



A New Year, a New Team

Welcome to the first PTUA News for 2002. We hope you have all had a restful holiday period.

As some of you may have heard, there has been a major change to the committee of the PTUA: this year will see the PTUA face the world without the leadership of long-term president Dr Paul Mees.

Over the holidays, Paul handed in his resignation. Over the last few years, Paul had juggled the roles of PTUA President and an increasingly influential transport academic. At the end of the day, Paul felt that his career must come first.

In his 8 years as president, Paul was responsible for leading the PTUA through some of the most difficult times for public transport in Victoria. Under his leadership the organisation was clear and uncompromising in its demands.

Many battles were won. Who could forget the huge threat public transport faced under the first Kennett government? Or the daft days of the scratch ticket? Both campaigns won under his leadership. We will be sorry to see him leave the committee, but he assures us that he

will continue to be a very active 'ordinary' member. Paul explains himself further in a letter to members that we have printed elsewhere in this newsletter.

In his place, the committee has appointed long-term committee member and former secretary Les Chandra as president for the remainder of 2002. He will have the support of other long standing committee members, as well as several new members.

The committee has met and planned out an ambitious year for 2002. The PTUA will continue to campaign in the outer east suburbs, trying to get a decent public transport service, and to see a rational allocation of transport funds. We will continue to point out the broken promises of the government. We will continue to fight the disaster that is automatic ticketing. There will be exciting new campaigns in inner and outer suburbs. Members will be kept posted as campaigns develop.

In short, although some of the faces may be different, 2002 will be an exciting year for the PTUA. We hope all members will contribute to make this an effective one.

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Traffic chokes City of Yarra

At the planning weekend on 12 January, the PTUA Committee decided to campaign in the lead up to the local council elections in March, focussing on selected wards within the City of Yarra. Yarra is alone among the inner-city councils, with most of its transport planning aimed at providing more parking while paying lip service to public transport and cycling.

The PTUA is planning to engage in formal and informal discussion with candidates to seek their support for a range of institutional and policy changes at the council. This would include support for better tram priority, traffic calming and pedestrianisation (including on main roads), and advocacy for more transport alternatives for the traffic that currently chokes the inner city on a daily basis.

Members are encouraged to help with the campaign by lobbying their local councillors and council candidates and writing letters to the editor of local papers. A public

meeting is also being planned - please monitor our website at www.ptua.org.au and talk to your friends and neighbours about sustainable transport's role in keeping the inner city liveable.

More info ⇒ www.ptua.org.au

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Keeping in touch...

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World Wide Web

Our home page is at www.ptua.org.au

The PTUA members' discussion list is at
www.yahogroups.com/group/ptua

Committee Members

Les Chandra – President
Anna Morton – Vice President
Vaughan Williams – Secretary
Lucy Oates – Assistant Secretary
Daniel Borowski – Treasurer
Daniel Bowen – Newsletter editor
John Cox
Hayden Jones
Martin Koval
Bronwen Machin
Tim Mattingsbrooke
Anthony Morton
Tim Petersen – Convenor, Geelong branch
Miriam Powell
David Robertson
Luke Savage

Committee Meetings

Third Thursday of each month. Members are welcome to attend. Please call the office for details

PTUA Plans for 2002

The PTUA Committee conducted its annual Strategic Planning Weekend on the 12th and 13th of January at Commonground near Seymour. Aably facilitated by long-standing member Ralph Mclean – among whose many claims to fame is the establishment of the far side tram stop at the Exhibition Buildings – the Committee discussed and reflected on the context the organisation is in and strategy for the short and medium term.

The Committee selected a number of exciting and challenging campaigns and projects to pursue this year. On the organisational front, we will be preparing and launching our new policy document for Melbourne to replace the valid but dated Greening Melbourne. We will also be beginning a serious membership drive aiming to increase both regular and corporate members. Our members, and only our members, are responsible for keeping the PTUA afloat both financially and organisationally - without your ongoing support and activism, we could not function.

The Committee has decided to diversify our campaigning, while accepting that the organisation can only have one major campaign at a time. We will therefore work on different campaigns in sequence for 2002. In the early part of the year, we will be campaigning in local council elections, focussing on selected wards in the City of Yarra. Yarra is the "weakest link" amongst inner-city councils in promoting the cause of sustainable transport and we hope to influence candidates to make it a higher priority.

