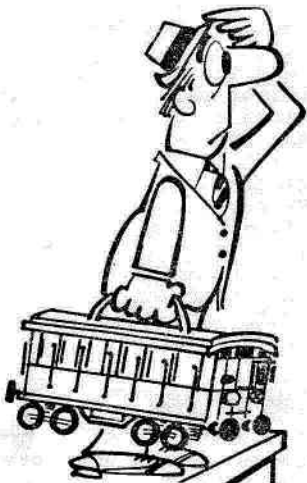


# TRAIN TRAVELLERS ASSOCIATION



## Newsletter

September 1980

Train Travellers' Association,  
G.P.O. Box 254B,  
Melbourne, 3001

Telephone :

Secretary Ken McIntyre reports:

### Opposition Leaders Ride the Trains with the TTA

In our June Newsletter we reported on the non-acceptance by the Premier, Mr. Hamer and Transport Minister, Mr. Maclellan of our invitation to ride the suburban trains with us in peak hours. We are pleased to report that the Leaders of both Opposition Parties rode the trains with us in July, 1980.

On Friday 11 July, 1980 the Leader of the Opposition Mr. Frank Wilkes, accompanied by the Shadow Transport Minister, Mr. Steve Crabb, travelled with TTA members between Flinders Street and Caulfield in the morning peak hours. The trip received wide TV and press coverage.

On Tuesday 15 July, 1980 the Leader of the National Party, Mr. Peter Ross-Edwards travelled with us in the morning peak period between Flinders Street and Caulfield.

Both Party Leaders had personal experience of the daily frustrations train travellers face - lack of information about train departures and/or platform of departure, late trains, dirty trains, poor lighting, offensive graffiti on the inside of train carriages, overcrowding, etc.

According to a press statement Mr. Hamer travelled by a suburban train - time and destination unknown. The train was spotlessly clean and only 3 minutes late!

Over 30 million passengers who are annually affected by the late and dirty trains are definitely not using the same trains and system that Mr. Hamer did!

91 million passengers use VicRail each year. Not one of them has reported seeing Mr. Hamer travelling by train.

In fact, passengers inconvenienced by the daily cancellations, late trains and poor efficiency keep demanding -

"Where is Mr. Hamer; why can't he come and witness the rail mess?" It's the cry of train travellers around Victoria.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING IN BRIEF

The Annual General Meeting of the TTA was held in the Victoria Hotel on Wednesday 30 July, 1980. The Chairman of VicRail, Mr. Alan Reiher, was the chief guest. In his address to members and guests Mr. Reiher painted a rather gloomy picture of VicRail's present and future situation. These facts are well known to members because long before Mr. Hamer discovered VicRail was a mess, we had been telling his government and proving in letters, submissions and through entries in the Guinness Records that it is a mess. Mr. Reiher did not hold out much hope of obtaining the required funds from the State government for the necessary improvements to VicRail. Mr. Reiher's pessimistic outlook for the present and future of VicRail further emphasises the need for a stronger and larger TTA to serve as the lobby group to pressure the government and politicians to reverse the present policies to downgrade public transport.

Your Office bearers elected for the year 1980/81 are: -  
Home Telephone No.

President: Dr. Charles Sowerwine  
Vice-President: John Alexopoulos  
Secretary: Ken McIntyre  
Treasurer: David Bowd  
Publicity Officer: Patrick O'Connor  
Council Members:  
 Dr. Douglas Sherman  
 Miss Lynne Thompson  
 Pat Minihan  
 Barry Gray  
 Steve Howard  
 Alex Boyne  
 Robin Vowels

New Categories of TTA Membership

At the Annual General Meeting held on 30 July, 1980 it was unanimously decided to introduce two new categories of membership.

From 1 August, 1980 there will be 3 types of membership: -

. Members	-	subscription	-	\$ 3.00	annually
. Donor Members	-	"	-	\$ 10.00	"
. Corporate Members	-	"	-	\$ 50.00	"

This change is necessitated by the need to improve our financial position and to encourage members to contribute more than the normal \$3.00 subscription fee.

Donor members and Corporate members will only have the same benefits, privileges and voting strength as other members.

We request members who can afford it to subscribe as Donor members.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 1979/80

The Train Travellers' Association has added another year to its life which could probably be best described as one of consolidation. The initial three years of its existence under the guidance of founding president Frank Casey saw a fledgling organisation rise out of public anger and frustration to a point where a framework for future advancement was established.

The main thrust during the past year has been aimed at establishing a regular basis of communications with members to encourage their continued support and to keep them informed of activities, events and progress towards our aims. The vehicle for this activity has been the regular newsletter, published on a quarterly basis, and it has proven to be most successful bringing renewed interest from members and resulting in a significant increase in media coverage.

The efforts of our founding years activities were rewarded in part during the last 12 months with increasing recognition by the media of the Train Travellers' Association as an authority on the problems associated with train travel in the State and as the voice of rail commuters. Increasingly the various arms of the media, particularly the electronic media, are seeking the views and opinions of the TTA on a wide range of transport issues. Whilst this has provided a welcome opportunity to get our message across and keep pressure on the Government and Vicrail, it has increased the workload of our Secretary significantly and during the year the General Council in an attempt to spread the load appointed Mr Patrick O'Connor to the vacant office of Publicity Officer.

Considerable effort has been directed during the year to establishing or extending our communication links with Vicrail management and the Rail Unions. In the case of Vicrail management great difficulty has been experienced in maintaining regular contact and there has been a noticeable reluctance on the part of Vicrail management to meet on a regular basis and enter into meaningful discussions aimed at identifying problems and solutions to them. On the Union side however it has become evident as our rapport has progressed that our message has been received by the Unions and accepted in principle. We are confident that continued liaison in this area will result in greater consideration of the travelling public's plight in future industrial disputes.

