBURBAN TRAINS

Our Association supports the need for guards on suburban trains, provided they are utilized in a manner which will provide better service to users, and make a significant improvement in passenger safety and prevent vandalism and ticketless travel.

We have for many years called on the rail management and the unions to agree to our proposal to convert the existing guard to that of a roving conductor, and believe that this change will result in better service to the user.

The duties we propose for a conductor-guard are as follows:

- ★ Continue with existing train safety duties;
- ★ In off-peak hours (that is, from 9.30am to 4pm and after 7pm, the conductor-guard will walk through the train carriages to check and issue travel tickets and check on vandalism, unruly behaviour and assist passengers if required.

We expect the following benefits to be gained:

- ★ Reduction in lost revenue due to ticketless travel and over-riding;
- ★ The guard will check on unruly behaviour, and potential unruly behaviour by drunks and louts. The very presence of an official in uniform walking through the carriages will in most cases be a sufficient deterrent to unruly behaviour. Assistance can be called on the conductor-guard's two-way radio.

The duties proposed for the conductor-guard are successfully implemented in other rail systems in Australia, including Perth, Adelaide and Brisbane, and are used overseas.

— Ken McIntyre

MORNINGTON

The entire rail reservation at the Mornington shopping centre is up for sale.

The Met has called tenders nationally for the sale of seven lots of land at Mornington between the Nepean Highway and Franklin Street.

Tenders close on 12th February 1988.

Selling off the entire reservation will close off forever the possibility of a future rail service.

— *Weekend Australian* 28-29 November 1987

SANDRINGHAM LINE

Work is being undertaken on the Sandringham line to enable Comeng trains to run. *Sun* 10/10/87, *Age* 7/11/87

[Comeng trains are wider than Tait, Harris and Hitachi silver trains. Comeng trains could not run in the western suburbs until platforms were shaved and tracks moved further apart.]

The work at Brighton Beach station which attracted the notice of a reader because of the negligent damage done to cable ducting, involved shaving the platform face to accept the wider Comeng trains, and involved relaying signalling cables in the platform itself.

The Harris trains which presently operate were specifically refurbished recently for this line, and at considerable expense (complete refitting, asbestos removal and airconditioning).

Does this mean that the Government is to scrap these trains or what? The MTA still runs asbestos-riddled Harris trains. If it is planning to scrap any trains, the unsafe (asbestos) Harris trains must be the first to go.

Now that the St Kilda and Port Melbourne rail lines are closed, there should be a minor surplus of refurbished Harris trains, and these should be used in place of some unrefurbished Harris units.

CLARENDON STREET BRIDGE

The Lord Mayor of Melbourne and the Mayors of South Melbourne, Port Melbourne and St Kilda jointly wrote to the Minister of Transport Mr John Kennan on 17th December, requesting that he take action to prevent demolition of the Clarendon Street rail bridge.

They were acting on advice that the MTA had called tenders for its demolition.

The Lord Mayor and mayors maintained that demolition would lose the opportunity forever of providing a link to Flinders Street Station.

In early January, a prominent sign reading "SAVE BRIDGE FOR FAST RAIL LINK" was placed on the south face of the bridge. [see photo page 32]

A round-the-clock vigil was established on Sunday 24th January on the bridge. *Age* 25/1

DISCOUNTS, FREE TRAVEL & FREEBIES

Herald readers who had that paper delivered to their homes could travel free at weekends anywhere in the metropolitan area on MTA vehicles. The Herald arrangement would last for six months commencing November 1987.

The MTA arrangement was promotional, and did not involve payment by the Herald to the MTA. *Age* 15/10/87

In November, Herald card holders could take their families for a Saturday return with V/LINE at a huge 40% discount. Cheap rates for children also applied. *Herald* 5/11/87

Throughout January, passengers could obtain discounts on various goods upon display of a Met neighborhood ticket. *Age* 11/1/88

Other freebies included a trip to the zoo, discounts on electrical goods, movies, meals and the like.

ANOTHER LIE TRAIL ADVERTISEMENT

"What Melbourne's been waiting for arrives today," proclaims the MTA's full-page advertisement in *The Age* on Friday 20/11/87.

"We are proud to announce the opening of the first light rail system in Australia," continues

the second untrue public relations statement.

The Glenelg tram in Adelaide was, in fact, the first such system, being converted from a broad gauge rail line to standard gauge in the 1930s, and has been operating ever since, with trams (LRVs) which can be coupled.

"From noon and all day tomorrow you will be able to travel free from the city to St Kilda," said the third misleading statement.

Passengers reasonably expected that the service would be operating between St Kilda and East Brunswick (the route of the widely advertised service; the first trip was advertised to commence from East Brunswick).

In reality, the LRV operated between St Kilda and Lonsdale Street (in Spencer Street) and did not enter Bourke Street at all (apart from the first and last runs). A number of people waited in vain in Bourke Street for the tram to materialize.

LOSS ON LOANS

Overseas loans raised for the STA (V/LINE) had virtual losses of \$36.7 million owing to devaluation of the Australian dollar. The losses are, as yet, unrealized, but would be incurred if the loans were repaid on 30 June 1987. *Age* 11/11/87

STAFF CHANGES

★ The Director-General of Transport, Mr Russell Ingersoll, left at Christmas to join real estate developer L. J. Hooker Pty Ltd.

Mr Ingersoll had been with the transport authority only 18 months of a 5-year contract. His terminating salary was \$100,000 per annum; his new salary was \$400,000. *Herald* 4/11; *Age* 5/11/87

★ Mr Jim Kennan took over from Transport Minister Mr Tom Roper, who moved to Consumer Affairs in a ministerial reshuffle in December.

TRANSPORT LOSSES INCREASE

The STA has reduced its operating costs in real terms of 10%, in the 1986/7 financial year, according to the then Transport Minister, Mr Roper.

The savings had been largely due to a reduction of 2500 in the workforce.

The cuts had saved \$20 million this financial year, and would save a further \$40 million next year.

Redundancy payments totalled \$41 million this year, however, and the redundancy scheme was expected to be paid for by March 1988. [Giving a net loss of \$21 million this year.]

A record 5 million passengers had been carried during the past financial year. *Herald* 29/10/87

The Met lost \$462 million. *Herald* 4/11/87

The combined losses of the MTA, STA and the Port of Melbourne authority were \$984 million. Accumulated losses of MTA and STA were \$2.6 billion. The MTA and STA were losing \$3 million a day. *Age* 30/10/87

WASHING TRAMS

Tenders were called for consultants to register interest in examining the current system of manually washing trams. *Age* 21/10/87

On 23rd January, tenders were called for a tram washing machine. *Age*

MTA IMPROVES BUS SERVICES

★ The MTA called for proposals for provision of bus services which will operate from July 1988 "as part of an integrated and coordinated metropolitan public transport service".

Private bus operators provide service under contract to the MTA on some 220 bus routes, requiring 950 buses running up 880 km per week. *Age* 21/10/87

Tenders for the actual services were subsequently called for on 5/12/87. *Age*

A further tender was called for a six-month trial of new Sunday bus services to commence in February 1988. *Age* 28/11/87

★ The Government announced it would be spending \$600,000 improving public transport for

25,000 residents in Broadmeadows, Coolaroo, Fawcner, Epping and Reservoir. *Age* 30/9/87

★ \$1¼ million would be spent on streamlining and rationalizing bus services in the Dandenong area, following a review of services. Better coordination with trains, and more frequent services are highlights of the improvements. *Age* 25/11/87

★ SATURDAY BUSES: Saturday afternoon buses commenced operation on 5th December with new hourly services to support (?) Saturday afternoon trading. The services cut out at approx. 5pm, still too early to catch people returning from shopping sprees. *Age* 4/12/87

[Previously, most private bus services ceased around 1pm on Saturdays.]

PACKAGE DEAL UNWRAPPED

V/LINE lost \$20,000 on its package VFL deal to bring country Victorians to the city for the grand final football match.

V/LINE's managing director, Mr K. Fitzmaurice, said he was "delighted with the success of its 1987 VFL finals series packages".

Of the 500 grand final tickets available, V/LINE sold only 300 at \$225 each. One hundred VFL tickets were sold at cost (\$25.50) [for "cost" read 'loss', because that did not cover handling], and 100 VFL tickets were returned to the VFL (Hawthorn Club). *Age* 9/10/87

ARBITRATION COMMISSIONER REBUKES AUTHORITIES

"The Arbitration Commissioner strongly criticized transport authorities for continuing to negotiate with unions over a second-tier wage rise while costly freight bans were in place."

The Government retreated from its earlier position of not negotiating while bans were in force.

\$8 million was lost in freight revenue since Monday 5th October. *Age* 13/10/87

COMPUTING FACILITIES DUPLICATED

To assist it to manage its 100,000 parcels of land including 5,000 tenancies, the STA purchased an \$850,000 computer.

The MTA expended another \$250,000 in acquiring a smaller version of the same system for managing its land and which is also connected to the STA computer via telephone line. *Australian* 6/10/87

So now there are two computing systems and two divisions of staff to manage what is essentially railway land.

MAPS FOR THE BLIND

The Ministry of Property & Services produced suburban rail maps for the blind. One map is printed in braille, while the other is printed in large type for the visually impaired.

There are 10,000 Victorians who have less than 10% of normal vision. *Age* 28/9/87

WHAT THE RIGHT HAND GIVETH . . .

Having upgraded the railways investigation squad by handing responsibility to the police in June, the Government then served redundancy notices on 60 investigation officers.

As at September, the Transit Police Force consisted of about 50 police officers and 230 investigation officers.