During the middle part of the year we hope to be able to take action on long-standing public transport issues in the developing northern suburbs, to follow on from our minor victory on Craigieburn services.

We will continue to support Environment Victoria in their excellent work on the regional fast trains project, as well as looking at issues within Geelong and other regional areas.

Later in the year, our long running Outer East campaign will again enter a peak. We have not changed our policy in this area and will continue to push for our package to be implemented in the lead up to the state election.

Throughout the year, we will be preparing a comprehensive proposal for late-night service improvements, which we hope to launch at the end of the year to coincide with New Years Eve celebrations. The lack of effective late night public transport in general and on New Years Eve in particular was topical this year and the Committee feels this to be an important area in which Melbourne lags behind other cities.

To run this demanding schedule for the year, the PTUA will need the continuing support, advocacy and activism of its members. All of us must become advocates for better public transport - we need every member to contribute to the best of their ability. Write letters to the editor, ring talkback radio, and lobby your local MP. Encourage your friends and neighbours to do the same and to join the PTUA. We will get there quicker with your help.

Copy deadline for the next PTUA news is 15th March

Newsletter production: Daniel Bowen, Peter Parker and Vaughan Williams. Printed on recycled paper by Flash Print, Collingwood.
As always, our thanks to Max Nicholson and the rest of the mailout team.

Airport rail link scrapped

The State government has gone back on its promise to construct a rail link to the airport following a consultants report that the project would not be viable.

The government's public/private partnership proposal would have required the construction of a special line between the Airport and Spencer Street Station. As with the unsuccessful airport line in Sydney, passengers would pay a premium fare to use the service. The consultants found that predicted passenger volumes would not justify the line being built.

The PTUA is not surprised at the adverse finding. As the Sydney experience demonstrates, an expensive new line poorly integrated with existing public transport and charging premium fares was never going to be successful.

The most successful airport lines overseas are run as integral components of their urban public transport systems. The PTUA considers that Melbourne should do likewise, with airport services operating via the Broadmeadows line and attracting normal Met fares.

Service integration would make public transport much more attractive to others who use the airport, including those who work there and family members seeing relatives off. As an interim step, the PTUA supports the incorporation of Skybus into the existing Met fare system and improved bus services between the airport and Broadmeadows.

We also believe that it is unwise to judge the viability of long term infrastructure by looking at short term effects of events such as the Ansett collapse and September 11th.

Melbourne lags on late night transport

Melbourne is falling behind other cities when it comes to providing New Year's Day public transport. Trains and trams ran an hour later than usual, but the 1am finishing times were still too early for many. And these were the lucky ones; the hundreds of thousands in suburbs served only by bus had little choice but to stay at home, risk driving or try to find a scarce taxi.

The PTUA considers that given the mounting road toll (especially drink driving) and the usual shortage of taxis, a great opportunity to use public transport to get people home was missed. If the government was serious about the road toll, it should ensure adequate public transport.

Clearly, Melbourne's late night public transport is inadequate, both generally and on New Years Eve. A look at other cities in Australia and overseas confirms that we lag behind the pack:

- New York and Chicago run their suburban trains 24 hours a day
- London, Sydney and Toronto operate train replacement bus services between 1am and 5am, seven nights a week – with standard daily tickets accepted
- Perth runs its trains until 3am every Friday and Saturday night

Perhaps West Australians stay out later on weekends than Victorians, but more likely the difference is caused by a lack of serious planning in Melbourne's public transport. Even the taxi industry acknowledges that taxis are not suitable for moving significant numbers of people in a short space of time.

This is particularly apparent during big late night events such as the recent Australian Open tennis (one match went until 2am this year), but long queues for taxis can be found in the city on any Friday or Saturday night after midnight.

During this year, the PTUA will be preparing a more detailed policy on late night services. This will include wide consultation and be launched later in the year in preparation for a campaign on the issue. Issues and possible measures we will examine include:

- Extending the Nightrider buses both to more suburbs and more nights of the week
- Running after-midnight trains, particularly on Friday and Saturday nights
- Running a skeleton all-night tram network linking major nightlife precincts such as St Kilda, Southbank and Fitzroy
- Addressing the issue of late night service into the city (while the train system closes down around midnight, the last city bound trains leave the outer terminals in time to reach Flinders St by midnight - the last train leaves Frankston at around 11pm).