The Association has made itself and its views known through another avenue during the year which, whilst not having the same impact as those already mentioned, provides a further avenue for recognition and presentation of the user's viewpoint. This avenue is a number of enquiries on various matters of community interest conducted by various government organisations during the year. The most significant of these was of course the State Government enquiry into Victoria's transport system (1979 edition).

As with most voluntary organisations a small nucleus of hard working supporters form the backbone of the organisation and they have provided immense support to myself and to the Vice-President, the Secretary, Treasurer and Publicity Officer and it is most pleasing to see this group increasing at our last two monthly meetings.

In terms of membership our year has been one of growth and we are stronger now in numbers than at any time in our existence. This is a reflection of the success of the Newsletter and of a membership drive held recently.

As the outgoing president of this organisation I find it sad to report that since commencing regular daily train travel 26 years ago the standard of service has sunk to its lowest ebb. It would be easy to say we have failed - too easy. Whilst our efforts have yet to bear fruit in terms of improved funding and management, and through these two things a better standard of service, we have been successful in creating greater public awareness of deficiencies and in encouraging a greater number of Victoria's apathetic silent majority to voice their protests. During this month (July) these protests have resulted in one of the greatest acts of political hypocrisy Victoria has known. The Premier has commented that Vicrail is in a mess, almost as if it was news. The Train Travellers' Association has been telling the Premier, his Transport Ministers and his Railway Administration this for several years, providing full details of problems and their causes and has suggested remedies. I consider it an insult to the travelling public that the Premier, who must ultimately take the responsibility for the mess created by his Government, should announce in this manner that he has fouled his own nest. Such action does not give anyone confidence in the ability of the Government to improve the position.

As an Organisation we must keep up our pressure for improvements to the Vicrail system and the standard of management applied to it. In the near future the much heralded underground loop will be partly opened and this event must surely strike fear into the hearts of seasoned Melbourne commuters who have endured the years of Vicrail's neglect and mismanagement. If any advantage is to be gained from the \$400 million invested in the Loop more people must be encouraged to use the suburban rail system and they cannot be expected to do so with the prevailing standard of service. Our thrust in the coming year will need to include a close watch on the Loop's opening and continuing development. We must also place strong emphasis on one of the more basic items in our charter - representation on the Vicrail Board of Management. Only passengers feel the frustration of delays, cancellations and inefficiency and therefore we believe are in the best position to identify where action needs to be taken to remedy problems. We also believe that our advice as regular commuters would provide a significant contribution to Vicrail management.

We will continue to fight on behalf of the commuters of Victoria and we look forward to your continued support in the year to come.

- Pat Minihan  
(President)

#### A Note on Mr. Reiher's Figures

Members who were present at the AGM will recall that Mr. Reiher gave a number of discouraging figures regarding country passenger service patronage and energy efficiency.

In regard to patronage however, Mr. Reiher compared the 1975/76 high point with the 1978/79 low. If one takes figures for the whole decade, one notes a 25% rise in patronage between 1971/72 and 1975/76 and then a fall which brings patronage back to the levels of ten years ago.

In regard to energy efficiency, things are more complicated. Mr. Reiher gave overall figures for energy used per passenger for a country train vs that used per passenger for a bus and gave them as percentages.

There are two problems here. The first is simply the comparison between an 80 year old train pulled by a middle-aged freight locomotive vs a modern bus--it simply isn't fair. US government figures show that modern trains pull more seats for less fuel than buses. The only fair comparison is between trains and buses of the same vintage. A corollary to this point is that buses have much more cramped seating than trains. If train seating were as tight as coaches, you would have 100-150 seats per carriage rather than the normal 60-80. The difference is the much greater comfort available in a modern train. This potential for comfort is more important than specific figures for fuel consumption because only trains can be made attractive enough to compete with cars and airplanes, which are the real energy wasters.

The second problem is the method used by Mr. Reiher. To determine the energy efficiency of any mode, you must know both the fuel consumption per seat (Seat Miles per Gallon) and the number of passengers to get Passenger Miles Per Gallon, that is the fuel used per passenger. Mr. Reiher's figures in this regard thus tell us nothing until we know the fuel consumption per seat offered and the loadings of the vehicles he is comparing.

Most overseas experience suggests that modern trains are both more effective in attracting patronage than buses--and thus achieve higher loadings--and more energy efficient per seat.

--C. Sowerwine,  
President.

#### Is Your Subscription Current?

Most members have already paid their membership subscriptions for the 1980/81 financial year but there are still some who haven't and we request them to maintain their support for the T.T.A.

The date to which your membership is paid up is shown in the first line of the address label on your Newsletter wrapper. If the year shown is not 81 (or later) this indicates that your subscription for the current financial year has not yet been received.

If you have any queries about subscriptions please contact the Treasurer, David Bowd, telephone 452776 after hours.

## THE TRAIN TRAVELLERS' LAST STAND!

Reports of the recommendations of the Lonie Inquiry into Transport (Victorian Transport Study) published to date, confirm the fears we expressed in our last Newsletter that the Enquiry will become an Execution of public transport in Victoria. The Transport Minister Mr. Maclellan's bias in favour of the car over public transport is too well-known. The pro-car bias of the Transport Study group leader, Mr. Lonie has been well documented by The Melbourne Times (30/4/80). The biased findings of this study will be used to justify the final destruction of the rail system towards which the Hamer government has been working since 1969.

Some of the recommendations involve the:

- . . closure of more country rail lines.
- . building more Freeways costing \$600 million. Remember the Hamer government always claims to have no money for rail improvements!
- . removal of regulations on transport of freight, which will kill the rail freight system.

The use of our scarce fuel resources, greater pollution and health hazards, more road congestion, road deaths and accidents, denial of consumer choice: all these will follow if we let the Hamer government force us to rely on cars for transport.

