

TRAIN TRAVELLERS' ASSOCIATION



Newsletter

October 1981

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Fare Increase Swindle

The Victorian Government and in particular the Minister for Transport have, in the announcement last August stating that fares would be increased, engaged in one of the most cynical acts against train travellers seen for many years. The initial announcement, which did not give any details, put the level of the increase at an average 13%, foreshadowed changes in the zoning structure and promised modal interchange ticketing systems. What has now emerged can only be described as the 13% fare increase swindle.

The Vicious Circle

The fare rises, which came into effect on 4 October, added to the cuts in services on the suburban systems e.g. St. Kilda, Port Melbourne, Glen Waverley etc. and the continuous decline in efficiency will stifle public transport - an objective towards which

the government and its Transport Minister appear to be working.

Since 1970, the State's rail and public transport systems have been caught in a vicious circle, through inadequate funding, irregular, reduced and inefficient services and poor management, leading to a massive decline in public patronage. Between 1970 and 1980 there has been a drop of over 38% in the number of rail passenger journeys alone.

Decline in patronage increases operating deficits and provides the government with further excuses to cut services and staff and increase fares - a policy the government has adopted to perpetuate the vicious circle.

There Is Another Way

Like other transport systems around

the world which have been expanded and improved as a safeguard against future fuel shortages, the New South Wales Government has proved that increased capital expenditure to the tune of \$200 million a year over the past 5 years, improved efficiency and expansion of services will increase public patronage. As a result fare increases can be avoided.

25.9 million additional rail passenger journeys were made in the Sydney metropolitan area in 1979/80 - an increase of 14.5% on the previous year. Public patronage of Sydney's metropolitan public transport, train, bus and ferry, increased by 40 million passenger journeys between 1976 and 1980.

The Association has protested to the Premier, Mr Thompson in the strongest terms making the above points and drawing attention to the continuing appalling standard of service travellers receive for the fare they pay. Mr Thompson in reply, whilst expressing regret at the rises made what can only be described as a pathetic attempt to claim the Government is improving services by restating the long overdue re-equipment programs which are now seriously in arrears. He totally ignored the matter of poor service standards which is one of the main factors in driving people away from our rail system.

MAJOR OUTCRY AGAINST CHANGES

TTA members have strongly condemned the Government's action and have been particularly incensed by the cynical way the changes have been introduced and the manner in which many important conditions or changes have been played down, disguised or omitted from publicity altogether. The following matters which have been drawn to attention by various members are of interest to all train travellers and highlight the true position surrounding the fare increases.

Increases Range Up To 167%

As reported by the ALP and the Melbourne Herald, and highlighted for

individual cases by a number of members, the increases range from 4% to 167% with one isolated instance of a reduction (Frankston). The analysis compiled by the State Opposition's Transport spokesman indicates that the train travellers widely used weekly ticket will rise by 18% and 30% for travellers using the most popular stations e.g. Glen Waverley passengers will find their weekly ticket will rise from \$7.70 to \$10.00, a 30% increase. Other popular stations such as Blackburn, Watsonia and Moorabbin are similarly affected. Travellers from Rosanna, one of the most heavily used stations on the Hurstbridge line, have been severely penalised by the new fares and must pay an increase of 39% from \$7.20 to \$10.00. For those using stations closer to the city the rises go as high as 133%.

For Frankston passengers the reduction does not extend to weekly tickets and even they must incur an increase of 11% or \$1.00. In the case of daily and concession tickets the charges through the system range from increases of up to 167% to one instance (Frankston) of a reduction of 17% but for the most heavily trafficked stations the increases are 25% to 43% - far removed from the elusive 13%.

Yearly Ticket Concession Eliminated

One of the more important unpublished facts of the fare increases is that a specific concession or discount no longer applies to a yearly ticket. It's only use after this increase will be as a hedge against future fare increases. As an example an annual ticket for the old zone 6 cost \$330, a discount of 25% against the basic weekly fare however under the new date to date system for periodical tickets the yearly will cost \$442 an increase of 34% which is almost double the increase in the weekly ticket. Under the new date to date system the fare is calculated by taking the weekly fare and multiplying by the number of weeks for which the ticket is provided and then deducting 15%. As the old quarterly ticket was already subject to 15% discount and the yearly

to a further 12%, traditional yearly ticketholders are being penalised twice in this round of fare increases.

Off-Peak Definition Changes

Another subtle, unpublicised change is the alteration to the definition of an off-peak train. Under the new scheme, off-peak trains are those which leave the place of boarding after 9am, instead of being those which arrive in Melbourne after 9.30am. Passengers in outer suburbs will be worst affected by this move. For example, from Berwick, the first off-peak train to Melbourne in the morning is at 9.34am instead of 8.32am. Furthermore, evening peak trains, will, by definition be off-peak trains, since the 4pm to 6pm period exception no longer applies. Unless there are further facts yet to emerge it is difficult to see the sense in these changes.

Weeklys and Central Zone

Considerable confusion has arisen through the omission from the Ministry of Transport's explanatory brochure of full details concerning the Central Zone. Following a number of queries, Secretary Ken McIntyre contacted VicRail General Manager, Bob Gallacher who confirmed that an omission had been made and that Rail Weekly tickets for travel in Zone 1 also included travel in the Central Zone. Some clarification is also needed as to what actually constitutes the Central zone. The map which depicts the VicRail zones is, according to the Transport Ministry information service incorrect in that it shows Richmond and North Melbourne outside the Central Zone whereas they are junctions between the Central Zone and Zone 1 similar to Jolimont, South Melbourne and Montague.

Anomalies

We often hear of Australian State Boundaries being based on the wanderings of 19th century British explorers and it seems that the Ministry for Transport's new zone boundaries have been based on some similar totally irrelevant criteria. The natural human gauge of cost for distance is one that

all travellers understand and would readily accept. The Ministry for Transport however apparently believes we need something more exotic (or perhaps they don't employ anyone capable of drawing circles) and has come up with a zoning system full of anomalies which defy explanation (almost). Deer Park for some reason falls into Zone 1 whilst places such as Macleod, Hampton, Blackburn and Patterson which are all closer to the city, by any measure, do not enjoy the same privilege. General Motors employees and Hallam travellers should also feel aggrieved in that they do not enjoy equality with rail users at Hurstbridge, Belgrave, Lilydale and Frankston and fall into Zone 3 rather than Zone 2. Perhaps the hardest hit by the new zonings are the people of Rosanna who are clearly being disadvantaged even against the old zonings based on rail distance. This is obvious when the fare increases are examined and it can be seen that Rosanna is the only station previously in Zone 4 that now falls into Zone 2 and thereby suffers an increase of 47% instead of 16%. The obvious outcome of this particular inequity will be costly extensions to the car park at Heidelberg.