According to Mr Davis, head of the Transit Police, the loss would affect fare revenue and train patrols. Mr Roper, the then Transport Minister, said: "This will have no effect on the active security patrol teams." *Age* 18/9/87

Since June when the Transit Police force was set up, more than 130 passengers per month have complained about violence and offensive behaviour. Compared with the total of 540 approx. complaints, however, only 132 arrests have been made in the 4½ months since June.

Readers can draw their own conclusions. *Herald* 18/11/87

ADVISE COMMENCES OPERATION

Over a month late, on 16 November, ADVISE commenced operation along a 10km stretch of Canterbury Road. The ADVISE (Advisory Display of Variable Information for Speed & Economy)

displays for drivers the optimum speed to travel in order to receive a wave of green lights at consecutive intersections.

The scheme is estimated to save up to 15% on fuel consumption.

The scheme will be monitored by a combined team from the CSIRO and Road Traffic Authority. *Age* 14/9/87, 17/11/87

PAY RISES

Melbourne's tram drivers and conductors were among 70,000 to be awarded a 4% pay rise on 4th August, under the second-tier of the national wage system.

Train drivers won from the Government a \$16 to \$17 pay rise, again under the second-tier of the national wage system. The drivers are members of the AFULE.

After a protracted battle, members of the ARU and AMWU finally won their 4% second-tier increase. Regrettably, the award was made without complete guarantees of increased productivity to offset the increase. *Age* 5/8/87, 15/9/87, 23, 26/10/87

SMOKING

The regulation on smoking on public transport vehicles reads:

"It is an offence for a driver or a member of the public to smoke on either an MTA bus or tram or private bus contracted to the Met. Penalty for such an offence is two penalty units (represented \$100 per penalty unit) which equals a \$200 fine." *Age* 5/9/87

WEST GATE EXTENSION OPENED

A 3-kilometre extension to the West Gate freeway opened on 18th December. The extension is part of a \$186 million project. *Age* 19/12/87

TOTALLY SHUT, BUT STILL PAYING OVERTIME.

During the December rail strike, when the rail system was totally shut, an MTA employee was seen sweeping the concourse at Flinders Street Station — on Sunday evening, and presumably on double time . . .

LOST, STOLEN OR STRAYED

Some \$3 million of railway equipment was stolen or missing. The items included:

622 train radios at \$3,810 each, total	\$2,552,220
473 airbrake testing devices	\$78,991
830 end of train markers	\$104,878
500 first-aid kits (approx.)	\$16,144

Age 7/12/87

You don't suppose that any of this stuff turned up at the railways Lost Property Office?

PAY FOR NOTHING

Management agreed to pay guards who attended a stopwork meeting on 2/12/87. *Age*

YOU HEARD IT'S GOING TO STAY OPEN, BUT CAN YOU LIP READ?

Mr Roper denied that the Government intended to close two tram services (route 10/12).

He was responding to claims that "conductors were saying quite openly that it's going to close", and that track had deteriorated. *Age* 17/11/87

The track junction at the Mills & Danks Street intersection is so bad that the A-class trams negotiate the curves at 5kph to avoid derailing)

[We have previously reported that the track and road surface has deteriorated badly.]

TRACK IMPROVEMENTS

To improve tram services for the MCG and the new tennis centre in Flinders Park, crossovers were installed in Batman Avenue, and a second track was installed at the junction of Batman Avenue & St Kilda Road, providing a double-track turnout from St Kilda Road.

A crossover was installed in Collins street just west of William Street.

These crossovers and turnout should permit more flexible tram operations in the inner city.

TALL SHIPS & TENNIS

Extra tram services on the Port Melbourne line on 31st December, for taking Melbournians to the tall ships, failed to materialize. The Government had run a half-page advertisement in The Age, advising of the special arrangements.

Regrettably, the Government through the MTA had not made firm arrangements with the crews, and the day was a public transport disaster.

Arrangements for special trams on the inaugural day at the Tennis Centre, however, were more successful. Batman Avenue was closed off, and 30 trams provided a shuttle service between Princes Bridge and Richmond Station. (However, it is claimed that the trams were not stopping at the swimming centre. *Herald* 14/1/88)

Attendees were advised to leave their cars at home, and to travel by public transport.

The message was successful, for about 60,000 fans attended, and only 6,000 cars were brought.

late news

TALL SHIPS

Instead of the frequent tram service that was advertised for the tall ships in the early hours, the service had dropped back to hourly by 3am.

When the last Port Melbourne tram departed from Brunswick, passengers were still waiting for a St Kilda tram to materialise — they had been waiting for an hour.

Unfortunately for them, they did not get on the Port Melbourne tram. Had the driver known that his tram would connect with a St Kilda-bound tram at Queen Street, he could have taken those passengers.

As it turned out, the MTA decided suddenly to stop all services at 3am, leaving passengers stranded in the city.

PTUA SUBMITS

In the past few months, the PTUA prepared submissions to transport authorities.

The first submission was to V/LINE concerning future options being considered for country rail and bus services.

The second submission was to the MTA's METPLAN, on options being considered for metropolitan passenger services (train, tram, bus).

The submissions are lengthy, and if any reader desires a copy, please send \$3 to the secretary to cover photocopying and postage. (Address on page 2)

PERSONAL PROFILE

It is ironic that the person in charge of construction of the controversial light rail project should, in about 1981, have conducted a survey of those concerned citizens and groups who made submissions to the Lonie enquiry. The survey was to ascertain whether the Government was listening to the residents.

SOUTH MELBOURNE

On Thursday 4th February, the MTA announced in the press that a new pedestrian crossing would be installed at South Melbourne Station within 24 hours.

Work had not commenced by Sunday 7th February.

On Sunday 7th, the PTUA asked the Minister to close the line because of hazardous situations admitted by the Ministry.

SPENCER STREET

Relocation of the Spencer Street tram track across Flinders Street created two traffic lanes and a right-turn lane on the east (south-bound) side. However, that work reduced the carriage width on the west side to two narrow lanes. Trucks and especially semi-trailers now have difficulty turning left from Flinders Street Extension into Spencer Street. Recently a semitrailer had to do several reversing movements to negotiate the corner in an "argument" with a tram turning from Flinders Street, delaying a number of trams, not to mention cars, in the process.

TRAM ROUTE 10/12

We have elsewhere listed areas of concern about the continuation of services on tram routes 10, 12, 15 and 16. In particular, we draw readers' attention to the lack of timetables for route 10, 12, and the omission of route 10, 12 from the on-time running study.

We now draw attention to the following extract from the Age of 31st December:

"Tram and bus services will run half-hourly from midnight until 3am and then as required.

"Special shuttle light-rail service will operate on the Port Melbourne line to return people to the city from the tall ships display from midnight until 2.45am, and then as required.

"Tram routes 10, 12, 15 and 16 to St Kilda Beach will not run special services." [our emphasis]

It is significant to note that bus route 201 was not so affected, although it parallels the light rail route, but that route 10 to East & West Preston did not get special services; thus it was effectively downgraded in relation to the other routes.

On Sunday mornings, the N°. 16 tram operates a 30-minute service, as does the light rail tram No. 96.

You would expect that the N°. 96 tram would depart from St Kilda 15 minutes after the N°. 16 tram, to provide an improved 15-minute service to the city.

But no! The light rail tram is scheduled to leave St Kilda at the same time as the N°. 16 tram.

According to a usually reliable source, the official reason is that they don't want passengers to get used to a 15-minute service when they take away the N° 16 tram.

FREIGHT INEFFICIENCY

The following summary of a typical morning's work on the *freightgate pilot* graphically illustrates why V/LINE runs at a loss.

6.00am Arrive for a rostered sign-on at 6.10am for the 6.30am freightgate pilot. (pilot, driver, and fireman)

Drive over to locomotive. Check locomotive handbrake, check end of train marker on locomotive, check that jumper cable is supplied, check tool kit, check handlamp, two-man equipment; boil billy. (3 crew to do this!)

7.00am Shunters arrive. Board locomotive. Locomotive takes shunters to centre cabin to find out what work is required.

7.40 Shunters come out again and work starts. (Well, not really, because the locomotive now drives to where the work is.)

10.00am Meal break (30 minutes).

Source: *Newsrail*, March 1987

This report shows that the locomotive crew and pilot (3 staff) signed on at 6.10 am, and did not commence productive work until 7.40 am. During that time, the locomotive was prepared, but the checks wouldn't have taken 5 minutes.

One could reasonably expect that once the locomotive was prepared, work could start — but no! The shunters hadn't been advised what their work was. So it's a drive on the locomotive to the central office to be briefed, an activity which wastes another 40 minutes. After 2hrs 20 mins' work, it's time for a meal break! The locomotive crew have been on the job(?) for 3hrs 50 minutes while the shunters' shift was 3 hours.

There does not seem to be a need for either the fireman or the pilot until it's time to move the locomotive; indeed, there doesn't seem to be a need for a fireman at all — his role could be taken by the pilot. The appears to be no need for the pilot before 7.40am in any case.

TRANSPORT ACCIDENT BILL

On Michael Schildberger's ABC radio show on 22nd January 1987, a listener said that a driver ran into the rear of his car, causing injuries to his wife and three children. He had to pay \$259 in medical expenses for each (more than \$1000 total), because the new Transport Accident Act did not cover him.

Under the provisions of the former common law, he could have sued the driver of the other vehicle.

NEW SNAIL SPEED RECORD

On 16 November, I boarded a city-bound train at Caulfield at 7.58am. The train departure was shown on the station destination board and confirmed via public address announcements, as running express to Richmond and direct to Flinders Street Station.