## YOU CAN STOP THIS DESTRUCTION OF VICTORIA'S PUBLIC TRANSPORT.

Write to the Hon. R. J. Hamer, Premier's Office, E. Melbourne 3002 or to your local State Member of Parliament and to the newspapers and protest about the biased recommendations of a pro-car group being accepted as policy by the government.

- . demand improvements to public transport.
- . object to the waste of public money on Freeways.
- . object to the closure of country rail lines.

Ask your family members, workmates, neighbours to join your protest.

## REMEMBER THIS IS YOUR LAST STAND!

If we fail to thwart the Hamer government in its plans we could kiss good-bye to our Public Transport in Victoria.

More Members and Helpers are Needed

If you are not already a member of the Train Travellers' Association but would like to join please send your name and address to the Secretary, Train Travellers' Association, G.P.O. Box 251B, Melbourne, 3001 together with a cheque or money order for \$3 (cash is also acceptable but there is a risk of it being lost in the mail). Applications will be acknowledged.

Members can help by encouraging their friends, relations and colleagues to join the T.T.A. The more members we have, the more effective our organisation will be.

We also need volunteers to assist with occasional small jobs such as handing out leaflets, attending meetings, etc. If you are able to help in this way please notify the Secretary so that you can be contacted when the need arises in your locality.

## A MORNING IN THE LIFE OF A HURSTBRIDGE COMMUTER

It is a cold damp and windy morning as the Hurstbridge commuter leaves home to make his daily pilgrimage to the city on the 6:45. Having showered and breakfasted through a power failure and being long experienced in the rigours of coping with such events on the legendary Hurstbridge Railway Line the commuter wends his way down to the station with a sense of mixed apprehension and adventure. With what nerve-shattering experience will Vicrail challenge his sanity today? History tells that the possibilities are unlimited.

As he passes the end of the stabling sidings a lifeless train indicates that all is not well. After parking and locking the car the full extent of the problem becomes evident. No train has moved from its overnight position and the regular stalwarts of the 6:45 stand forlornly around the station entrance. With a sense of futility and despair the Hurstbridge commuter walks across the potholed unpaved car park, the mud splashing his freshly polished shoes and seeks answers to the obvious questions.

The regulars have already ascertained that lightning has knocked out the electrical sub-stations at Wattle Glen and Diamond Creek and, despite the elapse of more than two hours, power has still not been restored. Opinion is that a bus service is to be substituted, although no-one seems sure of what the course of events will be. Spirits rise when the familiar bearded figure of the bustling Station Assistant appears and explains the problem. The Wattle Glen Sub-station is still inoperative and, after a light-hearted suggestion that pushing the useless trains that far would solve the problem, all are assured that a bus to Eltham will be along shortly to connect with a train that will follow the schedule of the 6:45 to the city. Several minutes later the familiar figure re-appears to comment, after observing that no bus is in sight, that these buses run nearly as late as the trains and then scurries off to make another phone call.

The bus finally arrives and all are conveyed to Eltham, picking up passengers at Wattle Glen and Diamond Creek along the way. Arriving at Eltham four minutes late the empty platform tells the story. The substitute train for the 6:45 has departed without waiting for the bus and all must suffer a 13 minute penalty to the journey. So much for co-ordination! The Hurstbridge commuter, spirits at a low ebb, his Eltham travelling companions already on their way to the city, walks dejectedly along the platform as the next train is shunted from the siding. Arriving at his usual carriage he boards and sits in his normal spot without noticing the wet seat. Attempting to dry-off the wet trousers he observes the reason for his indignity - five broken windows. Moving to a dry seat he settles down and opens the paper. The reason for failing to notice the wet seat then immediately becomes obvious - the carriage has no lighting. He is used to riding in half-lit cars on dull winter mornings, but reading under these conditions is impossible. Undaunted he moves to the next car only to be confronted by the same problem, but at least there are no broken windows. A corner seat and the paper held up at an angle to the window is a reasonable compromise, and the train sets off.

At least the journey is uneventful and the city is reached on time where the train can be taken out of service for repairs to the offending lights and windows. This however is apparently beyond Vicrail's organisational capacity despite the hour and a half or more available to give advance notice of the need for repairs and the growing number of trains filling the stabling sidings that could be substituted. Withdrawal from service does not take place and commuters on the 8:02 to Macleod must also endure unlit cars and broken windows but, fortunately, the damp posteriors of incoming passengers will save them from wet seats.

As he hurries along Swanston Street to avoid the next shower of rain the Hurstbridge commuter attempts some mental arithmetic to determine whether the debit to flex time will rob him of his day off and laments that he and his kind are a hardy lot to endure the endless punishment from Vicrail. As a long time supporter of public transport however he will be back again tomorrow for a further dose of man's inhumanity to man - courtesy of Vicrail.

- Pat Minihan

Hurstbridge Line Co-ordinator

#### Rail Strikes Are Self Destructive.

The TTA has always been critical of the frequent strikes and stoppages by the rail unions and has repeatedly stressed that such strikes destroy the confidence of users and potential users in the reliability of the services, which leads to the loss of patronage and ultimately destroys the system which the unions claim to be campaigning for improvement.

The massive decline in rail patronage in the past decade can be attributed to wanton Government neglect, poor management and these frequent rail strikes.

By holding the public to ransom or as hostages in their disputes with the rail management and government, the rail unions have lost all public sympathy. The rail strikes, like all strikes, affect the innocent and fellow workers who lose their wages, leave credits, etc. or are put to unnecessary expense to get to work. Unemployed youth without private means of transport are treated as "transport risks" by potential employers because they will not be in a position to get to work in the event of a strike. Every passenger turned away by a strike is one meal ticket less for the rail worker and unions.

In the recent 6-day rail strike TTA secretary Ken McIntyre and Publicity Officer Patrick O'Connor played a major role through their direct approaches to all the union leaders involved, the rail management and government to get the strike settled. Much of their spare time was involved in behind the scenes mediatory work, press and radio contacts, etc.