A major anomaly of a different kind is that associated with the modal exchange facility. In an extremely cynical act the Government has provided exchange facilities for rail travellers only if they purchase tickets on a daily basis despite the fact that in 7 of the 8 old zones weekly ticket holders to the city have suffered an increase greater than that of daily users. Where is the logic? What the Government has done is deprive the major users of the rail system, the weekly ticket holders, of the advantages of modal exchange making its claims of innovation with this aspect of the new structure hollow and farcical.

Refunds on Flexi-Fare Vouchers

With the introduction of the new three-zone fare system, Flexi-Fare vouchers (which were based on the old eight-zone system) will no longer be valid from 4 October 1981.

Even though it is stated on the vouchers that they are non-refundable VicRail has advised that full refunds on unused vouchers will be available. Applications for refunds of \$10 or less will be handled by local stations but for larger amounts application should be made to VicRail's Chief Marketing Manager, 470 Collins Street, Melbourne.

To Hell With Accuracy

Numerous members have drawn attention to the many errors on the VicRail Zone Colour Coded System Map in the Ministry of Transport Brochure. One member has commented that the blunders in the leaflet would lead one to presume that major construction work to move stations or junctions is about to occur. It can only be presumed that the map was drawn by someone with little knowledge of the system. For the benefit of concerned members St. Kilda and Port Melbourne trains will not shortly commence using Princes Bridge station nor is that

station to be moved to the other side of Flinders Street. Similarly Kensington and Newmarket are not to be relocated nor is the Frankston line to branch off from Malvern or the South Gippsland line from Hallam in the near future. We also have heard from a reliable source that trains to Newport and beyond will continue to pass through Footscray. Whilst it is difficult to predict what the Transport Minister might do the TTA knows of no plans to close Yarraman, Kananook, Ardeer, Sydenham, Diggers Rest or any of the other stations left off that map with the exception of lines where closure of the full line has been announced.

Further TTA Action

The TTA will represent a number of matters relating to the new fare structure and zoning boundaries to the Government in the near future with a view to having inequities remedied and details will be advised to members in future newsletters.

NEW FARES AT A GLANCE

OLD ZONE	NEW ZONE	SINGLE			RETURN #			WEEKLY			QUARTERLY			YEARLY		
		OLD	NEW	%INC	OLD	NEW	%INC	OLD	NEW	%INC	OLD	NEW	%INC	OLD	NEW	%INC
CENTRAL		.35	.70	100	.70	1.00	43	2.40	4.00	67	27	35	30	95	177	86
1	1	.35	.70	100	.70	1.40	100	2.40	5.60	133	27	62	129	95	248	161
2	1	.60	.70	17	1.20	2.00	67	4.30	5.60	30	48	62	29	169	248	47
3	1	.70	1.10	57	1.40	2.00	30	5.30	8.00	51	59	88	49	206	354	72
4	1	.95	1.10	16	1.90	2.00	5	7.20	8.00	11	80	88	10	280	354	26
5	2	1.05	1.40	33	2.10	2.60	24	7.70	10.00	30	85	111	31	298	442	48
6	2	1.30	1.40	8	2.60	2.60	-	8.50	10.00	18	94	111	18	330	442	34
7	3	1.55	2.00	29	3.10	3.60	16	9.00	12.00	33	100	133	33	349	530	52
8	3	1.70	2.00	18	3.40	3.60	6	11.00	12.00	9	115	133	15	403	530	32

Notes applying to old zones.

- 1) Excludes Jolimont, Montague, North Melbourne, Richmond and South Melbourne to which Central Zone fares now apply.
- 2) Clifton Hill, Jewell, Rushall, Victoria Park and Westgarth not included. Full Zone 1 fares apply to these stations.
- 3) Except Toorak which is now grouped with old Zone 2.
- 4) Except Rosanna to which now Zone 2 fares apply.
- 5) Excludes Altona, Bentleigh, Deer Park, Galvin, Oakleigh, Seaholme and St. Albans to which new Zone 1 fares apply.
- 6) General Motors and Hallam are not included in Zone 2 and must pay Zone 3 fares.
- 7) Frankston is an exception in this old Zone and now falls into Zone 2.

New fares are Travel Card fares and include Tram and Bus travel except for old Zone 1 and 2.

WANTED URGENTLY

WE URGENTLY REQUIRE THE SERVICES OF A VOLUNTEER TYPIST (PREFERABLY IN THE CITY AREA) TO ASSIST US WITH TYPING ARTICLES AND GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE.

VOLUNTEERS PLEASE CONTACT THE SECRETARY.

A HARD FIGHT AHEAD

By our incoming President Dr Douglas Sherman

On the 10th June the Herald carried an article titled "Rail Lines Switch - 4 to Stay". We know that VicRail had been directed to close five suburban services - viz St Kilda, Port Melbourne, Upfield, Williamstown and Altona, in August. Then in early June a new decision was taken and Mr Dixon announced that now only the Altona line would be closed, although the services on the other four lines would be reduced.

The T.T.A. has played a significant part in the decision to retain the four lines, but we need to keep working to ensure that the trains are a comfortable and convenient way to travel. Mr Maclellan may have changed his mind about the closures, but he has still had a victory in that the services have been reduced on the four lines. Moreover Mr Maclellan is still saying there will be more "changes" to public transport. We hope that these changes will make public transport much more attractive to many more people, and that there will be improvements to the service, but these positive changes will only occur if considerable pressure is put upon Mr Maclellan and that will take a great deal of work.

WHAT CAN WE DO?

The following are some ideas I have; if anyone has other ideas or suggestions we would like to hear from you.

TTA Membership.

The bigger our organization, the more impact we can have at Spring Street. Please renew your subscription when it is due, and try to recruit other people to become members. We try to keep the subscription for ordinary membership as low as possible (\$3) so that as many people as possible can join.

Finance.

If you can afford to, please become a donor member or send a donation. With an election next year, we will need to be able to distribute leaflets, and perhaps even advertise in the newspapers. We keep the TTA independent of political parties and unions so as not to compromise our independent voice. We look to our members to supply the finance we need.

Write to local M.P.'s, the Premier and the Minister for Transport.

Your politician knows that for every letter that someone has taken the time to write to him, there are about 50 other people who feel the same, but didn't get around to writing. If each one of our 1,000 members wrote, then our politicians would know that some 50,000 people are concerned about public transport. Letters need not be long, but should be politely written. The newsletter contains material that could be used as a basis for your letter. Even though your MP may be in opposition, it is still important that he knows that you are concerned about public transport, because - who knows - one day he might be a member of the government!

Talk to your Friends.