The train left Richmond at 8.11am and was stopped opposite the Jolimont yards for 24 minutes, after which it proceeded via the loop!

After crawling through the loop and stopping for 3 minutes between Spencer Street and Flinders Street stations, it arrived at the latter at 8.56am.

The train took 58 minutes to travel 8 miles. This is just about twice the speed at which a man walks — a new rail speed record.

— Ken McIntyre

THE SHORTEST TRIP IN MELBOURNE

(or, BUREAUCRATIC STUPIDITY facilitated by computer)

In Flinders Street at the corner of Elizabeth Street there is a bus stop for the Garden City bus (Route 201/203).

An MTA timetable is on display at the stop (which is, of course, at Flinders Street Station).

The timetable says you can catch a bus at 9.42am Monday to Friday going to — yes — Flinders Street Station. (And you can catch one going to the same place at 6.14am on Saturdays.

The top of the timetable reads: *Elizabeth Street Going to Garden City*. Every departure time (about 120 of them) on the timetable has an asterisk next to it. If you read the footnote, the asterisk signifies that the destination is . . . Garden City. (Exception: about 5 trips terminate at Market Street.)

The timetable says Route 203. But most buses display . . . Route 201.

SUNDAYS AT ST KILDA

The N° 96 tram is timetabled to leave at the same time as the N° 16 tram from Acland Street St Kilda. In practice, the N° 96 tram leaves first because it arrives at the terminus last.

A spot check on Sunday 30th January at St Kilda Station at 2pm, a route 16 tram was followed by the N° 96 tram and the tourist tram, all going to St Kilda Beach.

At 2.10pm, a Route 16 tram was followed by the tourist tram followed by a route 16 tram, all going to the city.

The tourist tram is timetabled to depart St Kilda for the city at 11am, 12 noon, and at 2pm, 3pm, 4pm and 5pm, within minutes of a route 16 tram.

TOURIST TRAM

The MTA came under fire for running a tourist tram in an inefficient manner, and mostly empty.

The tram runs a timetabled service all week between the city (Victoria Street) and St Kilda Beach, following route 16.

The tram has been running all but empty. *Herald* 5/1/88

At \$2 for a single trip, the fare has been criticized as being too high. (\$1.30 enables a passenger to travel on any other tram for up to 2hrs 59 mins, while the princely sum of \$2.40 entitles the rider a whole day's travel, again on any other tram.)

On 12th January at around 4.30pm, the tourist tram was seen departing Flinders Street for St Kilda — on another empty run.

On 30th January at St Kilda Station at 2pm, it was carrying only 3 passengers out, and at 2.10pm about the same number were going to the city.

On Sunday 7th February, the tram was observed in St Kilda, never carrying more than four passengers.

On Tuesday 2nd February, the vintage tram that was providing the service was replaced by the Y-class crew-training tram — still at a single journey fare of \$2. (Perhaps the MTA could use one of its 4-wheeled vintage trams, or even the zoo tram?)

CLARENDON STREET

The newly-installed overhead under the Clarendon Street bridge is so bad that it produces a display at night fit to rival the Bicentenary fireworks.

MTA EMBEDS ITS MISTAKES IN CONCRETE

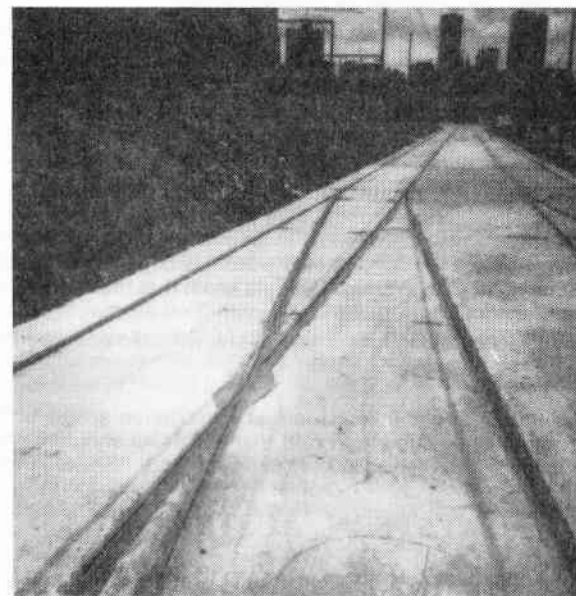
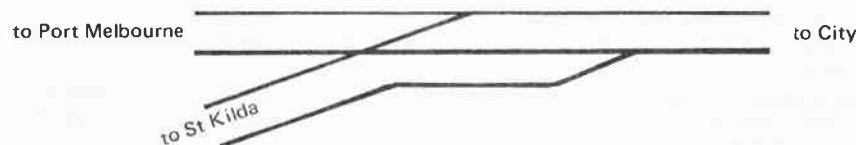
At the intersection of the St Kilda & Port Melbourne light rail lines, the MTA installed a turnout with points so sharp that trams must drop unnecessarily to dead slow. The sharpness of the turnout as shown in the photograph opposite. Points with a larger radius should have been installed.

Furthermore, the MTA failed to take advantage of the huge space available for a much more efficient turnout.

The present turnout is traditional for tram installations, namely, double track laid parallel for both tracks, as shown below.



What could have been done would provide a reserved segment for out-bound Port Melbourne trams — in effect providing three tracks near the intersection as shown below. The three-track arrangement would have permitted St Kilda-bound trams to bypass Port Melbourne trams that have been temporarily held pending a crossover with a city-bound St Kilda tram.



A glimpse of the trackwork at the junction of the St Kilda and Port Melbourne lines at Whiteman Street. Notice the kinks in the two turnouts to the St Kilda line, requiring vehicles to drop back to dead slow.

NEWS FROM INTERSTATE

NEW SOUTH WALES

SYDNEY'S TANGARA TRAIN IS ELECTORALLY EXPEDIENT

Sydney's new Tangara train (which means "to go") came to a dead halt when 50 bogies manufactured in Japan failed to meet safety requirements. The trainsets (including bogies) have gone into production without a prototype train being built and tested.

A prototype train had to be towed to its launch in December for an election announcement.

Neither the prototype nor the production model was ready to put into service. (It seems that governments never learn — recall that the "Super Silver" Comeng trains entered service without a prototype being built, and which had hundreds of faults that were rectified in service. Wheel faults were the most serious of these to manifest themselves.) — *Sydney Morning Herald* 4/1/87

Monorail 1

Temporary chairlifts are to be installed at several of the eight stations on Sydney's controversial monorail. Until station facilities in the city are complete, the temporary chairlifts will carry disabled and elderly people. — *Sydney Morning Herald* 4/1/88

Monorail 2 (Yes, this is serious)

Sydney returns to the 1800s with the oldest safeworking system in the world on its new monorail (which will be opened early this year).

A manual "staff and ticket" system is to be used, with staff (i.e., personnel) on standby in case of breakdown.

On entering a section of track, train drivers lean out of the cab window and press a button to obtain a ticket which entitles them to proceed. The drivers have to insert that ticket in another machine at the end of the section.

The personnel on standby issue handwritten tickets and will telephone ahead. The handwritten tickets will then be collected by stationmasters.

If a ticket is lost, the handwritten method comes into operation immediately.

When the equipment dispensing and receiving tickets breaks down, and the Pyrmont Bridge is opened, the station-masters confiscate the pens of standby staff in order that handwritten tickets authorising train movements cannot be issued.

Signalling is mechanical, with kerosene lamps to illuminate them at night.

Railway Digest, December 1987

There can be no substitute for failsafe devices which shut off motive power and apply brakes automatically when a train proceeds beyond a safe point. A system which relies on antiquated manual methods to ensure safety — particularly in an overhead system which spans a sideways-opening bridge and which severs the rail link over water — is begging a disaster. These days one expects a computer-supervised train system. It would seem that the "safety" system was not the outcome of common sense.

The manual system (with stationmasters and pilots) will also ensure high operating costs.

Monorail 3

On 19 October, the monorail underwent trials at a maximum speed of 7 km/h. Noting the snail-like speed, newsreader Clive Robertson said that the trains should have sleeping carriages attached. Normal operating speed is to be 33km/h (20½ mph). — *Railway Digest*, December 1987

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

A new train was introduced in November linking the towns of Perth and Bunbury in the south of the state.

Called the *Australind*, the train covers the distance in two hours, clipping at least one hour from the old train's time. The *Australind* has a top speed of 110 km/h, and has the distinction of being the fastest narrow-gauge train in the world.

The 20-metre long carriages have reclining and revolving seats, and push-buttons to call the hostess to bring refreshments.

Sun 20/11/87

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

You've all heard the story before. The South Australian Minister of Transport has announced a plan for Adelaide's public transport system, and intends to call in a consultant. This is part of the text of what he recently said about the system:

Mr Keneally said that the public transport system too often followed development to the fringe suburbs, arriving some time after the people who were dependent on it, and did not provide adequately for local travel to schools, shops, creches and health centres.

Many buses made only one morning and one evening peak-hour trip. [So far, so good]

Mr Keneally hinted at a possible further downgrading of Adelaide's rail system, following the closure of the Belair-Bridgewater service, when he said peak-hour train travellers were being subsidised \$2.50 a journey while bus and tram travellers were nearly covering the full operating cost.

He said fewer than 20 p.c. of the STA's passengers travelled by train, yet the rail operation incurred about 45 p.c. of the \$100m or so annual operating deficit of the authority.

"We must aim to reduce the rate of increase in the STA deficit," he said.

Now for the punch line:

"My endeavor is to remove costly services away from areas where they are poorly patronized. That will enable the authority to have the capacity to put in new services where there is a very real demand, such as Salisbury West."