The TTA has offered its services to both the unions and the rail management to serve as an intermediary to avoid strikes and stoppages or in quick settlement in the overall interests of the travelling public and so prevent damage to the rail system.

#### WEST GATE BRIDGE TO BE CLOSED?

In the twelve months to October 1979, the West Gate Bridge lost \$17 million. VicGate, the operating authority for the bridge, is planning to cut out most of the lanes. The asphalt and cement are to be ripped up and sold for scrap, in order to offset the deficit. Electric lighting is to be replaced by candle-light in a bid to reduce operating costs. Tenders have been called for the removal of surplus toll booths and pylons.

The secretary of the Private Transport Travellers Association (PTTA), Mr Ken McInsteelrim, said that the inefficient managers of VicGate should be sacked, and be replaced by representatives of users and people sympathetic to the road system (Age 28/1/80). The Chairman of VicGate, Mr G. Ibbs, said that "our job has not been one of trying to run the bridge..." (Age 8/10/79).

The Minister of Transport, Mr Maclelland, said that bridge patronage had declined to such an extent that it was only being used by a few thousand cars daily. Most of the time, particularly during the early hours of the morning, no-one used it at all. "We are not going to run empty bridges. 'Soft options', such as lifting taxes to meet private transport deficits, were not the answer." (Age 15/2/80). He said that the average Australian "would put his wife in the Family Law Court and starve his children, before giving up public transport" (Age 15/2/80). In due course, the steelwork would be salvaged. Somewhat ominously, he concluded: "As signals became unserviceable, they would be ripped up because it cost too much to repair them".

The secretary of the Healesville Road Commuters' Group called for lifting of speed restrictions. At some places, the speed limit is 5 mph (8 kph) and it now takes 45 minutes to cross the bridge. To brighten the atmosphere of decay, the group recently painted one of the toll booths.

The PTTA complained about potholes: "At one place, where a pylon has subsided, there is a 180 metre-deep hole." People are being forced to wait up to 30 minutes to cross the bridge. Last week, in industrial action aimed at reducing delays, toll-collectors refused to collect tolls at peak times (Age 30/4/80). The Government's response was prompt: it reopened one of the lanes after repairing it with sawdust and glue. Said Mr Maclelland: "Concrete is too expensive. We just haven't got the money." The rail system has priority. He continued: "Rail funding is a tremendously important question. Inevitably we must decide if we are to have the rail lines we need or whether we go on patching it up." (Age 15/2/80)

The secretary of the Australian Roadways Union (ARU), Mr R. C. Tailor, said that "2000 toll collectors would be put out of a job. At a time of high unemployment, this was a disaster for Victoria. The Government is installing toll-collecting machines. At present, we need two staff to operate each toll-booth. The cuts will undoubtedly lead to an increase in taxes."

When interviewed yesterday in the comfort of his private train, the chairman of the RAPIDtransit Cooperative of Victoria (RACV) replied to road users' criticisms: "The Flinders Street Railway handles 70,000 passengers at EACH peak time, whereas the bridge carries a mere 20,000 drivers in a whole DAY! Funds have gone where they will benefit the most people, that's all."

- Robin Vowels

### Impressions of Brisbane's New Electric Trains

Having read the enthusiastic comment by Pat Minihan in the March 1980 edition of the T.T.A. Newsletter I was eager to try out these new trains when I visited Brisbane myself in April.

The Melbourne media have made little mention of these high standard trains which commenced operation late last year and many people here are consequently unaware that Brisbane is now developing the most modern suburban railway system in Australia.

The development of these modern trains is part of a progressive upgrading of the Brisbane suburban system over the last 15 years from a somewhat antiquated operation of wooden carriages drawn by steam locomotives. During this time a sophisticated automatic signalling system has been installed and diesel-electric locomotives and stainless steel carriages have been brought into service.

In 1973 a survey of consumer preferences in urban rail carriage design was conducted jointly by the Queensland Railways and the federal government's Bureau of Transport Economics. Comprehensive questionnaires were filled in by people (not only rail commuters) living near railway routes.

The results of this survey showed that there was a significant consensus in commuter likes and dislikes and the new electric trains have been designed largely in conformity with the wishes of the majority expressed in the survey. The resulting train design has naturally had good public acceptance.

Regrettably, to the best of my knowledge, VicRail has never bothered to enquire into the wishes of its customers, with the result that in our stainless steel trains we are inflicted with such things as overhead straps which are hard for standees to reach and uncomfortable seat pads for sitting passengers. These were two items strongly disapproved in the Brisbane survey and, of course, they were not incorporated in their trains. Instead there are hand-grips along the aisle at the end of each comfortably upholstered transverse seat.

The new Brisbane trains also feature air-conditioning, double-glazed windows, carpeted floors with the carpet continuing up the walls to the window frames, public address system and power operated doors.

The air-conditioning system is quite powerful and effective being 28 kW per carriage. This is about 6 times the power required to air-condition an average house, but is needed to cope with Brisbane's often warm and humid climate, the number of occupants and the frequent opening of the doors.

Air-conditioning of Melbourne's new trains has at last been agreed to by VicRail and one wonders why such an obvious benefit to passengers and crews has been resisted for so long. Air-conditioning not only provides comfortable interior temperatures but also with double-glazed windows seals out dust and rain and reduces noise levels.

The seating arrangements in the new Brisbane trains are very good and of unusual design. The double bench seats on each side of a relatively wide aisle are suspended by cantilevering from the walls. There are no supports under the seats which makes floor cleaning easy and effective and allows adequate space for passengers' hand luggage, etc. The seats are robustly constructed yet well upholstered and covered with brightly coloured green and yellow striped or blue woollen fabrics. Special seats near the doors are reserved for handicapped or wheel-chair passengers.