It is essential that people's ideas about public transport be changed. Your newsletter will give you facts that you can use in discussion. Even a person who is not sympathetic may be given a new idea that he may think about later. Often the most hardened car user is open to the argument that if more people go by train, then the roads will

be a lot less crowded when he is using his car.

Contact the Media.

Write letters to the editors of the newspapers, ring Access Age and ring Talk Back Radio if they are discussing public transport issues. Obviously not every letter written to an editor gets printed, but the more letters there are on an issue, the more letters on that subject will be chosen for printing. Staff at both the Age and the Herald have said to Ken McIntyre, "How is it that you have 1,000 members, yet it is only you who keep sending us letters?"

Write for the Newsletter.

Articles are always needed for an official publication, however brief. If you have facts, statistics or ideas which could help our cause, please send them to our editor (Pat Minihan). We would also like to hear about interesting and informative books or articles you may read. Constructive reviews of relevant books would be helpful.

Technical Suggestions.

If you have some knowledge and expertise in a relevant field (eg bicycle lockers, signalling systems etc) and are able to make a useful criticism or a suggestion relating to VicRail's operation, then write to us giving full details. We meet with the VicRail board at approximately quarterly intervals and can take the matter up with them. In some cases of special expertise we may ask you to come with us to discuss your ideas with the Board.

Make Submissions to Enquiries.

Enquiries on various matters are held from time to time and usually submissions from the public are invited.

In particular it is required that before a new bus service replaces a rail service there must be an enquiry at which the public be given the opportunity to appear.

If you use train services which are likely to be closed, a line in an area likely to be affected, then prepare an outline of your submission objecting to the replacement now, so that you will be ready to give notice of intention to make a submission as soon as you hear of the inquiry. Often only 7 days are given in which to notify your intention, and it can happen that by the time you read the advertisement there is very little time in which to lodge your notification.

Watch the Victorian Government Gazette.

Proposed enquiries are advertised in this publication. Mr Maclellan may announce his intention to hold a transport enquiry in fine print in the Gazette and we would appreciate, if you have access to the Gazette, your notifying the T.T.A. if such an advertisement should appear.

Help Form a Telephone Tree.

Occasionally there are reasons to contact members quickly. One would be to advertise of an opportunity to make submission to an enquiry into replacing a rail service. Another could be a demonstration if an adverse Government decision concerning rail travel were announced.

The telephone tree would be organised on a local basis, that is those willing would telephone about 10 members living in their area, to pass on the message.

If you would be prepared to do this, perhaps two or three times a year, please write and let us know. We can then give you a list of people to phone.

In order to have a record of your phone number would all members please include your telephone number, including business if applicable when you renew your subscription.

Why must we keep up the pressure?

"Asked if there would be further changes after the State Election next year, Mr Maclellan said: 'I think there will be continual changes!'"

- DOUGLAS
SHERMAN

THE STONY POINT LINE - CLOSURE AND AFTERMATH

The closure of the Frankston to Stony Point rail service is another addition to the unbelievable record of the Minister of Transport. In this case, however, Mr Maclellan has flatly refused to accept his responsibility to the public. In doing so, he appears to be openly displaying his disdain for his portfolio in Government.

The decision to substitute buses to Stony Point was made in contradiction to loud protest from the community, representations from other Cabinet Ministers, and a detailed report by the Save The Stony Point Train Committee. The latter report proved beyond doubt that the service was vital to business, was an important tourist attraction carrying thousands of passengers, and could not possibly be provided at less cost by buses. For reasons known only to himself at the time, Mr Maclellan refused to listen. Somehow, Cabinet and the media were led to believe that the rail freight dispute was due to closure of lines because they were uneconomic.

It has become clear from the TRB Inquiry into the South Gippsland line that the main reason for country closures has, in fact, been the impending necessity to replace the railmotors. The railmotor to Stony Point had put in fifty years of valuable service. The Tender Specification calls

If you are able to help in any way please tick the appropriate boxes on the membership application form in this issue.

for a two bus service to replace it. Each bus is to be articulated, with a twelve cubic metre freight compartment, and capable of carrying ten surfboards and eight bicycles. This is intended to run alongside a railway line being kept open for freight. The subsidy alone would pay for a new railmotor in less than eighteen months.

The introduction of buses to Stony Point has been effected at considerable cost and inconvenience to the community. The resultant fall in patronage, compared with the train, has added about 1000 car trips per week to roads renowned for fatal accidents. An extra bus, required for parcels, has been costing VicRail \$100 per day. Ticketing arrangements have been chaotic, and tour sales lost, since station facilities have closed. Elderly and retired persons make up about one third of the local population. Some have had to be physically assisted to be able to use the new service.

The Government has committed an appalling injustice, with frightening implications for the future. The service must be re-instated and commonsense allowed to prevail.

- Mark Rossiter

NO COMPLAINTS - SO THE SERVICE IS GOOD (SAYS VICRAIL)

TTA Executive Members met with VicRail management on 4 September 1981 and discussed over fourteen topics of concern to train travellers. The main subject of discussion was the unsatisfactory operation of the METROL system and the general inadequacy of methods for conveying information to passengers of train delays, cancellations, change of platform etc. Special attention was paid to the indicator boards at Richmond station where the information provided is programmed to the timetable and not to actual daily running conditions. We once again requested the provision of a train notice board at all stations to indicate correct and timely information on train delays and cancellations to the public.

VicRail General Manager Mr Bob Gallacher stated that the number of public complaints received by VicRail was declining. In a situation where commuters are subject to the daily disasters of train delays, cancellations, incorrect information provided on train notice boards and delays outside stations, this is surprising. Travellers should not forget that apathy and indifference in not complaining will allow VicRail management to gain or adopt the impression that they are providing us with a good service. We have one of the world's worst rail systems in Victoria because of years of wanton government neglect and amazing levels of public and media apathy. We cannot expect better services unless we demand them. Train travellers are requested to let the government and rail authorities know their feelings on the inadequate and inefficient services, in no uncertain terms. Send your written complaints to The General Manager, Victorian Railways, 67 Spencer Street, Melbourne 3000, or phone (03) 61001 and ask for The VicRail Trouble Shooter or the

Complaints Section. Please keep a record of your complaint and let us know of the action (if any) taken by the authorities on your complaint.

At the meeting the TTA also called on VicRail to raise with Railways of Australia:-

- . The need to increase the base level of insurance cover on lost luggage from the existing maximum of \$50.00.

- . The need to revise the timings of intercity express trains in order to reduce/eliminate the lengthy waits for connecting trains e.g., the trip to Perth or to Brisbane. By speeding up travel time between capital cities, rail travel can be made more attractive for the public.