The poor quality or absence of late night public transport, particularly on New Years Eve, is an issue for road safety as well as transport policy generally. Poor public transport means that partygoers have fewer options for getting home. It may also encourage some to drive (or accept lifts from drunken 'friends') when they should not. This can only exacerbate an already unacceptable road toll.

The PTUA would welcome any input from members on this issue.

M>Trams faster

Trams in Melbourne's south and east are between one and three minutes faster according to new timetables released by M> Tram. The speed improvements were possible due to improvements to traffic signalling at busy intersections. The

PTUA supports this improvement and hopes that further tram priority measures can be taken.

Everyone wins from speed improvements. Faster trams improve the attractiveness of

public transport, permit more frequent services, and from the operator's viewpoint, allow more revenue to be collected per hour of vehicle running time.

Meet the 2002 committee

Les Chandra (President) has served on the committee of the PTUA since 1992 (he thinks). He has held the positions of Treasurer, Secretary and more recently Assistant Secretary. He commutes to work daily on the 822 bus, which he wishes ran at nights and on Sundays.

Anna Morton (Vice-President) has been on the committee for four years. She lives in East Brunswick, and relies on PT, cycling and walking for transport, having no good enough reason to own a car.

Vaughan Williams (Secretary) is a law student at La Trobe University. He was arrested in utero on Alexandra Parade in the late 1970's and now lives in East Brunswick near the likely southern section of the Merri Creek Freeway.

Lucy Oates (Assistant-Secretary) is Studying Fine Art (Printmaking Honours) at RMIT and works part-time at a call centre. She lives in Footscray, right beside the ~~St Albans~~ Sydenham Line.

Daniel Borowski (Treasurer) is a 3rd year Commerce/Info Systems student, but as you read this he'll be in Vietnam on a well deserved break after taking a year off from uni to work full-time last year.

Daniel Bowen (Newsletter editor) is a computer consultant, single dad and self-confessed Internet junkie who lives in Glen Huntly, and often wishes he didn't need to own a car.

John Cox is a Country Program Manager with Australian Volunteers International. John has a particular focus on the Pacific Region, where he manages volunteer placements in four Pacific Islands countries.

Hayden Jones is a union employee and humanitarian whose many claims to fame include co-ordinating the Public Transport First campaign in Aston last year.

Martin Koval recently completed a Bachelor of Arts at Melbourne University. He lives in Carnegie and is currently pursuing a career in IT.

Bronwen Machin is currently the Integrated Transport Coordinator for the City of Port Phillip. Previously she worked with Environment Victoria on transport and clean air campaigns.

Tim Mattingsbrooke is a long-suffering commuter of the Hurstbridge train line (beyond Eltham!). He has served the PTUA as chairperson (not to be confused with President) for the last 2 years.

Anthony Morton is an engineering academic at Monash University and a long-suffering patron of the North Road bus. He joined the PTUA in 1996 and has since been active on the Committee, serving as Newsletter Editor between 1997 and 2000 and assisting with policy documents.

Tim Petersen (Convenor, Geelong branch) is an Arts/Law student at the University of Melbourne and a proud but frustrated Geelong resident. Has a 'vested interest' in improving public transport!

Miriam Powell is an environmental engineer with a special interest in greenhouse emissions and climate change. Her other affinities include cycling, China and the colour orange.

David Robertson is a public servant, and an active member of such organisations as Amnesty International and Community Aid Abroad.

Luke Savage first became significantly involved with the PTUA during the Aston Campaign. He is the School Archivist at Melbourne High School, and a Councillor of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria.

From Paul Mees

Dear PTUA members,

I am writing to advise that I have resigned as President of the PTUA. It has been a great privilege to fill this position for eight years, but I believe the time has come for me to retire. I had considered doing this before the 2001 AGM, but the situation was too chaotic, with the Federal election campaign just finished, and a threat by pro-freeway forces to make a takeover bid for the Association (fortunately, this did not eventuate). But the holiday break has given me time to reflect and make a decision.

There are three main reasons why I feel the time has come for a new PTUA President.