— *The Advertiser* 20 October 1987

This is what the Advertiser's Editor said about the plans on 23rd October:

We need public transport. We need a comprehensive and coherent plan for public transport, and one which can be adjusted as circumstances change. We do not need the apparent confusion under which the State Transport Authority and its operations now seems clouded. And we wonder how much we need the latest vision of the Minister of Transport, Mr Keneally, and his plans to call in an overseas consultant.

Public transport thinking in SA appears to be topsy-turvy. The Minister seems to have a personal commitment to cutting rail services rather than improving them. He says any new public transport operations, to new suburbs for example, would be justified only by cutting out other services. He shows an obsession with cutting the STA deficit, budgeted at \$116.3m for the next year.

Cutting, however, should not be the overriding concern, even though money is tight. The community, which rejects the idea that all public transport must be entirely user-financed, is concerned not so much with taxpayer funding of the STA as with efficient spending of that money on providing services to attract more patrons, not fewer.

The authority has shown, with the O-Bahn [guided busway] for example, that imagination and relative efficiency are not always incompatible with bureaucracies; and it is undergoing some internal reforms as a result of this year's Collins report. But how much further it has to go is shown in the statement this week from the Minister, delivered as though political life was limited, about his grand vision for the future of Adelaide's public transport.

Mr Keneally's vision does not appear to include the broad issues inextricably bound with public transport policy, such as Adelaide's roads, private transport, health, environment and culture. In public transport itself, it goes little beyond the obvious need to address the radial nature of Adelaide's network. At its heart, the grand vision seems to consist of appointing another international consultant to tell him what to decide.

Courtesy of *The Advertiser*.

NEARLY 40% UNHAPPY WITH TRANSPORT

"Nearly 40 p.c. of Adelaide people are unhappy with the public transport system, according to a survey by *The Advertiser*.

"The telephone survey of 459 people carried out in December showed 39 p.c. had negative

reactions to public transport while 35 p.c. approved of the system and 26 p.c. either did not use public transport or had no opinion."

The O-Bhan guided busway, which services the north-eastern suburbs, received a 23% vote from those who said the system was good or very good. Less than 2% were critical of the service.

Of the bus system generally, 9% said it was very good, 23% said it was good, but 17% said it was bad or very bad.

Six percent said trains were very good, 18% said they were good, but 6% said they were bad or very bad.

The Glenelg tram, which services the south-western suburbs, was given a vote of good or very good from 22% of those surveyed, and fewer than 2% were critical of the service. (A roughly equal vote compared to the O-Bahn.)

Perhaps the greatest eye-opener is the final sentence of the news report:

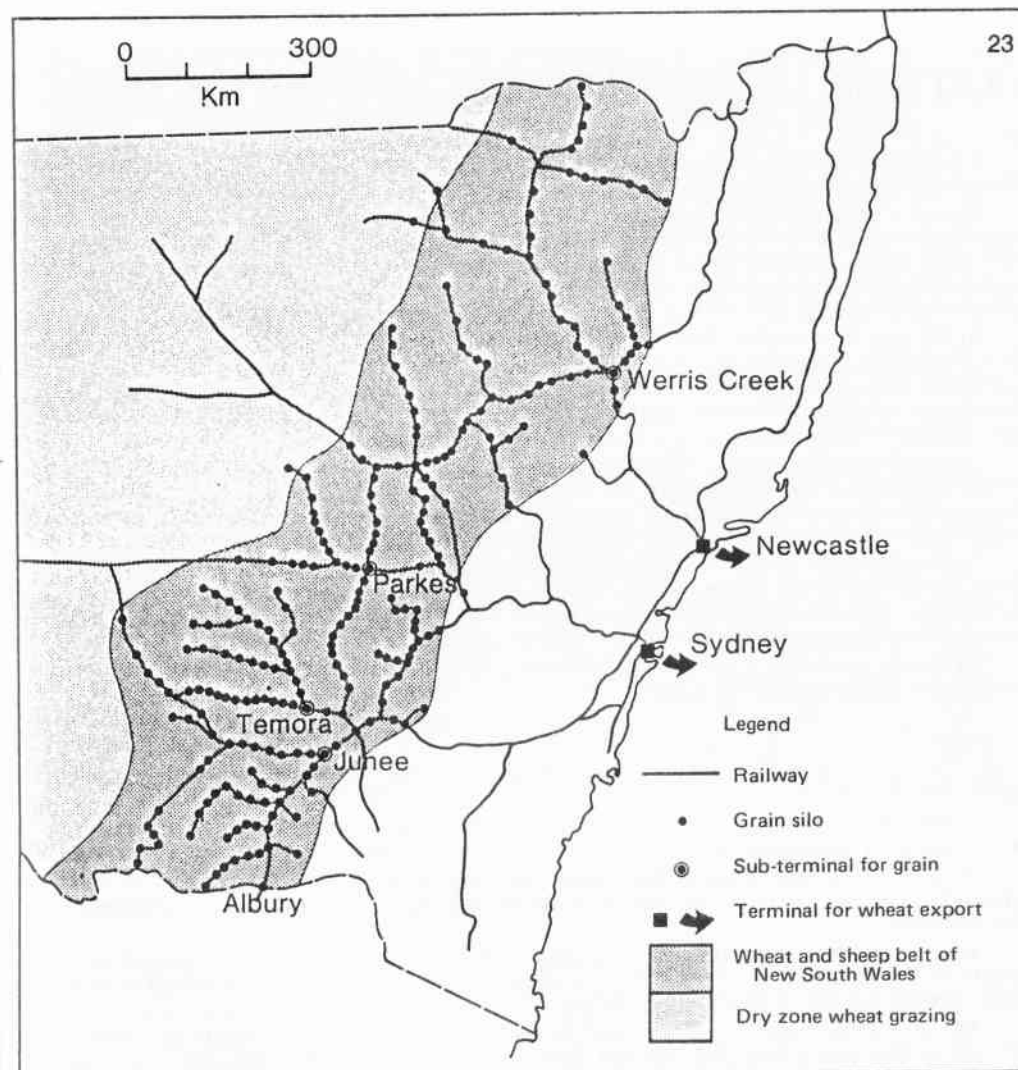
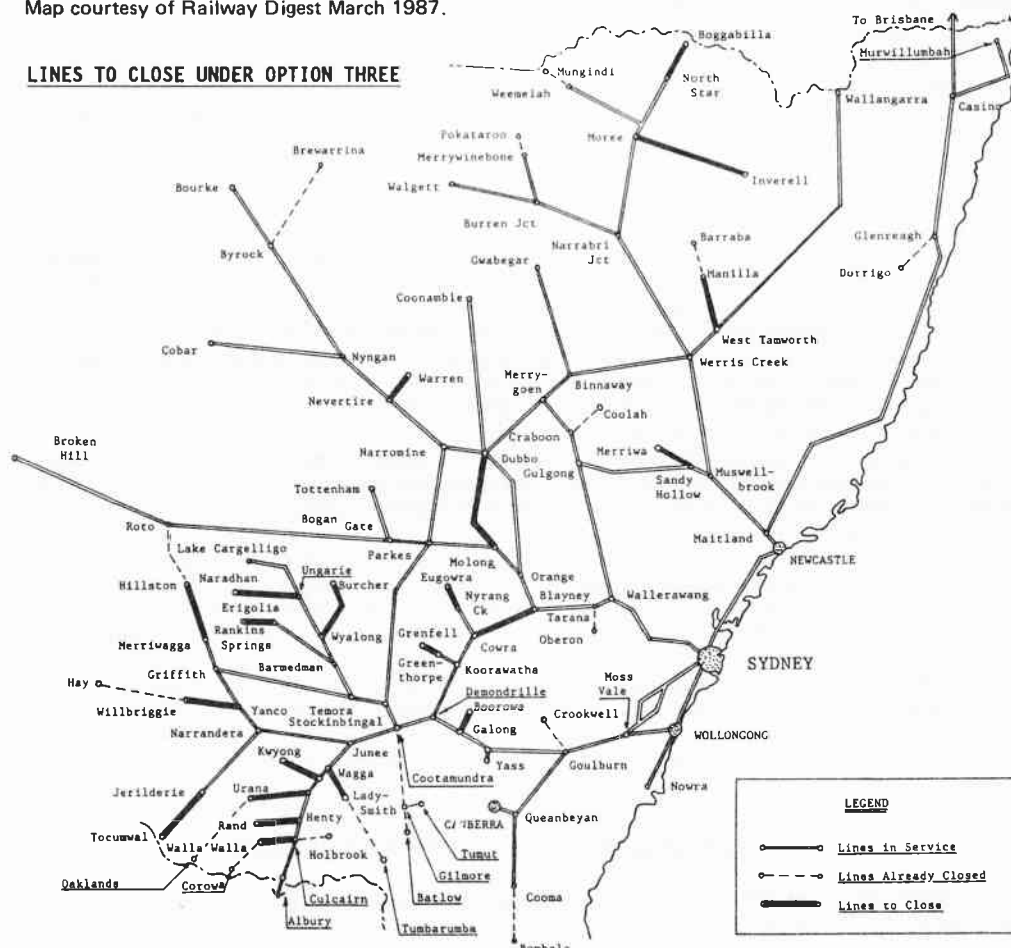
When questioned about an increase in public transport services, of those who had an opinion 47% supported improvements, 32% said the service should remain the same and 3% said services should be cut.

The Advertiser 6 January 1988

The newspaper clippings were contributed by Ray Walford.

Map courtesy of Railway Digest March 1987.

LINES TO CLOSE UNDER OPTION THREE



Map from Australia Our Changing Land, courtesy of the publisher.