Discussions were also held on the proposed fare rises and modal inter change facilities to take effect from 4 October 1981 but were restricted, as at that stage VicRail had not received definite instructions from the Transport Ministry as to rates, conditions etc.

The TTA also called on the rail management to improve the levels of its preventative maintenance schedules to reduce the daily incidence of train, signal and track failures.

The need to publicise rules and regulations on ticket refunds and use of OFF PEAK tickets was again stressed. Introduction of passenger amenities such as a newsagents stall; a refreshment stall and lockers at Museum station were called for as urgent requirements.

It is proposed to hold further regular meetings with VicRail Management and these will be reported in future issues of the Newsletter.

- Ken McIntyre

IS YOUR SUBSCRIPTION CURRENT?

Some members have not yet renewed their subscriptions. Adjacent to your name on the Newsletter wrapper the date to which your subscription is paid is noted. If it is expired please use the form on Page 19 to arrange renewal.

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

As an Association we are still growing and if we are to adequately represent the Train Travellers of Victoria and gain improvements to the poor standards forced upon us by the Government and Railway Administrators we must continue to expand and become a strong voice on behalf of travellers. Current members are urged to recruit new members and thereby assist us further in bettering the poor facilities we endure daily. We must express

particular thanks to one member Mr J.K. Richardson who has recruited many members since joining and continues to be active in this regard. We extend a welcome to the following new members who have joined the Association since the issue of our last newsletter and remind them they are welcome to attend our monthly meetings and participate in all association activities. (D indicates donor member).

ANDERSON Mr G.R. (D)	Mount Macedon
ARMSTRONG Mr G.J.	Eaglemont
ARMSTRONG Mrs S.R.	Eaglemont
BARBER Mr E.G. (D)	Blackburn
BARROW Mr A.D.	Surrey Hills
BEED Dr C.	Parkville
BLAIN Ms S.	Coburg
CARTER Mr C.	Ringwood
CHARRETT Mr P.L.	Mt. Waverley
CLARKE Mrs D.M. (D)	Camberwell
COWLING Mr R.J. (D)	Murrumbeena
EISFELDER Mr K.J. (D)	Carnegie
GAVIN Mr P.M.	Coburg
GEORGIU Mr M.	Canterbury
GIBSON Mrs M.	Newport
GREY Mr M.	Beaumaris
GULEY Mrs M.L. (D)	Glen Iris
HANAN R.J. (D)	Greensborough
HARDING Mr T.S.	Nathalia
HOWLETT Mrs D.L.	Somerville
INGLIS R.A.	Bayswater
KAYLL R.W.	Reservoir
KELLY Mr R.P.	Clayton
KENYON Mr B.L.	Montmorency
KOCH Mr B.V.	Westmeadows
LEVINSON Mr L.	Fitzroy
MCCRACKEN Ms E.	Camberwell
McKENZIE Mr K.A. (D)	Lakes Entrance

MADSEN Mr R.E.	Black Rock
MAGLICA Rev V.N.	Fawkner
MANN Mrs H.V. (D)	Glen Waverley
MARSHALL Mr D.G.	Mooroolbark
MARSHALL Mrs M.R.	Mooroolbark
MISBACH Mr E. (D)	Doncaster
MURRAY Ms M.L. (D)	Cheltenham
O'DONOGHUE Mr M.	Albert Park
PULLAR Mrs M.	Richmond
ROSMAN Mr G.	Upwey
ROSMAN Mrs B.	Upwey
ROSSITER Mr M.H. (D)	Frankston
RUSSELL Mr G.	Bayswater
RYAN Mr L.T.	Box Hill South
SHERLOCK Mr P.L.	Glen Waverley
STEEL Miss A.C.	Glen Iris
SUTTON Mr D.A. (D)	Hawthorn
TOTTENHAM Mr T.J.	Eastwood NSW
TUCK Mr D.	Mitcham
TYRER Mrs M.F. (D)	Watsonia
WHITEHEAD Mr R.J.	Ashburton
WONG Mr P.	Malvern
YOUNG Mrs P.M.	East Brighton

SANDRINGHAM BRANCH MEMBERS:

BRADFORD Mr K.	Sandringham
McBRIDE Mr B.	Hampton
RIGONI Mrs J.	Sandringham

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

Members and other Newsletter readers are invited to make contributions to the TTA Newsletter. Articles of interest, suggestions for improvements to service and accounts of overseas systems and trends broadly relating to public transport will be considered for publication. The TTA reserves the right

to edit, abridge or reject any material, however, subject to availability of space every effort will be made to publish items submitted. Material for the next issue should be addressed to, The Editor, TTA Newsletter, PO Box 116, Hurstbridge 3099. The closing date is 1 November.

TTA CONCERN AT MOVE TO VFL PARK

The TTA has addressed the Chairman of the VFL Dr A. Aylett, expressing concern at the decision to shift the VFL Grand Finals to VFL Park because of the inadequate public transport facilities available to service the Park.

Inadequate public transport facilities will force football patrons to drive there by car, resulting in an enormous waste of our scarce fuel resources; massive environmental pollution in the locality and adjoining areas and increase in the road toll following increased road usage. The TTA called on the VFL administration to lobby the State government and support our demands for expanding public transport facilities in general and for the provision of new rail and tram services to service the Park.

Construction of a rail siding or line from either Huntingdale or Glen Waverley rail stations to the Park; or alternatively a new tram service extending from the No. 64 tram route down North and Wellington roads to the Park, connecting with rail services at

Ormond and Huntingdale stations; are TTA proposals to cater for the travel needs of VFL Park patrons. The TTA also reiterates its suggestion to the government to construct a rail siding to the MCG (as at the Show grounds) to relieve the need for people driving there by car.

In the absence of adequate train/tram facilities which can move people in bulk quicker than cars/buses, public patronage at the Park will be unattractive and inconvenient, thereby frustrating the proposed improvements. The closure and reduction of Sunday train services is also a factor to be considered and will hamper patronage at the proposed Sunday matches planned by the VFL in future.

In his reply Dr Aylett states "The absence of adequate public transport facilities in particular railway services (to VFL Park) is undoubtedly a cause of concern and it is indeed disappointing that the Victorian State Government has not elected to provide these much needed facilities".

TRB HEARINGS - AN APPEAL FOR VOLUNTEERS

The TTA was one of the organisations which presented a submission to the Transport Regulations Board Hearings into the granting of a licence for the replacement bus services in place of the now closed, rail services on the Melbourne-Yarram line. At the time of going to press the hearings had not been completed.

TTA President Dr Douglas Sherman personally attended the hearings which were held in the Korrumburra Court House from 3 September 1981; taking leave from his normal work for this purpose. Future hearings into the closure of rail lines and granting of

licences for bus replacement services will be held in other parts of Victoria.