The first is the personal campaign against me run by Peter Batchelor over the last year or so. Mr. Batchelor has told all sorts of people that the PTUA disagrees with his adoption of the Kennett freeway agenda because I am personally bitter that I failed to get a job as his political advisor. The Minister's claims are nonsense, of course (I have never wanted or applied for such a job), but with a state election likely in the next 12 months, I think it will be better for the cause of public transport if the Minister is deprived of any further excuse for diverting attention from the real issues.

The second reason is that new voices for public transport might increase the likelihood of the message being heard by some sections of the media, which seem to have become bored with me. Last year, a senior media figure told me that the public has "Paul Mees fatigue". I think this person was subconsciously transferring his own pro-freeway bias to the public, but his comment does suggest the need to change personnel from time to time.

The third and final reason is that being President of the PTUA makes it much harder for me to present, in my academic role, as a dispassionate analyst of transport issues. Personally, I think the "dispassionate academic" pose is largely rubbish: an academic who claims not to have personal views on an issue as politically charged as transport policy is either lying to cover them up or has a bias so profound that he or she is unaware of it. Nevertheless, I think separating the two roles will enable me to make a stronger contribution in my professional capacity.

I do intend to remain active in the campaign for sustainable transport, as a Melbourne University lecturer and also as a regular and hopefully active, member of the PTUA. I would like to thank all those PTUA members – far too numerous to name – who have supported me over the last eight years, and before that during my time as Secretary, and I hope you will continue to support the organisation and the cause. I am very pleased that Les Chandra has agreed to serve as President: Les is a talented, hard-working, long-serving committee member, and will do an excellent job.

Yours sincerely,
Paul Mees.

Suburbs suffer PT shutdown

Residents in many outer suburbs were without public transport for four of the eight days during the Christmas/New Year period.

While trains and trams operate to Sunday timetables on public holidays, most suburbs reliant on buses receive no service on these days. Most of those that do run on Sundays and public holidays do not run on Christmas Day. This left some two-thirds of Melburnians with no public transport at all.

Coming at the same time as an aggressive, confrontational crackdown on the victims of a dysfunctional ticketing system, proposed cuts to Sunday services, and a fare increase, the poor quality of service added insult to injury.

Suburbs such as Melton, Werribee, Whittlesea and Dandenong are just some of those without buses. Yet these areas have the population and need for public transport on Sundays and public holidays.

An example is the City of Greater Dandenong, which has a population of 126,000. Dandenong is a low-income area and 12.8 per cent of households have no car (compared to 11.2 per cent for all Melbourne). Yet, like the other suburbs listed, there were no bus services for four of the eight days between Christmas Eve and New Year's Day.

The PTUA believes that it is time public transport users received a Christmas present from the state government in the form of affordable mobility for all, 365 days a year.

M> Sunday services under review

Readers will recall the article in the previous PTUA News that M> Train was proposing earlier Sunday finishing times and a reduction in service frequency from 30 to 40 minutes. These cuts have been shelved for the time being, but M> Train may

try again later in the year. Members can be assured that the PTUA will continue to oppose these service reductions.

Craigieburn services saved

The PTUA has welcomed a decision to reject plans to reduce midday V/Line train services to Craigieburn. National Express, which runs the service, had planned to increase intervals between trains from approximately one hour to up to two hours. However the Director of Public Transport rejected the proposal following action from consumer groups, including the PTUA.

The PTUA considers that services on the Craigieburn line should be increased, not reduced. Given that Craigieburn is a major growth area, its train service should run as frequently as services in other outer suburbs. Also local feeder buses should be timed to connect with the train, rather than require waits of up to 30 minutes as at present.

The PTUA is pleased that the government rejected the service cut. We hope it signals a renewed commitment to public transport, including the honouring of its promise to electrify services to Roxburgh Park and Craigieburn.

Sydenham trains

Transport Minister Peter Batchelor launched the new suburban service to Sydenham on 23 January. The PTUA strongly supports the extension and we are pleased to see it come into fruition.

The extension includes a slight relocation of Sydenham station adjacent to the local shopping centre and a new station at Keilor Plains.

The area currently has very poor public transport and we hope the government will complement the new electrified train service with better buses.

We congratulate the government on delivery of this important initiative for the western suburbs and hope to see many more soon.