NEW SOUTH WALES

The NSW SRA is undergoing another cost-cutting exercise, and was, in early 1987 considering an option to close another 21 country lines as from December 1987. The proposed closures involve lines servicing grain silos. The haulage of grain was to be transferred to road. (see map opposite)

The railways are best-suited and best sited to service grain silos, as any school child can tell you.

The map opposite, from a Form 5 geography book, clearly shows the importance of the grain lines which were originally constructed to move produce, rather than people. (That comment goes for the main lines too.)

Notice that the grain lines are predominantly off the main lines.

LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS LETTERS

Sir,

I write to protest in the strongest possible terms at the apparent incompetence and uncaring attitude of the Met driver of the 5.32pm train from Museum to Pakenham on 5th November 1987.

Between Oakleigh and Springvale it crossed my mind more than once that the train was probably travelling at an excessive speed. It was not a complete surprise, therefore, on reaching Springvale station, to see the train overshooting the end of the platform by at least *three or four carriage lengths!* The driver then reversed the train until passengers in the foremost carriage (in which I was travelling) were able to exit only through the rearmost doorway.

At the very next station, Sandown Park, the driver considerably made up for the previous error of his ways by succeeding in pulling up with only *the entire first carriage* overshooting the platform's end. But where he completely blotted his copybook, in the eyes of several irate commuters including this writer, was when he subsequently took off in the direction of Noble Park, leaving Sandown Park-bound passengers stranded on board.

Upon being questioned by said commuters when the train reached Noble Park (fortunately without a hat-trick of overshootings) the driver mumbled something about the brakes being faulty. Even if this was the case, it does not excuse his failure to reverse at Sandown Park. As far as I could determine, not even an apology was forthcoming for his pathetic performance.

The incident also brings into question the efficiency and powers of observation of the train guard and Sandown Park Station Assistant, both of whom should have noticed that the first carriage had overshoot the platform, and should not have given the 'All Clear' before allowing Sandown Park passengers to disembark from that carriage.

As a daily commuter, I feel distinctly unsafe in the knowledge that the persons described above continue to man our rail system.

(name supplied)
Keysborough

27 October 1987

Sir,

I feel I must bring to your attention the following information together with the accompanying photographs.

One morning last week while I was standing on Brighton Beach Station, I was amazed to see the damage that was done to the cabling conduit attached to the base of the platform.

It appears that approximately 6 inches has been sawn off the edge of the entire length of the platform, and the offcut of stone or concrete has been allowed to crash down on the asbestos channelling below.

Surely, two wooden 4 x 2's moved along under each section of stone as it was cut off would have prevented this wanton destruction. Replacement will cost hundreds, probably thousands of dollars — money which the system cannot afford.

What an example of public sector ineptitude and waste of taxpayers' funds.

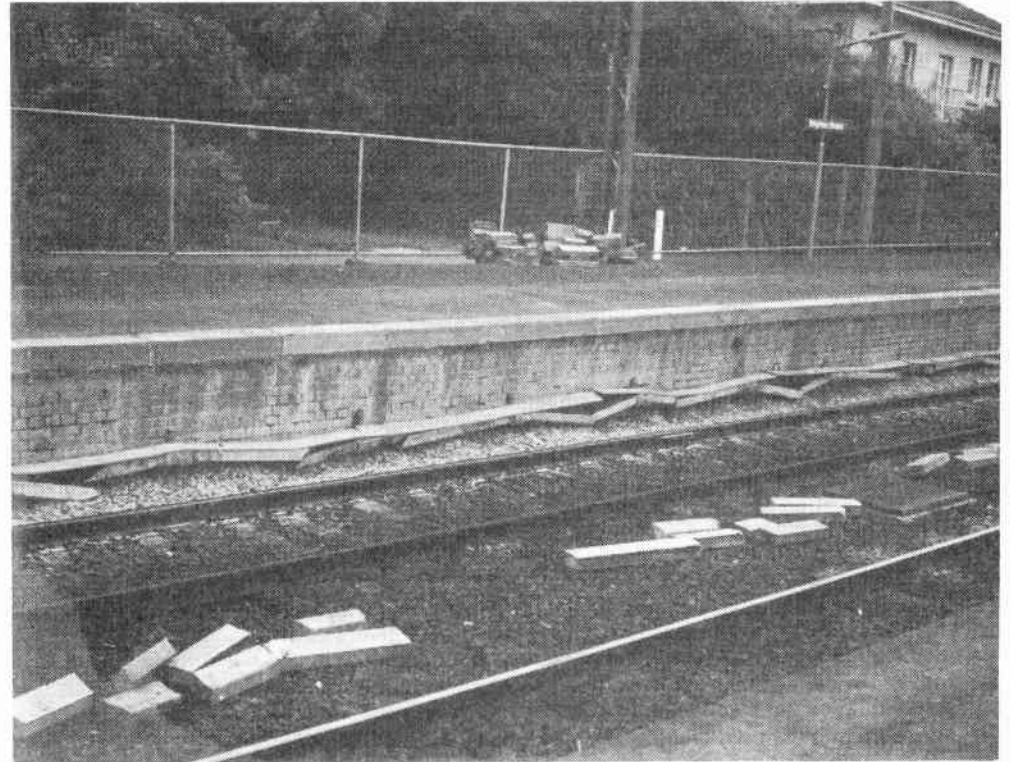
Yours faithfully,
H. D. McKeon,
Brighton Beach

Sir,

The collision between two trams on the light rail line at South Melbourne on Wednesday afternoon was a predictable consequence of the Metropolitan Transit Authority's wonton action in destroying the automatic signalling system which used to function on this line when it was operated by trains. Had this signalling system been retained, trams would have been kept safely spread apart and such an accident would have been virtually impossible.

It is incomprehensible that such safety devices should have been scrapped when the track was converted to Light Rail operation. Likewise, the automatic boom barriers at level crossings have been removed, thereby increasing the risk of collisions between road and rail traffic.

Another predictable consequence arising from the diversion of trams from the railway reservation into Clarendon Street is the greatly increased travel time between St Kilda and the city



Brighton Beach platform, courtesy of H. D. McKeon

compared with the previous train service. Prior to the conversion to Light Rail, the MTA had claimed that travel times would be reduced.

These major deficiencies in the Light Rail service could be corrected by restoring the automatic signalling system, reinstating the automatic boom barriers at level crossings and providing an alternative direct Light Rail connection to Flinders Street Station via the Yarra Bridge.

However, while the service continues to be operated by trams rather than true Light Rail Vehicles, the disabled, the elderly and people with babies in prams will remain at a disadvantage in comparison with the easier access to trains by having to clamber up and down steep steps to board and alight from the trams.

One may also predict that, if the MTA implements the plan to remove suburban train guards, there will be an increase in vandalism, assaults on passengers and a decline in patronage. The obvious alternative is to redeploy the guards and train conductors, thereby providing enhanced security for passengers, control of fare evasion, increased patronage and revenue.

— David Bowd

Sir,

I write firstly to express my support for your Association, and secondly to outline some railway practices which cause only hindrance and frustration to commuters. I have tried to discuss the following matters with the Stationmasters of both the Flagstaff and my local railway station; however, while purporting to show concern, they really couldn't have cared less, and indicated that there was nothing that could (would?) be done.

Apart from the usual problems of overcrowded trains at peak periods, etc, my constant cause for complaints are:

1. At the underground loop stations at peak times, there is only ever one ticket-selling window open, which results in very long queues, frustration and the missing of trains.

Most of the people in those queues in the evening are people purchasing 70¢ tickets, as it is not possible to buy a return ticket. I was told by the Flagstaff Station Master that I should purchase the return ticket when I arrive at Flagstaff in the mornings.

In my view, this is a facile approach to solving the problem.

The whole problem could be solved if machines were made available in addition to the one ticket seller, then I can't see how the union could complain about loss of jobs.

Nevertheless, it is a continued source of frustration each night to watch a couple of railway personnel purporting to check tickets (an impossible and unproductive task), while there is one ticket seller who works under extreme pressure without any assistance.

I also can't understand why the tickets are not pre-punched, and how the design of non 70¢ tickets was ever arrived at, given that each ticket requires two separate clippings which only contributes to the delay.

Although the above matters may seem rather petty, I just can't help but become increasingly annoyed at what could be a more efficient system with so little thought or effort required.

2. I am also annoyed at the apathetic attitude of railway staff to vandalism.

When travelling, it is not unusual to encounter youths drinking, smoking, swearing, carving up seats, and writing on the walls and seats, etc. On two occasions (not late — about 6pm to 7pm), I have reported/told my local railway attendants while the train is stationary at the platform, and have been met with the rather simple response, "Well, what do you expect me to do? There is nothing that we can do about it." (I now no longer bother.)

Given the current glossy campaign about how fabulous 'The Met's' investigators are, I still can't help but feel a little depressed when I see their investigators do little other than hassle peak-hour commuters for tickets (assuming of course that they can purchase them!!!!)

I do not know whether you have any line of communication with the Minister or Shadow Minister, but if you do, I would appreciate it if you could pass on my comments.

I am sure that I am not alone in the views that I have expressed.

Lynn Hudson
Kensington



Beneath its webbed electric wiring
no, this one's brown and cream.

At The Esplanade, the tourist tram with its unusual adjustable outward-facing seats in the drop centre. Some three passengers can be seen on this final run for the day to the city at 5pm on 21st February. A few minutes prior on the out-bound run, there were no passengers.

V/LINE

TENDERS closing at 11.00 a.m.
on the date indicated are invited
for:—

9.3.88 — DISMANTLING, SALVAGE, PURCHASE & REMOVAL OF CLOSED RAILWAY LINE BAINSDALE TO ORBOST.
TENDER NO. 14/13/043/3361.