Being a voluntary organisation we cannot afford to have our individual office bearers use their work leave entitlements to attend such hearings daily. We ask members and volunteers, preferably from the locality where the hearings are held, who have time to spare, to offer their services to attend. We will supply them with copies of the submission, questions to raise, action to be taken etc.

Volunteers are requested to contact the Secretary.

THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY

THE DESTRUCTION OF VICTORIA'S RAIL PASSENGER SYSTEM

Some years ago Victoria had, for its area, by far the most extensive passenger rail system in Australia. Under the Hamer and Thompson governments our railways have been viciously chopped - so that only a skeleton of the previous service remains. (see map on next page).

The current rail cuts being carried out by the State government are just the final stages of a process of demolition of Victoria's rail services which has been gathering pace since 1970:

VICRAIL'S FINAL PLAN

(from NETWORK, April, 1981 - official Railways of Australia journal)

This is to retain only short distance inter-urban commuter services to South Geelong, Bacchus Marsh, Kyneton, Seymour, Warragul-Traralgon.

Otherwise EXPRESS TRAINS ONLY will run from Melbourne to Warrnambool, Ballarat, Dimboola, Mildura, Bendigo, Swan Hill, Shepparton, Albury, Sale and Bairnsdale.

WE DEMAND THE RETENTION, EXTENSION AND UPGRADING OF ALL PASSENGER RAIL SERVICES IN VICTORIA!

RAIL SERVICES -



"DONT COP THE CUTS!"

THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY



Map - courtesy Bayside Public Transport Committee

BALANCE AND BIAS OF WRITERS

Katherine Whitehorn, AGE, 1 September, started the first of two articles on Japan headed "The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly".

In these articles she refers to there being two clattering overhead railways in Tokyo for every pretty temple.

Overhead railways are noisy of course, but the writer fails to grasp the point that Tokyo could hardly function and would be "badder and uglier" without them. Even though she goes on to briefly describe a two and a quarter hour train and bus trip out of Tokyo that would have quote "taken at least three hours by car". The full message still eludes her.

I probably would not have persisted in reading more than the first paragraph if it hadn't been for a nagging desire to solve the mystery of the caption attached to the lead photo. The picture was of a half hectare or so of a parking lot captioned "Hideous but Functional" and filled with bicycles. I was vaguely hoping to discover what words the writer might use to describe an area filled with the same number of cars.

Peter Burden who writes elegant and eulogistic articles for the motoring page of the National Times must be the darling of the RACV, the NRMA and the rest of the motoring organisations

VICRAIL'S FAME IS WELL KNOWN

Brian Naylor, Melbourne's well known Newsreader who is perhaps more well known for the travelling he does by aircraft rather than train, is obviously very much aware of the frustration commuters feel each day in the all too often tortuous trip past the MCG. Whilst reading a recent news item concerning the development and trials

because Peter never misses a chance to plug for more money for roads and freeways. Rather surprisingly Peter went some way toward balancing his biases in the August 30 edition of N.T.

He devoted a page to quoting from the Daimler Benz annual report describing difficulties the West German motor industry faces in competing with the "government controlled, government encouraged" Japanese car industry. The Benz report contains criticisms like "omissions in the construction of environmentally safer, fuel saving road by-passes and the improvement of traffic flow in urban areas are likely to negate the purpose of many technical efforts. Technical efforts refers to car manufacturers attempting to reduce harmful emissions, noise and fuel consumption.

It is not made clear by the National Times writer if the report claims German manufacturers are doing better at emission control and fuel consumption reduction than the Japanese.

Burden discloses however that Mercedes concede that more expenditure on roads is hardly the way to bring electoral popularity today! How long before the local equivalents are forced to the same conclusion.

- Rod Bryant

of a new train in France capable of speeds in excess of 200 miles per hour he commented that it would certainly make a difference to the trip between Richmond and Flinders Street. The fame of VicRail's best known torture stretch is spreading.

- Pat Minihan

RELIEF FOR RURAL NON-SMOKERS

Following representations from Country members, the TTA on September 2 called on the Ministers for Transport and Health and the respective Shadow Ministers to urgently consider the introduction of legislation to ban smoking on public transport services in rural areas. The text of the letter sent was as follows:-

"Legislation exists to ban smoking on Urban and metropolitan State run public transport, but such legislation does not cover Rural State owned public transport.

With more rural area train services being downgraded and closed down, bus services will form the only means of public transport in most of Victoria's rural areas in the near future. The Government has plans to phase out rail services in most of the Country areas in the next three years.

The question of banning smoking on such bus services in rural areas has to be decided upon by the respective government departments, from the basic aspects of health, convenience of non smokers and for uniformity of legislation vis a vis urban and rural areas. Bus journeys on rural trips are longer in distance and time and hence present a greater health hazard and inconvenience to the non smoker who is forced in the small confines of a bus, to suffer the inconvenience and discomfort of inhaling the smoke and being contaminated by the smell of burning tobacco.

What should be a normal, pleasant bus journey becomes a period of discomfort to:

- . the elderly, many of whom suffer from bronchial or respiratory problems.
- . the children and adult non smoker, whose right to clean and uncontaminated air is denied.

The fact that non smokers form the larger component of the population is borne out by studies in Australia.

(a) Dr. N. Gray and D. Hill of the Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria in 1980 conducted a survey and published the findings in a Report titled "Patterns of Tobacco Smoking in Australia". The survey found that 35% of adults 16 years and over in Australia are smokers.

(b) A South Australian Health Commission research study 1981, found that one third of the population smokes (AGE 26.8.81). These studies clearly show that the non smoker is in the majority and his rights are to be upheld.

The discomfort and inconvenience suffered by this majority of non smokers will force them to resort to private car trips for their transport needs, thereby reducing the viability and cost effectiveness of the State and private owned bus services in rural areas. Decline in patronage will result in greater costs to the taxpayer in general, in terms of public subsidy costs, with the ever present danger of the services being closed down altogether, as happened with the rail services in these areas.

We call on you to urgently consider the introduction of legislation to ban smoking on public transport services in rural areas for the reasons enumerated in this letter."

The Minister for Transport in a prompt reply to our letter advised on 25 September that he had recently taken the matter up with the TRB and that some restrictions will be applied. The main points of Mr Maclellan's reply were as follows:

"I am sympathetic to the suggestion that provision should be made for the comfort of non smokers on long distance country stage buses and took the matter up with the Transport Regulation Board recently. I understand that the Board has now reached an agreement with the Bus Proprietors' Association that smoking in these buses should be restricted to

specified areas in the vehicles and that an amendment to the Transport Consolidated Regulations is being drafted in conjunction with an examination of the procedures needed.