Photos by the author:



New Brisbane electric trains have a neat and attractive styling.



Bright and well designed interior of a Brisbane electric train.



The power operated doors are actuated by moving the door handle so it is not necessary to force them open manually and they are closed or unlocked under the control of the train driver. Just before the train stops at each station signs beside the doors are illuminated to indicate which ones have been unlocked. There is communication provided between the carriages and the opening of the fairly wide doors on adjoining carriages is synchronised. These doors remain open for several seconds then close again automatically, in a similar way to the inner and outer doors of a lift. The passage between carriages is surrounded by a diaphragm so that there is no draught when the doors are opened and there is security for people moving between carriages.

This facility enables a conductor to be employed to move through the train receiving fares and usually there is no collection of tickets at station exits. At the time of my visit fares were about 30% lower than in Melbourne for equal distances.

The electric supply is at 25 kV a.c., a more economical system than the outmoded 1.5 kV d.c. supply used by VicRail since fewer and simpler sub-stations are required along the route and the overhead wiring need not be so heavy.

Stepless motor control enables the trains to accelerate smoothly and rapidly to a top speed of 100 kph between stations, an exhilarating and purposeful sensation. Braking is also smooth.

The bogies are fitted with composite rubber/metal main-springs similar to those of Melbourne's orange trams. These give a smooth and steady ride despite the narrow 1067 mm track gauge. The most pleasing feature however is the low noise level emitted by the wheels. With double-glazed windows and carpeted floors the interior noise level in the carriages is very low and normal conversation is possible even while passing through tunnels.

Another very pleasant surprise was the cleanliness of the carriages. I travelled in two different trains and both were devoid of rubbish or dirt on the floor or seats and the absence of graffiti was also significant. In fact both trains were as fresh and clean as one could wish.

Each three carriage train can be automatically coupled with another as proposed likewise with Melbourne's new generation stainless steel trains. The length of the carriages is similar and they will have other features in common such as a public address system, double-glazed windows and carpeted floors. Unfortunately, in other respects the new trains which should go into service soon in Melbourne are well below the standard already set in Brisbane. An article in the VicRail publication "Rail Ways", May 1979 edition, entitled "Our Special Silvers!" has illustrations showing a rather austere interior with the seating arrangement no better than in the 60-year-old Tait trains. Neither does there appear to be any provision for communication between the carriages.

To date electrification of the Darra and Ferny Grove lines is operational and is virtually complete as far as Ipswich. Work will commence on another two lines shortly and most of the suburban system will be electrified by the mid 1980s. While I was in Brisbane the Queensland Parliament approved the reconstruction and electrification of a section of suburban line to Thorneside which was dismantled in 1970 and also the construction of a completely new commuter railway route to serve the developing Redcliffe Peninsula expected to be finished by 1984.

The Queensland Government is also actively considering the electrification of thousands of kilometres of main country lines, an enlightened approach to alleviating the effects of the impending shortage of liquid fuels for transport.

- David Bowd

# TREASURER'S REPORT : FINANCIAL YEAR 1979/80

Cheque book balance at 1979-07-01 \$ 159.04

## Receipts

Subscriptions	1979/80	\$ 225.00	
"	1980/81	\$ 327.00	
"	1981/82	\$ 3.00	
			\$ 555.00
Donations & arrears		\$ 98.10	
Cheque account interest		\$ 3.88	
			\$ 101.98
			\$ 816.02

Subscriptions received in the financial year 1979/80 increased by 88% compared with the previous year, but donations contributed were down by 60%.

Members maintained their traditional support by giving additional donations but the higher level of donations in the previous financial year was mainly due to a collection at the public meeting during October 1978 held in the Assembly Hall.

It is hoped that the introduction of the \$10 Donor and \$50 Corporate membership categories, if well supported, will defer the need for any increase in the basic \$3 membership subscription.

## Expenses

C.T.A. Membership (1979/80 & 1980/81)	\$ 80.00
Hire V.R.I. Room 236 (July '79 A.G.M.)	\$ 22.50
Newsletters postage	\$ 126.40
Printing	
Return address labels	\$ 33.43
March 1980 Newsletter	\$ 77.05
Letterheads	\$ 9.78
Recruiting leaflets	\$ 91.94
Typing of Transport Enquiry submission	\$ 50.00
Letters, stationery, photocopies, etc.	\$ 182.89
	\$ 673.99
Cheque book balance at 1980-06-30	\$ 142.03
	\$ 816.02

During the 1979/80 financial year we took two significant steps to reduce costs and thereby extend members funds.

Early in the year approval was sought and obtained from Australia Post to have the T.T.A. Newsletter classified as a registered publication - category B. This has halved the cost of postage per item.

The format of the Newsletter was changed in June to reduce the page size from A4 to A5. This has halved the cost of printing per page and it has also made the Newsletter easier to handle while reading.

- David Bowd  
Treasurer

'VICTORIAN TRANSPORT STUDY'

The 'Transport Study' has begun publishing its reports. So far, its recommendations include building \$600 million worth of freeways (including one under the Botanical Gardens--'Age', 29/8/80), increasing the number of trucks on the roads ('Age', 1/9/80), suppressing most Victorian rail passenger trains and replacing them with buses ('Age', 22/8/80), and curtailing Melbourne public transport: the 'Age' of 5/9/80 even tips the dismantling of the Port Melbourne electrified railway line and its replacement by a branch of the West Gate Freeway. Presumably St. Kilda will be next.

These recommendations are what one might expect from a 'Study' made up essentially of a BHP executive and a CRB chief planner under the leadership of a retired BHP executive, Mr. W.M. Lonie, who has made his extreme bias known in a 'Melbourne Times' interview of 30 April, 1980.