Tender documents are available from the Tender Documents Clerk, Level 8, 589 Collins Street, Melbourne, Vic., 3000, telephone (03) 619 4835.
No tender necessarily accepted.

Age 17/2/88

A LIGHT RAIL REPORT — SAFETY SACRIFICED

The St Kilda light rail project was brought into service with some serious safety defects and non-functioning equipment.

The following were noted on Tuesday 24th November, the fifth day of operation.

★ Safety railing and wire mesh had not been installed on the in-bound platform at City Road, where there is a sheer drop of some 5 metres. A workman was still installing the railing that evening (after hours).

The lack of railing and wire mesh was a serious hazard, because of the strong winds which could have blown passengers off the platform — apart from which the lack would be hazardous to small children.

★ Points to enable trams to turn out of Clarendon Street into the Whiteman Street reservation had to be operated manually. Trams had to halt under the bridge while points were changed, both on the St Kilda Beach and South Melb. & St Kilda Beach routes. Cars whizzing through the narrow lane between the tram and the bridge support could have "collected" a tram driver. (A fatal accident occurred several days prior.)

★ When installing the turnout at the Clarendon Street bridge, the MTA removed the safety island in front of the western bridge support (which bisects the two north-bound traffic lanes).

The MTA failed to provide signs warning motorists of the hazard, nor did they clean the black and white markings on the bridge support, to make them visible at night.

A few days prior to opening the line, a car crashed into one of the bridge supports.

★ Electric cables, dangling one metre out of the safety zone in Bourke Street, could have caused a pedestrian to trip and fall.

★ At the St Kilda turnout from Fitzroy Street at St Kilda Station, points again had to be operated manually.

There, most trams observed entered the Grey Street intersection against the red light.

The driver of LRV2002 entered the intersection (against the red light), halted the tram to change the points (completely blocking the intersection to traffic north, south, east and west), and turned out of Fitzroy Street, again against a second set of lights which were mis-timed. (The timing had been set up assuming that the points were automatic.)

The driver had failed to climb out of the tram to operate the push-button (a push-button, believe it or not!) to activate the lights.

Then he radioed the Met that the lights were faulty!

The same driver failed to use the push-button on his next LRV trip to the city.

The other drivers used the button, but missed their green lights through inattention.

★ On the approaches to the City Road bridge, and on the bridge itself, there are no guard rails to constrain the tram to the rail bed in the event of a derailment at this critical point.

Passenger and crew safety was jeopardized by the MTA operating the service without passenger safety equipment installed, by neglecting to have remote-controlled points working, and by failing to brief and to train crews adequately.

Footnote: On 14/1/88, the points at the Clarendon Street turnout were still being operated manually for trams using the light rail line.

The lights there were activating themselves in the absence of trams, were failing to activate when light rail trams were ready to turn, and when they did operate, remained stuck on after trams had disappeared from view, causing extensive traffic delays.

TRUGANNI ROAD

The single track tramline in Truganni Road near the Carnegie terminus of route 67 is to be converted to double track, following a drawn-out battle between the MTA, local residents and the RCA. The local residents were worried about the possible loss of parking; the RCA felt that traffic would be impeded, and the MTA wanted to reduce delays.

The conversion will cost \$850,000.

[The conversion is totally unnecessary, because the delays could have been eliminated by the installation of a second track at the terminus, and tram-activated lights, at a cost of around \$75,000 — Ed.]

PTUA ATTACKED AS BEING ANTI-PUBLIC TRANSPORT

The Emerald Hill, Sandridge & St Kilda Times of 21st January carried an article on the incidents on the St Kilda light rail line. The article reported the PTUA's concerns about the lack of safety on several parts of the line. The article also quoted an MTA spokesman as saying that PTUA claims about the line were "utter nonsense".

"The accidents could have happened on any line and had no relevance to light rail, he said.

"It is unfortunate that PTUA, which is meant to support public transport, has taken such a totally anti-public transport stance." *EHStK Times*, 21st January.

At the outset, we'd like to say that the PTUA supports public transport. (That shouldn't need saying.)

The PTUA raised valid concerns about the safety of the line following three separate incidents (in one, seven people were injured, one seriously).

If anyone should go into battle as regards passenger safety, it should be the PTUA.

The line is in a reservation with only one level crossing. Trams can get up to much higher speeds than they can anywhere else in the tram network.† There is also the matter of platforms. Nowhere else in the tram system are there high-level platforms. It is conceivable that an accident in which pedestrians could be crushed against the platform (by virtue of the inept placement of adjacent pedestrian walkways) could occur.

In these respects, the line is unique.

Patrick O'Connor replied for the PTUA in the following terms to the *EH&StK Times*:

The Editor,
Emerald Hill, Sandridge & St Kilda Times.
Sir,

re: SAFETY OF LIGHT RAIL

In your issue of 21st January, a spokesman who the MTA refuses to name, makes comments about our Association. It appears that this official is totally ignorant of facts about which he should be aware.

When with much ceremony and the expenditure of vast sums of taxpayers' money on advertising, the MTA opened the Light Rail project on the St Kilda line, safety barriers and mirrors now in position on a number of platforms were not even erected.

At Bridport Street Albert Park, safety boom barriers have been removed by the MTA. While appreciating the desirability to preserve the conservation of the area, [we note that] a large bush which obstructs the sightline of Light Rail drivers and the unwary was not even touched. No proper walk-way has been made, and pedestrians are enticed to enter an extremely narrow intersection in the path of on-coming road vehicles.

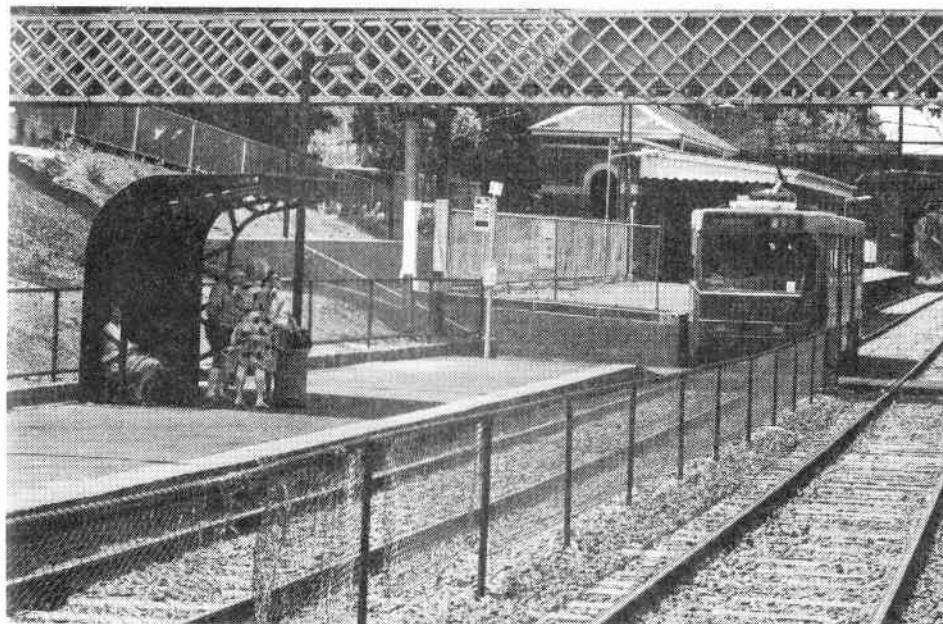
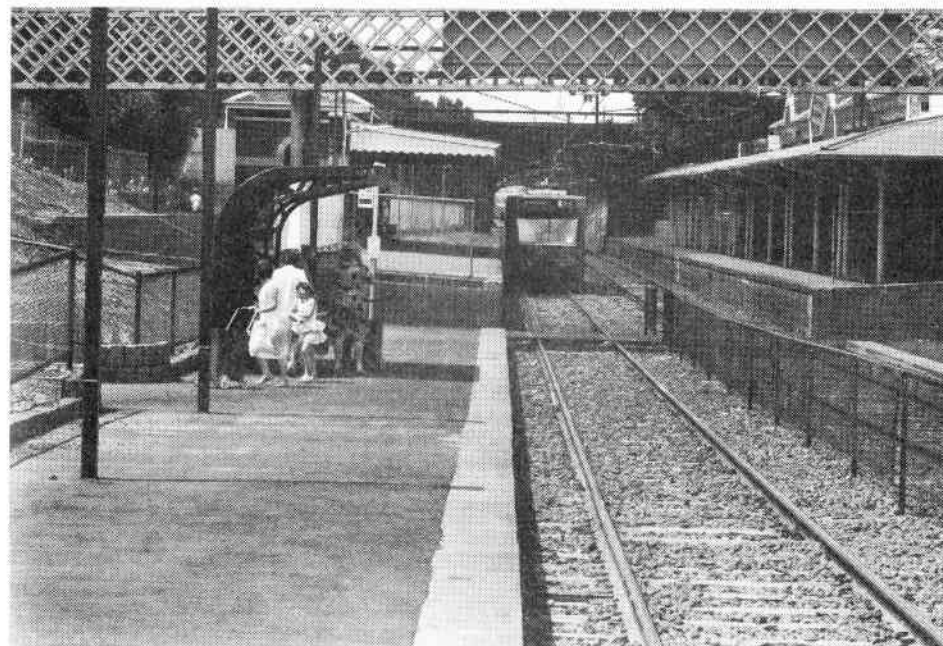
At South Melbourne Station, the overhead bridge which has ramps for the disabled has been closed off. As a result, customers for the market are enticed to descend by steps and forced to cross the rail line where prams and shopping jeeps can get caught in rail tracks. Light Rail is a fast and silent system. At one of the ramps built by the MTA at this station, at the point of crossing, not only can one not hear a Light Rail vehicle coming, but a child could not possibly see one. At this point of terror for any parent there is no warning notice of danger whatsoever.