There is no proposal at this stage to extend the ban to local bus services in country towns."

ZONE FARE SYSTEM DISGUISES ATTACK ON ST KILDA AND PORT MELBOURNE LINES

The two shortest lines, St Kilda and Port Melbourne, are seriously affected by the new fares. All single trips, and even to an adjacent station, are 70¢. Fares have doubled for short trips, making them unattractive. This leaves only two stations on each line (St Kilda and Middle Park; Port Melbourne and Graham) likely to generate significant revenue.

Custom on the lines has already drastically fallen away since services were cut by almost half on 23 August 1981. Services before 6am were cut out, and there are no trains after approximately 7.20pm. There are no Sunday trains. The St Kilda train has 408 trips per week, down from 987. The Port Melbourne train has 396 trips per week, down from 686.

Service frequency for the St Kilda line is 25 minutes (formerly 15 mins), and

ANNOUNCING FOR THETH TIME

How often do you read in the press an announcement of a major project involving Public Transport? After giving some thought to the question you would probably say reasonably frequently. If this is so why do we have such a poor system? The answer lies in the fact that the Government is fond of announcing projects but takes years to get them off the ground. The new silver trains have been announced a number of times but we have only seen one in service and that is a year late. The best example of slow follow through is the Box Hill Transport centre the most announced project in memory.

The latest victim of this Government confidence trick is Frankston Station.

It is to be hoped that the Minister follows through the introduction of the restrictions proposed so that the comfort of country travellers can serve some much needed relief from the battering it has taken in recent years with the increasing age and poor standard of maintenance of rolling stock and the substitution of buses in many areas.

- Ken McIntyre

for the Port Melbourne line is 25 minutes (formerly 20 minutes).

It is understood that patronage on the St Kilda line is down by 25% as a result of these cuts.

In a seemingly unrelated move, Melbourne's Commissioners decided to keep open the Proposed Secondary Road Reservation on Batman Park. (AGE 15/9) Mr Maclellan wants the reservation to extend the South Eastern Freeway. One platform at Flinders Street Station, the rail bridge, and the rail reservations, would be re-cycled as freeways. (TMT 16/9) Mr Maclellan said that "the Ministry had discussed the matter with the commissioners". (AGE 15/9) How long will it be before we hear Mr Maclellan say that patronage has fallen away so much that the St Kilda and Port Melbourne lines must close?

- Robin Vowles

It was recently reported in the Herald that the Minister for Transport said work on redevelopment of the station would be undertaken and completed in two years. In September 1975 an announcement with illustrations to match said work would start on a Transport Centre at Frankston in the next few months. Frankston station users should not get excited. After waiting six years to see the first sod turned rapid progress is hardly likely. A cynical person might even suggest that the sudden activity is an attempt to lift the Government's stocks in view of a certain event due by May next year.

- Pat Miniham

NEW SILVER TRAINS ENTER SERVICE

The first of Melbourne's latest suburban trains take to the tracks on October 2 (assuming there are no further delays) and despite the controversies surrounding their introduction the trains promise a standard of comfort that Melbourne commuters only dreamed of a few years ago.

COMFORT AND FEATURES

According to VicRail the new trains will provide the comfort, reliability and speed to attract passengers to the suburban system. The new generation trains will incorporate all those proven features now accepted by modern urban transit systems throughout the world as essential to provide an acceptable public transport facility. Some of the features to be included are air-conditioning, double-glazed tinted windows, full carpeting and extra seating. The trains will also encompass the most modern operating equipment and features to ensure the safety of passengers and crew.

One of the more annoying aspects of the existing fleet of silver trains, the high noise level, has received special attention and the carpeting and sound-proofing should reduce noise levels in the new carriages. Provision has also been made to overcome the long standing communication problem which has raised many tempers over the years. The new trains are to be fitted with two way radio and a public address system to keep passengers informed of running details, schedule changes and other information of interest.

Although, according to VicRail, the trains are to be delivered over six years the maintenance of this schedule will be dependent on the provision of adequate funds by the Government. Unfortunately, the history of modernisation of the suburban fleet causes some concern to the Association particularly promises

on the matter made by the Government and the delivery position, already twelve months in arrears, will be closely monitored and any slippage strongly represented. Past predictions that as a result of modernisation the Red Rattlers would be phased out before the loop opened have been broken despite the loop opening more than two years late.

DESIGN STANDARDS AND MAINTENANCE

There are two further points surrounding the introduction of the new trains that concern the Association. These are the recently reported fact that initially they will only run on three of the nineteen suburban lines (believed to be Glen Waverley, Frankston and Dandenong) and the effect of VicRail's poor maintenance standards on some of the new features of the trains, eg the carpeting and air-conditioning.

Although VicRail has claimed that the extra three inches in the width of the trains was provided to improve passenger comfort, considering that the existing silver fleet is 9'9" wide, it is difficult to accept that the increase will provide any significant benefit. Now that it has been established that an extensive track realignment programme will be required to accommodate the trains on 16 of the 19 suburban lines it seems far more likely that the three inch increase in width was included without proper consideration of the implications. When it is further considered that the existing silver fleet designed in 1969 could not at that time be accommodated on, at least, the Epping and Hurstbridge lines and still cannot due to lack of funds for platform extensions, it is extremely difficult to accept that VicRail would deliberately design trains that necessitate a costly track realignment programme in a situation

of scarce funds for the sake of a 2.6% increase in width to what are already wide carriages.

VicRail in taking this action whether by design or accident have created a double disadvantage for commuters. Not only will they be prevented from enjoying the advantages of the new trains on some lines until the track realignment work is undertaken but the benefit that funds expended on this programme could have provided if expended on other facilities will also be lost. It is twelve years since the existing silver trains were designed and the alterations to the suburban system which their design necessitated are still not complete. It is to be hoped that commuters will not wait another 12 years for the 'Super Silvers' to operate on the complete suburban system. When this situation is considered in conjunction with the aspects of poor design which have become apparent in the existing silvers, eg, jamming buffers high noise level, uncomfortable seating, pantographs that foul the overhead, wheels subject to pitting etc. it seems that the quality of VicRail design work is in need of considerable improvement.

As to future maintenance of the new trains only time will tell what standards will be applied but it is difficult to have confidence in VicRail's ability, or interest for that matter, to ensure that the filth and squalor we experience daily will not apply to these trains as it does with the rest of the fleet. The Blue trains

are the best example of the poor standard of maintenance that is applied by VicRail with the most significant point being the lack of adequate and regular cleaning. The Association will be watching this point closely to ensure that the new features, such as air-conditioning are not let fall into disrepair in the same way as the lighting on blue trains.