The recommendations, if implemented, would make Melbourne into a decentralised agglomeration of suburbs linked by freeways--like Los Angeles, a city without a heart--and would make Victoria largely dependent on imported petrol for our transport needs. Yet there is every reason to think the Hamer government may implement them: they fit in with the latest MMBW plan and with the stated intentions of the transport minister, Mr. Maclellan.

The Road Deficit

Mr. Maclellan has been focussing public attention on the deficit, claiming that public transport loses money and roads do not. But in 1977/78, the last year for which figures are available, the CRB, local government and other agencies spent \$351 million on roads. To this must be added the RoSTA budget, the EPA budget for vehicle caused air pollution, traffic police and emergency services (a total of at least \$50 million), and the cost of road accidents, estimated by RoSTA at \$430 million and the CRB at \$346 million. As the table shows, this makes a total of \$757 million using the most conservative figures. Against this are less than \$86 million taken in fees under the Motor Car Act and in road maintenance charges (since replaced by an increased tax on petrol, by which the private motorist now subsidises trucks).

A conservative estimate of the road deficit is thus some \$671 million, nearly four times the combined operating losses of VicRail and the MMTB for the same year. To be sure, petrol tax receipts have risen since 1978, but this is only a temporary phenomenon: by the mid-1980s, when most of our petrol is imported, we will necessarily be paying imported prices and these tax receipts will disappear as quickly as they came.

Every mode of transport costs the community money. The costs of public transport are highly visible while those of motor cars are hidden, but both cost money. The decision before us is not about deficits but about the best transport system for our money: moving people, not cars, by the combination of modes which produces the best overall results for the community, the best petrol efficiency, and the most desirable patterns of land use. By any of these criteria, the 'Transport Study' is a put-up job designed to justify the policy which the government is already pursuing: fare rises and service reductions for public transport, vastly increased expenditures for roads.

Consumer Preferences

Mr. Lonie and Mr. Maclellan argue at length that consumer preference is exclusively for cars. But they ignore many facts: the standing and capital costs of cars, combined with the hidden road subsidy, make road travel seem cheaper than alternatives despite its cost to the community; 1/4 of all Victorian households are without cars, many more are without a second car, and 1/2 the population have no driver's license; and, most of all, a substantial proportion of trips are still made by public transport, despite poor service and high fares: 1/3 of work trips and 1/5 of all trips throughout the whole of Melbourne are by public transport--see Figure 1.

Moreover, whenever a reasonable public transport alternative is offered, it attracts substantial patronage: from 1972 to 1975, when fares were held steady, patronage held steady for VicRail suburban traffic, increased 9% for the MMTB, and 29% for VicRail country traffic--see Figure 2. The East Burwood tram extension (which Mr. Lonie calls 'a mistake'...) is attracting 4,400 passengers a day--far more than expected--and 28% of them previously used cars.

An 'Age' survey of September, 1978, found that 77% of Victorians thought the answer to transport problems lay in public transport, not freeways. Hitherto, the government at least made a pretence of improving public transport, but now it is trying to shift the framework of debate: the question is no longer how to improve public transport but whether or not to eliminate it.

Petrol Efficiency

The 'Study' report on 'Fuel for Transport' has the merit of making its bias clear. It begins with a commitment for Australia 'to enter the 21st Century' with 'an expanding motor transport fleet being committed to personal transport systems /motor cars/'. Studies showing that public transport can attract more users are ignored. Other facts are distorted. The report notes that Melbourne trams are five times more energy-efficient than cars in peak-hours and that trains are eight times more efficient, and barely mentions that trams and suburban trains use electricity, not petrol. There are more than 200 million trips made each year in Melbourne without any consumption of petrol, in trams and trains, but the 'Study' wants to curtail public transport.

Similarly, the report admits that disruptions to petrol supplies are an 'increasing possibility', but ignores this possibility in its recommendations. The Victorian Parliament Conservation of Energy Resources Committee reports that by 1987 70% of Australia's petroleum will be imported and that road transport accounts for nearly half the use of this petroleum (43%)--see Figure 3. The TTA has joined other groups in calling for a 'fail-safe' transport system, including enough use of public transport, especially electrified, to ensure that Melbourne can continue to function in the event of interruptions to petrol supplies, but the 'Study' prefers to ignore this danger.

Country Rail Services

Both the 'Study' and the VicRail management are out to get country passenger services. Having allowed them to deteriorate since World War 1 now becomes an argument for abolishing them.



Of course a lightly loaded 80 year-old train may use more fuel per passenger than a fully loaded modern bus. But modern trains move more seats for less fuel than equivalent buses and give passengers seats that are twice as roomy, the chance to read, usable toilets, drinking water, baggage and bicycle transport, and even buffet services, which attract patrons. Buses are a transport of last resort, even in the US, where they have an unparalleled freeway network.

Despite antiquated service, patronage on Victorian country trains has held steady during the last decade--see Figure 2. Although service disruptions and fare rises have wiped out the gains made between 1972 and 1975, patronage now is as high as ten years ago. The solution is thus not to close more lines but to modernise them. For 1/6 what the 'Study' proposes to spend on freeways, Victoria could have air-conditioned country carriages and some improvements in speed. As soaring petrol prices curtail long country trips, country towns will need modern rail service to survive.

#### Transport and the City of Melbourne

The 'Study' has so far avoided question of land use, but its recommendations would have a disastrous effect on Melbourne. The Central Business District cannot survive without public transport: 2/3 of work trips to the CBD and 1/2 of all other trips there are made by public transport--see Figure 1. To have enough freeways to handle these people in cars would require destroying most of the buildings in the CBD! What would actually happen is that increased dependence on the motor car would spawn more suburban sprawl and patterns of land use by-passing the CBD.