Within 5 days of witnessing a Light Rail Vehicle overshooting a platform, the present writer observed exactly the same incident occurring. The only difference in the event was that when the driver noticed a press photographer present, he carefully changed to the rear cabin so that he could see clearly what he was doing and drove backwards.

It is for these reasons in the interest of safety of the public, that we ask for an enquiry open to public scrutiny, and we commend your paper for playing its part in that endeavor.

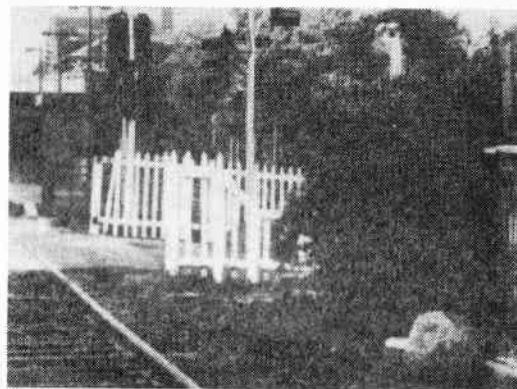
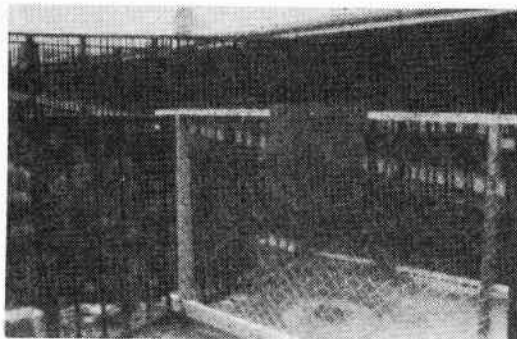
Yours faithfully,
Patrick O'Connor
22 January 1988

† On 19th January, a tram was observed to reach 76 km/h travelling between Albert Park & Sth Melbourne Stations, in spite of there being a speed limit of 50 km/h on the track.



Top: The ramp to the overbridge at South Melbourne station, closed by the MTA. The bridge provided the most direct access to South Melbourne market, and was negotiable by wheelchairs and shopping jeeps. Photographs courtesy of the Emerald Hill, Sandridge & St Kilda Times.

Bottom: the bush and fences at Bridport Street.



The hazards on the St Kilda line were communicated to the Ministry of Transport by our untiring Public Relations Officer Patrick O'Connor, on Friday 29th January.

Patrick visited the Ministry with the 2 photos above & on the cover as they appeared in the Emerald Hill, Sandridge & St Kilda Times (EHSSKT), where he was promptly seen by the personal adviser to the Minister for Transport. She stated that she was totally convinced by all the documented material that the Association had put before her, and that she would call for immediate reports and for action to be taken by the MTA.

On 4th February it was announced in the EHSSKT that work would start immediately on installing a new pedestrian crossing north of the existing dangerous crossing, and that work to repair the overhead footbridge would commence and would be completed by June.

The Association wishes to acknowledge its appreciation for the courtesy shown and the attention given by the personal adviser to the Minister.

Page 29 top: The second overshooting incident referred to in Patrick's letter. In this case, the tram halted opposite the old high-level rail platform beside the canopy. [Both photos courtesy of the Sunday Press.] The driver clearly mistook the platform. He then took over the rear driving end, and cautiously took the tram backwards to the correct stopping place. (lower photo, page 29). Note the blind pedestrian crossing at the edge of the platform. In the first overshooting incident in which the driver merely reversed, it would be impossible to see pedestrians from the driver's cabin at the opposite (front) end of the tram.

PTUA REQUESTS APPEARANCE AT INQUIRY

The PTUA sent the following letter to the Transport Minister Mr Jim Kennan, on 28th December.

Dear Mr Kennan,

On behalf of the Council of the Public Transport Users' Association I desire to inform you of our Association's grave concern about the collision between two trams on the Light Rail line at South Melbourne last Wednesday afternoon, 23rd December 1987.

Among the members of our Association there are a number of persons who have technical expertise in rail systems and who are familiar with the conversion of the St Kilda and Port Melbourne railways to Light Rail operation.

Our Association desires to provide evidence to the inquiry being held concerning the collision, preferably by personal appearance at the hearing. I trust that you will be prepared to respond favorably to this request.

Yours sincerely,
David Bowd
Honorary Treasurer

Following two further incidents (see elsewhere for details) the PTUA called for a public enquiry to investigate all safety aspects on the light rail line. (18th January)

On 7th December, the PTUA sent the following letter to the then Transport Minister Mr Tom Roper:

Dear Mr Roper,

Tram Route 10/12

Around the time of the public meeting at the South Melbourne Town Hall on 16th November regarding this issue, a number of statements regarding the future of tram route 10/12 (South Melbourne & St Kilda Beach to City) were reported as having been made by you. Let me repeat our Association's concern that this route, together with route 15/16 (St Kilda Beach to City) and the Garden City (201) Bus may be downgraded in order to increase the patronage figures for the North-South Light Rail Link.

In order to allay these fears, we would be grateful to receive your assurance that no such action is being taken or is being contemplated. In particular, we would be grateful to receive your assurance that the following measures will be taken in the immediate future:

1. Publication of timetables for the relevant routes;
2. Inclusion of the 10/12 route in the on-time running study currently being undertaken by the MTA;
3. Provision of full service levels on all relevant routes;
4. Proper maintenance of tracks on the relevant tram routes, particularly along the portion of route 10/12 along Danks Street, where tracks have clearly deteriorated to an unsafe position;
5. Continued running of services on route 15/16 to the terminus at St Kilda Beach.

I look forward to receiving your early response.

Yours faithfully,
Paul Mees,
Secretary

STOP PRESS – TRANSPORT IS KING

Mr John King has taken up the position of Director-General of Transport. He comes from the Attorney-General's Department, where he was appointed by the former Attorney-General Mr Jim Kennan who is now the Minister for Transport. Mr King sees industrial relations as his first priority. Herald 17/2/88.

TREASURER'S REPORT 1986/87

The Statement of Cash Receipts and Payments for the financial year ending 30th June 1987 that was presented to members at the Annual General Meeting shows that, after allowing for subscriptions paid more than twelve months in advance, our overall income exceeded expenditure for the period by a small amount.

Compared with the previous financial year, subscriptions received from Donor Members were about the same, whilst subscriptions from Regular Members were up by 36%. The increase here was not due to any growth of membership, but rather due to members paying for an extra year, and to the full effects of higher subscription rates.

Donations received were down by 4% despite a good response to our appeal. A number of large individual donations of up to \$100 was received from members. Sales of publications were down by 41%, but this enterprise is a relatively minor item.

There was a growth of 28% in the sales of MTA Commuter Passes, with about one-sixth of our members benefiting from the discounted price, even though these sales made little difference to PTUA nett revenue, since this activity was intended as a service to members, rather than as a profit-making business.

However, it was possible in some cases to earn a small amount of interest on the money advanced for Commuter Passes, by depositing these funds with the Commonwealth Bank Finance Corporation for a week or two until paid to the MTA. There were some special constraints in operating this account, including the necessity to maintain a minimum balance of \$2,000. For this purpose, I lent the PTUA \$2,000 on the understanding that the interest earned on this amount would be paid to me. This is the debt shown in the Financial Statement as interest on borrowed funds.

Approximately 100 members have paid subscriptions a year or more in advance. These funds have been transferred to a term deposit of \$571 with the Commonwealth Bank in order to earn higher interest and also to identify separately this money from our current account.

The response of many members to the two-year option on subscriptions has been very gratifying, as it has reduced the number of transactions requiring processing, and hence has eased the routine workload on the Treasurer and other PTUA members in maintaining the membership records, thereby enabling more attention to be given to the aims of the Association.

— David Bowd
Honorary Treasurer



PUBLIC TRANSPORT USERS' ASSOCIATION

Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements
Previous Year 1985/86

\$	944.66		Bank Balance at beginning of Financial Year
		ADD	Cash Receipts
\$	1775.00		Subscriptions - Donor Members
\$	1233.00		- Regular Members
\$	53.00		- Concessional Members
\$	689.00		Donations
\$	145.00		Sales of Publications
\$	23074.00		Sales of discounted M.T.A. Commuter Passes
\$	25.33		Interest
	-		Borrowed Funds
\$	26994.33		

\$ 26994.33

Statement of Cash Receipts and Payments for Financial Year 1st July 1986 - 30th June 1987

Reporting Year 1986/87	\$	777.48
	\$	1765.00
	\$	1673.00
	\$	46.00
	\$	658.36
	\$	85.00
	\$	29605.00
	\$	232.71
	\$	2000.00
	\$	36065.07
	\$	36842.55

\$ 36065.07

LESS Cash Payments

\$	22901.95	Purchase of discounted Computer Passes from M.T.A.
\$	1620.70	Preparing and printing 3 issues of "Transit News & Views"
\$	337.40	Postage, telephone, stationery, photocopies
\$	638.09	Artwork and other printing (leaflets)
\$	410.19	Bulk postage and registration of "Transit News & Views"
\$	410.00	Hire of rooms for meetings
\$	155.62	Miscellaneous (Hansard, transport, &c)
-	-	Interest on borrowed funds
\$	367.61	Secretary's expenses (postage, telephone, photocopies, &c)
\$	159.95	Automatic telephone answering equipment
\$	100.00	Hire of public address system
\$	60.00	Registration of P T U A under Associations Incorporation Act
-	-	Term Deposit with Commonwealth Bank
-	-	Unsecured Deposit with Commonwealth Bank Finance Corporation

\$ 27161.51

\$ 777.48

Bank balance at end of Financial Year

2011CCC

\$ 870.93

David Bowd
(David Bowd) Honorary Treasurer

INCIDENTS

★ A city-bound tram on route 70 came "within metres of plunging into the Yarra .. when it derailed and crashed into a power pole" at the edge of the bridge. The pole prevented the tram from crashing into the edge of the bridge and possibly bursting through and into the river. The accident occurred on the Wallen Road side of the bridge.