A ROLE FOR PASSENGERS

Passengers can also play a part in the cleanliness of carriages by ensuring that they do not leave newspapers, wrapping paper and other rubbish and litter in carriages and that when alighting from carriages near the end of the line of an evening they close windows. The general public are unfortunately an untidy lot and leave tons of litter in carriages each day. Carriages will last longer, seats will be kinder to other passengers clothes, and the maintenance effort will be reduced if passengers will just be a little more considerate and tidy in their habits. We should remember that they are our trains and the carriage we litter today may be the one we travel in tomorrow. We may often complain of dirty seats soiling our clothes but a large amount of dust can enter a carriage overnight or during the weekend through the window we leave open when alighting from an evening train.

- Pat Minihan

HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR ADDRESS?

If you have changed your address recently please advise any of the office bearers on the back page as soon as possible. Newsletters returned due to an incorrect address cause the Association to incur double postage costs in addition to the wastage in printing and preparation. Please help us to keep you informed of activities undertaken on your behalf.

THE ALTONA LINE - A PERSPECTIVE

FACILITIES

The 6.5km Altona-Newport line has three stations: Mobiltown, Seaholme and Altona, with station spacing of 2.5km, 2km, and 1km. Travelling time to Spencer Street is 28 minutes although during off-peak times, a shuttle service between Newport and Altona is provided by a red rattler, and the Altona to Spencer Street time is increased by three minutes.

Mobiltown Station offers the least facilities: a standard bus shelter which provides little protection from rain and its capacity of 15 persons is insufficient at peak times. There are neither toilets, taps, nor station master. Seaholme has a renovated timber station building in good order. Altona station was completely rebuilt in brick three years ago, at a cost of \$300,000. The building is attractive, clean, and facilities are excellent. All stations are readily accessible by wheelchair.

The power signalling is fully automatic for the single track between the Geelong line and Altona. The overhead is supported by steel stanchions to Kororoit Creek, but thereafter by wooden poles in poor condition. The Kororoit Creek bridge is in poor condition, having a 10km/h speed limit imposed since Easter 1977 when damaged by floods. Four years later, the speed restriction is still designated "temporary". Like the leaning tower of Pisa, the bridge is slowly sinking into the mud and is jacked up by giant wedges. The Civic Parade railway crossing is in an unsafe condition and also requires major repairs.

Four staff run the service, two station staff a driver and a guard, making it one of the most economical to operate, with a total staff of ten.

PATRONAGE

Four passenger surveys have been conducted by the TTA, three at peak times at Altona, Seaholme and

"The Altona Railway was taken over by the Victorian Government on 1st October 1924, after 36 years of intermittent use since 8 September 1888".

So reads the plaque erected at Altona Station to commemorate 50 years of service in 1974. Four years later Altona Station was completely rebuilt in a major upgrade of facilities. Yet three years later in December 1980, the Government announced its intention to close the line. In August 1981, the AGE reported that only peak-hour services would operate and there would be no day-time, evening, or week-end services.

POLITICS

The decision to close the Altona line was political and went directly against the needs of the community. The only sector likely to benefit from this decision is the road lobby.

Following an outcry from the community, the Government became sensitive to its election prospects, and has temporarily reprieved, but drastically cut services, Altona and the other three lines running through ALP-held electorates.

Fears are held that the line may be closed after the next state election. As an argument for closing the line, the Government is likely to use the state of the Kororoit Creek bridge, which has been under a temporary speed limit of 10 km/h for four years. Estimates to replace the bridge range from \$200,000 to \$1m. Until the bridge is replaced, the line will remain under the very real threat of closure.

The line has not been saved, but it still could be. Its operating costs (\$270,000) are practically recouped by revenue (\$240,000). The deficit is a paltry \$30,000 per year. It is thought that no other line comes anywhere close to this relatively low deficit. (The deficit for the metropolitan system was \$53.5m in 1978-9. [HTL p. 15].)

Mobiltown, supported by an all-day survey at Altona during August. The latter survey showed at least 1228 passengers used Altona station. Peak-time patronage at Seaholme and Mobiltown is 44% of that at Altona and we estimate the total patronage on the line to be 1754 per day. Of these, about half are female and about a quarter are under the age of 18. Our observations compare favourably with VicRail's February 1979 survey of 2000 (HTL p. 22) and 1900 (Herald 11/12/80). The differences are explicable as normal mid-summer and mid-winter variations of the VicRail and TTA surveys.

Altona peak-time usage was 696 passengers or 57% of the journeys, while the correspondent day-time off-peak figure was 432 or 35%. Some off-peak passengers patronised the Altona shopping centre whilst many came from the Wiltona migrant hostel. Most of the Mobiltown passengers were migrants from the same hostel.

Unlike other routes where patronage dwindles near the end of the line 56% of passengers travel to Altona giving a high utilisation of equipment. By the time morning peak trains depart Mobiltown, direct to the city they are about half full. This seems to be an extremely good performance after only three stations, rivalled probably only by Dandenong and Frankston which are transport interchange stations. (Altona is not a transport interchange).

POTENTIAL

Altona Station serves an expanding built-up suburban area. The Altona people need their train because there is no direct link to Footscray and beyond by road, and there would be no direct transport link to the city if the railway were removed. Good parking is available at Altona and Seaholme.

Altona Station is in a prime position right at the shopping centre with a row of shops faces the station. Shoppers travel from the other stations including Mobiltown, Monday to Saturday. Near Seaholme and Altona stations are four primary and two secondary schools.

WESTONA GHOST LINE

So keen has public support been to extend the line to the housing estate at Westona, that the Government promised in the past to extend the line. Altona Council kept the disused railway reservation open beyond Grieve Parade, along with provision for the station to facilitate this extension. A second shopping center has sprung up in Harrington Street opposite the anticipated station and a fifth primary school is nearby. Other proposals have included extension to Altona Meadows and to Galvin. (TTA).

ALTERNATIVES

Eight buses at \$70,000 each would be required to run between Altona and Newport. (HTL p. 24) Depot and workshop facilities would require an outlay of \$200,000 (est) giving a total immediate expenditure to provide buses of \$760,000. Travelling time between Newport and Altona of 19.5 minutes would add 8.5 minutes to off-peak trips and 11.5 minutes to peak-time trips. (Based on HTL p. 24 figure of 45 minutes for a round trip).

IMPROVEMENTS

(In order of priority)

1. Replace Kororoit Creek Bridge
2. Extend the line to Westona
3. New station at Westona
4. New one-carriage train for the shuttle service
5. Three new stopping places at Noordenne Ave, Elenheim and Challis Streets.