After completing a traffic study of 30 world cities for the OECD, a British researcher stated, 'when road capacity was insufficient there occurred a process of traffic restraint whereby the expected volume did not arise; and, conversely, when fast, open roads were built there occurred a process of traffic generation, whereby the road attracted more traffic than anticipated.' Thus building freeways favours traffic patterns toward the suburbs and away from the CBD. The study's conclusion about Melbourne: 'If the highway plans go ahead and the public transport programme is cut back, the metropolis will move rapidly into a weak-centre strategy; if the public transport programme is fully implemented . . . and if the cuts fall upon the transversal road projects, Melbourne may turn back towards a strong-centre strategy.'

Mr. Maclellan, Mr. Hamer, and the 'Transport Study' are leading Melbourne toward becoming a weak centre like Los Angeles: a series of suburbs in search of a city. Unless the public act now, this will soon be a reality.

(Dr.) Charles Sowerwine,

President, Train Travellers' Association.

Source for Figure 3:

Parliament of Victoria,  
Conservation of Energy Resources Committee,  
'Fourth Progress Report: Restructuring of Motoring Costs',  
Melbourne, 1979-80.

Figure 1:

Percentage of Trips by Public Transport

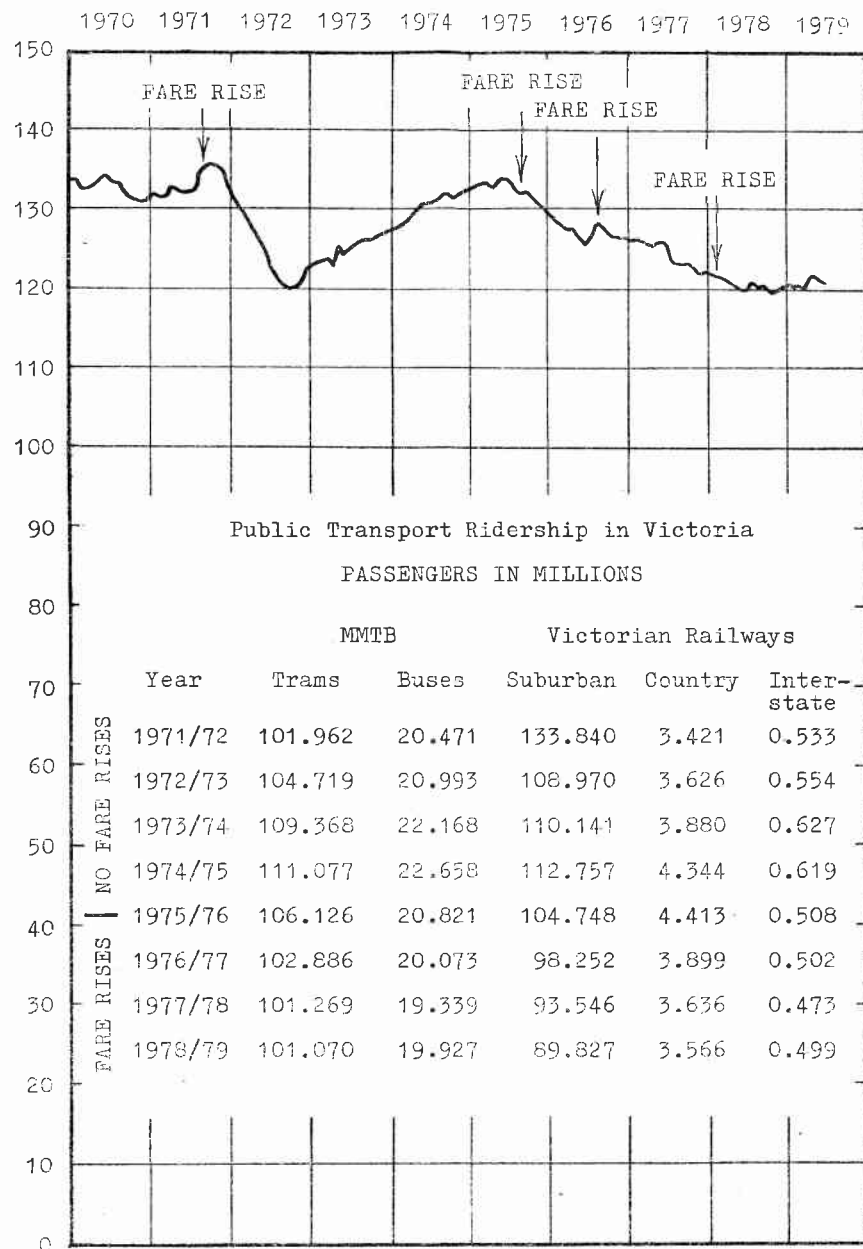
Trip Attraction	Percentage by Public Transport		
	Work	Non-Work	All Purposes
C.B.D.	69.5	53.3	60.5
Inner Suburbs (excl. C.B.D.)	36.1	24.8	30.0
Middle and Outer Suburbs	23.9	13.0	15.8
Total Melbourne Statistical Division	33.8	17.5	22.5

Table:

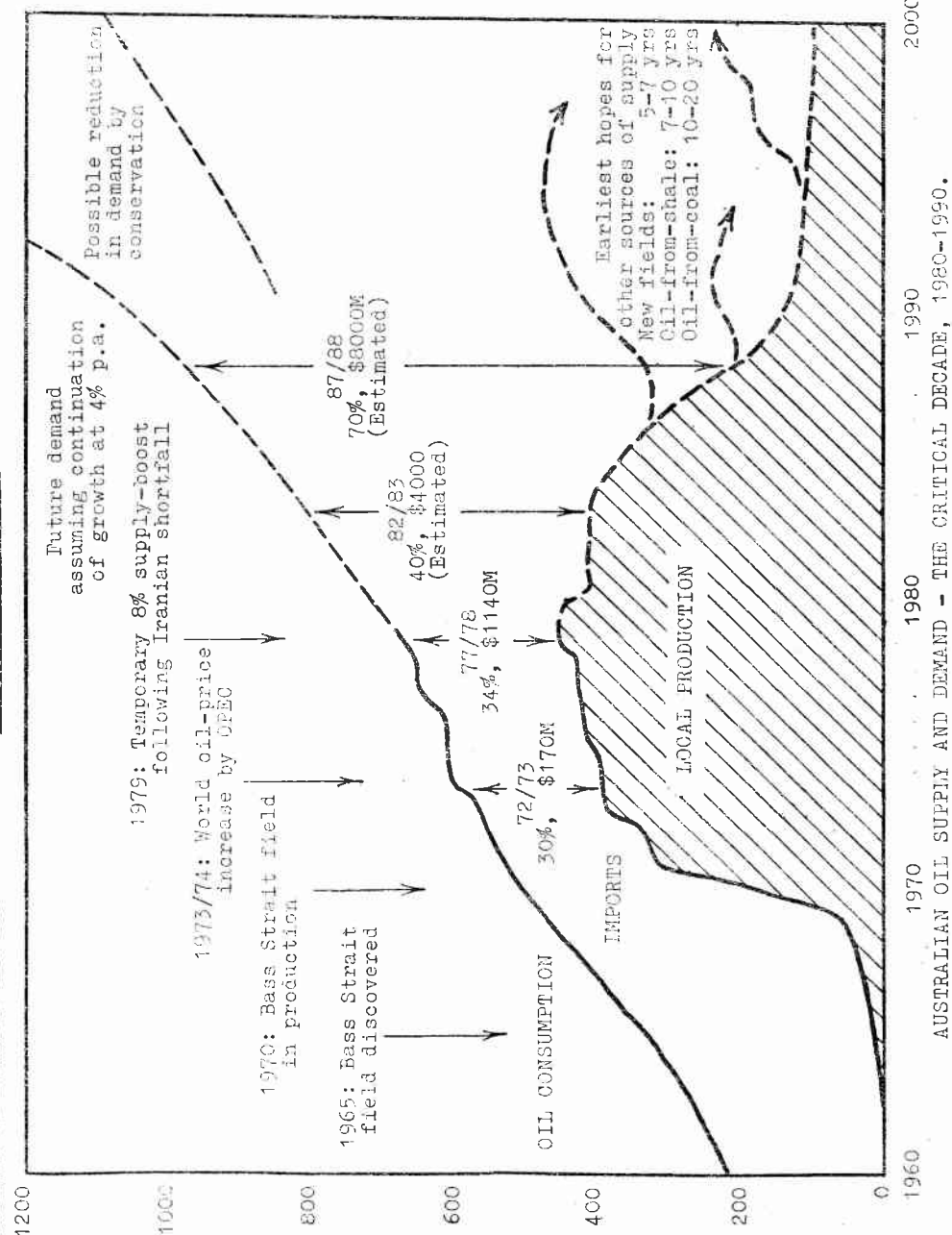
Road-Related Expenditures 1977/78

Roadworks (CRB, local gov't, others)	\$351,000,000
RoSTA budget: \$7,921,000	7,921,000
EPA budget: \$5,498,000; portion for air pollution	2,000,000
Police: \$142,900,000 current 9,699,000 capital	
\$152,599,000 total, of which 1/3 traffic	50,000,000
Cost of Road Toll (RoSTA est. \$430,000,000), CRB est.	346,000,000
TOTAL	\$756,921,000
Total Receipts	-85,750,000
ROAD DEFICIT	\$671,170,000

MMTB Trams and Buses: Total Ridership



## The Petrol Shortfall



## STAR BARGAIN FOR ALPHINGTON COMMUTERS

Alphington commuters to the City have a golden opportunity at their disposal to beat the recent fare rises to some degree. All they have to do is get off at North Richmond to buy another ticket on Monday morning (or on the first day of a quarter if a quarterly ticket holder) to avail themselves of this bargain. Once they have done this they may renew their Melbourne to North Richmond weekly ticket in the City on Friday afternoons.

The bargain arises because of an anomaly in the zones and fare steps used by Vicrail to calculate suburban fares. The result of this anomaly is that a weekly ticket from Alphington to North Richmond costs \$4.20 and from North Richmond to the City \$2.40. This is a total of \$6.70 whereas a weekly from Alphington to the City costs \$7.20. The saving is 50¢ per week or over \$20 per annum.

Obviously what is required is for the fare steps to be adjusted to eliminate the anomaly and to make the fare from Alphington \$6.70. In any efficient organization such a simple matter would have been rectified long ago, but in their usual style Vicrail seems unable to come to grips with the matter to take simple remedial action. The golden opportunity was the recent fare increase and, despite statements by Vicrail in 1979 that it would be looked at at the next fare increase, nothing has been done.

TTA member Heinz Kuehlenthal has taken the matter up personally with Vicrail but has struck the same procrastination that the TTA has been fighting since its inception. Mr. Kuehlenthal has made a full study of the problem and has suggested to Vicrail how the matter might be easily remedied. He pointed out to Vicrail that Thornbury and Gardiner commuters were also similarly disadvantaged by the uneven fare steps.

This case is a clear demonstration of one of the major problems within Vicrail that the TTA has been highlighting for some years - poor management. If Vicrail was an efficient properly managed organization, an anomaly such as this would never have arisen, let alone been allowed to continue. Heinz Kuehlenthal is to be congratulated for his initiative and efforts and it is to be hoped that the lack of response from Vicrail does not dampen his enthusiasm.

- Pat Minihan

Hurstbridge Line Co-ordinator

## Contributions to the Newsletter are Welcome

We would like to have your contributions for the December Newsletter. Please send them to the Secretary.

Articles may be brief or longer and it will help us if you can have them ready well before the deadline of 3rd. December 1980, the date of the last Council meeting this year.

The Newsletter is circulated to all T.T.A. members and also to Members of Parliament, major newspapers, T.V. and radio stations. If your article arouses interest it could well be republished to a much larger audience.