The Herald reported that "it was understood that an overhead wiring fault may have been responsible". However, we categorically state that there is no way that a fault in the overhead could have caused this derailment. *Herald 25/9/87*

★ About 18 passengers were injured when a tram crashed into the rear of a stationary tram in St Georges Road Northcote on 17th November. The cause is attributed to brake failure. *Age 18/11/87*

★ Seven persons including the driver were injured when a tram ran into the rear of a stationary tram near South Melbourne station on the recently-opened light rail system on 23rd December. The driver of the second tram suffered broken legs.

The cabins at the point of impact were wrecked.

According to a passenger in the leading tram, the second tram was travelling a bit close (30 to 40m behind).

There can be no question that the driver of the second tram was negligent in failing to keep a safe distance behind, and in failing to watch the tram in front. *Age, Herald 24/12/87*

Footnote: The Government removed the electric signalling from the St Kilda line when it converted it to standard gauge. Signalling would have kept a safe distance between trams (see LETTERS).

★ The second of only two prototype light rail vehicles in service (N° 2002) was derailed on turning out from Fitzroy Street St Kilda into the light rail reservation, on 31st December.

The rear of the tram derailed at the points and struck a steel power pole adjacent to St Kilda Station, and was extensively damaged. *Herald 14/1/88* It appeared that the points changed as the tram was travelling over them. [The points are now operated automatically from the other side of the intersection — about 40 metres away. If another tram came up to the stop on the west side of the intersection, it is conceivable that the points could change as the first tram is negotiating the points. We do not know whether the points were operating automatically on the day of the derailment. — Ed.]

★ Tram 292 thinks it's a train

On 15th January at 5pm an outward-bound tram overshot the stopping place at South Melbourne station, and came to rest beside the old high-level rail platform. The driver opened the doors, and a youth jumped up to the platform.

The driver, realizing that all was not well, reversed the tram. However, by this time a following tram was rapidly approaching. The driver clamped on the brakes, but overshot the stop in the other direction; fortunately a collision was avoided.

After disgorging passengers, the driver drove at full speed, and failed to slow down for the Bridport Street lights, against regulations.

The PTUA promptly demanded that the MTA recall immediately — by radio — the driver for serious breaches of safeworking practice.

[While the PTUA was conducting a press conference over safety issues at South Melbourne Station on 20th January, a second tram overshot the stop, and came to rest abreast of the high-level platform. This time, however, the driver walked to the rear end of the tram and drove it back to the correct platform.] *Source: P. O'Connor*

★ On 1st February a tram crashed into the rear of a stationary tram at the corner of St Kilda Road and High Street, injuring 4 passengers, and delaying 25 trams for half-an-hour. *Herald*

★ On 1st October, two passenger trains collided head-on at Laverton when an in-bound train overshot the loop at Laverton Junction and collected an out-bound train. *Newsrail January 1988*

★ On 2nd February, two trains were derailed: At Caulfield station as a passenger train was pulling into the platform, the bogie of one of the middle carriages came off the rails, while between Coldstream and Lilydale, a two-wagon freight train came off the rails at a level crossing. In neither case were injuries reported. *ABC Radio news.*

MTA COMMUTER PASS DISCOUNTS NO LONGER AVAILABLE

With effect from January 1988 the Metropolitan Transit Authority has withdrawn at short notice the discounts which have been allowed to PTUA members over the last three years.

The MTA has claimed that this measure will help to improve their poor cost recovery performance; however, I would consider that it is more likely to have the opposite effect.

It is unlikely that anyone would wish to renew their yearly commuter pass at the full price, because the cost is approximately 11¼ times the price of the corresponding monthly Commuter Passes, as shown in the following table:

	Monthly	Yearly
Inner Neighborhood	\$44	\$488
Two adjoining Neighborhoods	\$58	\$657
Anywhere	\$69	\$773

Most PTUA members will find it more economical to buy monthly or weekly Commuter Passes as required, even though these are far less convenient than buying only the one ticket each year.

Members should not discard their MTA Photocards when their current yearly Commuter Passes expire, as this means of identification will still be required for use in conjunction with monthly passes.

I appeal to those members who joined PTUA initially for the benefit of the discounts on yearly passes to maintain their membership of the Association. In the current mood of cost cutting in public transport, the need for the watch-dog role of PTUA is more important than ever.

While the concern of the Government to reduce the public transport deficit is laudable, losses must be reduced by improving the present low standards of efficiency and performance, rather than by increasing prices and reducing services.

The influence of PTUA on the Government and the bureaucracy must naturally be highly dependent on how much support is forthcoming from the general users of public transport.

— David Bowd
Honorary Treasurer

SUBSCRIPTION NOW DUE FOR RENEWAL

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RAIL LINE RE-OPENED

For the first time since restoring the Leongatha, Stony Point and Cobram rail services some years ago, the Government re-opened a rail passenger service.

The re-opening took place amid a plethora of other railway closures and cuts in services, reaching a climax with the closure of the St Kilda & Port Melbourne lines (which the Government promised to restore).

It is unclear whether the re-opening is a prelude for more.

The re-opening was announced by the former Transport Minister Mr Steve Crabb, who was responsible for the re-instatement of the aforementioned services.

Initially, services will be operated by one-carriage trains.

Well, if you read this far, you probably realized that we are referring to the scenic railway at Luna Park, which was closed following a collision between two carriages when one stalled.

Age 29/10/87

WHAT A WAY TO RUN A TRAMWAY

On Sunday 7th February going to St Kilda on Route 96, LRV2002:

2.47pm LRV2002, travelling down Bourke Street, arrives at Spencer Street, just as "connecting" tram negotiates the corner into Spencer Street on its way to St Kilda. (The writer discovers that 2002 is to terminate there as the driver has been on duty since 10am or so, and that 2002 was scheduled to transfer its passengers onto an A-class tram.)

The driver says "they're always doing this".

The driver fails to announce what is happening.

2.48pm The driver radios to central control that the connecting tram failed to wait, in spite of his ringing the bell. Driver says he is told to "stand by". We sit and wait in the tram.

2.53pm The driver lights up a cigarette. I advise him that smoking is not permitted in the tram. He says he is allowed to smoke at a terminus; I repeat that smoking is not permitted, terminus or not. He continues to smoke.

2.57pm A Port Melbourne tram comes up behind. And waits. We are still "standing by".

3.05pm I said to the driver and another crew that we could have been to St Kilda in the time we have been waiting. At this stage there are three trams banked up behind the LRV 2002.

3.07pm An MTA official arrives in a car and parks on the in-bound tram track. Everyone is ordered off the LRV. No explanation is given. The LRV proceeds back towards the city, destination unknown.

3.10pm The Port Melbourne tram N° 289 which had been delayed behind the LRV, departs for Port Melbourne.

3.12pm Tram N°47 (route 86) shunts, ready for Bundoora. It too was held up behind the LRV.

3.13pm N°297 route 96 for St Kilda pulls into the stop, but overshoots the passengers by the length of the tram. Boarding is made difficult because access to the rear door is impeded by a recently-installed & painted waiting shed which is roped off. (Access to the other doors is prevented for the same reason.)

A passenger asks the driver why he went past the passengers. The driver said he had been told to stop there.

Some passengers complain to the MTA official who had arrived in the car. He says: "If you're not satisfied with the service, you can get a taxi".

The tram finally departs for St Kilda, after a 26-minute wait for the passengers.

Comment This incident is typical of the incompetence of the MTA in running a tram service.

★ In the first place, the LRV tram driver failed to use the radio to contact the driver of the tram with which he was to connect.

★ Secondly, having received a radio call for advice, the MTA failed to use the radio to tell the driver what to do. Instead, it sent an MTA official by car to tell the driver! How utterly senseless. By the time the official had arrived, four trams were held up on three different routes. Transport services disintegrated before the passengers' very eyes.

★ Thirdly, seeing that the connecting tram was just ahead, the driver failed to follow it to connect at the next stop. This was a perfectly feasible possibility because of the shunt at the Flinders Street rail overbridge.

★ Fourthly, the driver of the following St Kilda tram N° 289 erred in failing to halt the tram in front of the passengers, because the section of the tramstop where he halted was not in use because of highly visible works. And the pathetic excuse he gave was absurd, because after halting where the passengers were (to pick them up), he could then have driven forward to activate the lights.

[Your observer was on his way to deliver some material to a press conference on safety issues on the St Kilda line being held at South Melbourne Station.]

R. Vowels

Footnote: On Sunday 14/2/88 we are pleased to report that the trams did connect.

Cover: Illustrates the dangerous pedestrian crossing constructed by the MTA at South Melbourne station. These girls are hidden from the driver's view as the tram rushes by.

Thanks to persistent and exhaustive work by Patrick O'Connor, the crossing has been eliminated.

— Photograph courtesy of the Emerald Hill, Sandridge & St Kilda Times.