A number of possibilities could be considered for the line as the track is level with the reservation, much like the tram track in Dandenong Road. A hybrid vehicle capable of picking up from stations and from ground level, is quite feasible. Several extra stopping places could be available quickly and the line could be extended down, say, Maidstone Street and operated like a tram service. A further extension of the line to Galvin or to Altona Meadows are possible options.

All these suggestions would increase the catchment area of the line and make it more accessible to the new housing estates in west and east Altona, as well as established ones in the North Altona/Newport area.

CONCLUSION

The Altona railway serves a growth area well beyond the end of the line. Thus, existing day, evening, and weekend services should be retained. Modest amounts are required to replace the Kororoit bridge to renew wooden poles and to extend the line to Westona on the reservation.

There should be no question whatever of retaining this electrified line as

References

HTL: Hold The Line, J. Andrews, G. Lacy, P. Moriarty, Melbourne, 1981.
TTA: TTA Newsletter, June 1981.

FOOTNOTE - As from 4 October only 4 morning and 5 evening peak train services operate Monday to Friday. Buses operate at other times.

DID YOUR RED RATTLER LOOK LIKE THIS TODAY?



Altona passengers and those on some other lines know only too well of the decaying state of the Red Rattlers. Having celebrated their diamond jubilee in the 70's they are still with us in the 80's and with the delivery delays on new trains may still be rattling around in the 90's. Although none have quite reached the condition of the example shown many are in a deplorable state and are a major cause of cancellations and delays.

Photo - courtesy of NEWSRAIL

PUBLIC TRANSPORT NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD



"PASSENGER TRAIN: - MOST ENERGY EFFICIENT MEANS OF TRANSPORT"

As the price of Canadian petroleum approaches 85% of world levels, travellers will look more and more for alternatives to the automobile for inter-city transportation.

The most logical alternative, says VIA Rail Canada's Chairman and President, Frank Roberts, is the passenger train which is potentially the most energy efficient means of public transportation.

Addressing the Toronto Rotary Club on 29 May 1981, Mr Roberts told the audience that a recent Ontario study estimates that a rise in petroleum prices towards world levels would increase the cost of driving a car by 23-42% while for rail and bus, such an increase would reflect in only marginally increased fares. He added:

"The difference between the train and our main competitor, the private automobile, is substantial. For example, the new trains that we will put on the Toronto-Montreal run this fall will, at 70% occupancy, get 202 PASSENGER MILES PER GALLON while the private car, with two passengers, will get about 47 passenger miles per gallon. We calculate that on a Toronto to Montreal trip, the private car uses about six gallons per passenger more than the train."

However, Roberts cautioned, VIA's success in enticing Canadians away from their automobiles rests with the Corporation's ability to provide more convenient travel times and higher speeds. He explained:

"...between London and Manchester England, after the electric train was introduced, traffic went up 220% OVER SIX YEARS. In Japan, the introduction of the 155 mph train between Tokyo and Osaka cut air traffic between the two cities by 50%. A study by British Rail of service between Newcastle and London showed that for every 1% reduction in travel time there is a 2% increase in passengers."

However, said Roberts, before Canadian passenger trains will be able to successfully compete with the automobile speeds must be increased and travel times reduced. He said:

"Today our highest speed is 95 mph. The average speed in the Windsor-Quebec City corridor is 55-75 mph. Our objective is 125 mph by 1990--assuming we start improvements today. The trip from Toronto to Montreal would then be 3 hours, 40 minutes; Toronto to Ottawa would be 2 hours, 40 minutes; and Toronto to Windsor would be between 2 and 2½ hours."

Saying that it will take Canada another 10 years to achieve train speeds which other countries have already been operating for the past 15 years, Roberts said that VIA has already formulated plans for the high density Quebec City-Windsor travel corridor which could enable VIA trains to run at 125 mph by 1990.

Cautioning that funding for corridor improvements remains to be approved by Government, Roberts said that VIA's plans call for step-by-step improvements

over a ten- year period; "with priority going to places and things that will produce the most beneficial and quickest results."

However, Roberts said, if track improvements and consequent higher speeds are to be achieved by 1990, work on the project should begin immediately. He explained:

"The prime selling point (of inter-city passenger trains) is that in the long run, an excellent passenger service would be less costly to the taxpayer than a mediocre one."

"Obviously, improving passenger service in this corridor is going to prove an expensive proposition. VIA's argument is that the alternative is more expensive to the country in the

long run. Sooner or later, Canadians will have no choice but to invest in energy- efficient inter-city passenger systems. The sooner we do it the less costly it will be."

(Source: VIA Rail Canada News Release)

In contrast, our inter-city express trains (3 to Sydney and 1 to Adelaide daily) are a standing joke in terms of punctuality and efficiency.

Despite world experience to improve and expand rail passenger services as the most energy-efficient means of public transport, the Victorian Government and the Transport Minister appear determined to see that Victorian passenger train systems degenerate to their primitive state.

- EDITOR

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION or OFFER OF ASSISTANCE

I wish to join the TTA/I wish to renew my subscription

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POST TO:

The Secretary
Train Travellers Association
61 Liela Road
ORMOND 3163

TTA Membership and Newsletter

The TTA Newsletter is published by and for members of the Train Travellers' Association.

The TTA is a voluntary, non-party political, non-profit organisation of train travellers and public transport users.

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

The membership includes regular issues of the Newsletter for the basic subscription of \$3 annually. Those who can afford to are requested to become Donor Members at \$10 per year or to make donations towards the costs of printing, postage, hire of halls for meetings, etc. All members have equal status and their category of

membership may be changed, if they wish, when subscriptions are renewed.

Regular TTA activities consist of monthly meetings of the TTA Council to which all members are invited. The Council meets on the first Wednesday of each month (except January) in the Masonic Club Premises, 164 Flinders Street, Melbourne at 5.30pm. Please enquire the location of the meeting room from Ground Floor reception and sign the visitors' book.

Other TTA functions are the preparation of briefs and submissions; liaison with VicRail managers through regular meetings; representations to the Premier and Transport Minister on suggestions, complaints, etc; media interviews; speeches at public meetings; articles and letters to the press; publishing and distribution of leaflets; etc.

Members are encouraged to contribute articles to the Newsletter and offer suggestions and ideas to the Council for consideration.

Office bearers elected for the year 1981/82 are:

<u>President:</u>	Dr Douglas Sherman		a/h
<u>Secretary:</u>	Ken McIntyre		"
<u>Vice-President:</u>	Ivan Powell		"
<u>Treasurer:</u>	David Bowd		"
<u>Publicity Officer:</u>	Patrick O'Connor		"
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	Pat Minihan		"
	Robin Vowels		"
	Rod Bryant		"
	Ria Smit		"
	Alex Boyne		"
	Margaret Panter		"
	Steve Howard	(059)	"
	Barry Gray		"