News in brief

MetCard for Sydney?

The NSW government has chosen none other than ERG/Motorola to supply ticket machines for Sydney's new integrated ticketing system. This is of course the same supplier as for Melbourne's much maligned ticket machines. The current supplier, Cubic, is taking legal action.

Staffing the solution

During December's fare blitz, a Connex spokesperson told the Age (14/12) that:

"It has shown us an active presence is a (fare evasion) deterrent"

We couldn't have put it better ourselves!

Letter to the Editor

Letters may be sent to the office, or e-mailed to newsletter@ptua.org.au – but no attachments please. Note: letters may be edited for space reasons

Users must demand refunds

The authorities are cracking down on fare evasion, while ignoring the problem of large numbers of faulty ticket machines in Melbourne.

I have been systematically testing ticket machines and found that 30 percent do not work, and of those, 80 percent do not refund money put in.

Machine users must take a hard line and demand a refund for any money they lose - whether it is 5c or \$20. If every single person who lost money put in a claim, the sheer volume of complaints would force a change to the system.

Nicholas Bishop, Vermont South

Contracts vs. Reality: Yarra Trams

See accompanying article ⇒ Page 7

This study looks at peak services only.

The full spreadsheet, showing how the actual frequencies was calculated, is available on the PTUA web site at www.ptua.org.au

The train and tram franchise contracts are available at www.contracts.vic.gov.au

Service (measured at)	Direction	Time	Franchise frequency required (mins)	Actual frequency timetabled	Contract met?
11 W Preston to City (112) (Collins/Spencer Sts)	Peak am to Melb	07:31-09:30	6	5.71	✓
	Peak pm from Melb	15:31-18:30	6	6.00	✓
		18:31-19:30	12	12.00	✓
12 Sth Mel/St K Bch to City (112) (Vic Pde/Brunswick St)	Peak am to Melb	07:31-09:30	9	7.50	✓
	Peak pm from Melb	15:31-18:30	8	7.20	✓
		18:31-19:30	9	10.00	BREACH
30/34 La Trobe St (Spencer/LaTrobe Sts)	Peak am to Melb	07:31-09:30	10	6.00	✓
	Peak pm from Melb	15:31-18:30	10	8.18	✓
		18:31-19:30	None		
35 City Circle	Peak am to Melb	07:31-09:30	None		
	Peak pm from Melb	15:31-18:30	10	20.00	BREACH
		18:31-19:30	10	?	
48 N Balwyn to City (Flinders St West)	Peak am to Melb	07:31-09:30	8	6.67	✓
	Peak pm from Melb	15:31-18:30	8	7.20	✓
		18:31-19:30	15	15.00	✓
70 Wattle Park to City (Flinders St West)	Peak am to Melb	07:31-09:30	9	8.00	✓
	Peak pm from Melb	15:31-18:30	10	8.57	✓
		18:31-19:30	15	15.00	✓
75 E Burwood to City (Spencer/LaTrobe Sts)	Peak am to Melb	07:31-09:30	10	8.00	✓
	Peak pm from Melb	15:31-18:30	10	9.00	✓
		18:31-19:30	15	15.00	✓
86 Bundoora to City (Spencer/Bourke Sts)	Peak am to Melb	07:31-09:30	7	6.67	✓
	Peak pm from Melb	15:31-18:30	7	6.43	✓
		18:31-19:30	10	8.57	✓
96 St Kilda to City... (Exhibition Buildings)	Peak am to Melb	07:31-09:30	8	6.67	✓
	Peak pm from Melb	15:31-18:30	8	6.67	✓
		18:31-19:30	12	12.00	✓
96 E Brunswick to City (Exhibition Buildings)	Peak am to Melb	07:31-09:30	8	6.32	✓
	Peak pm from Melb	15:31-18:30	8	6.92	✓
		18:31-19:30	12	12.00	✓
109a P Melb to City (Vic Pde/Brunswick St)	Peak am to Melb	07:31-09:30	8	6.32	✓
	Peak pm from Melb	15:31-18:30	10	6.21	✓
		18:31-19:30	12	12.00	✓
109b Mont Albert to City (Collins/Spencer Sts)	Peak am to Melb	07:31-09:30	6	5.00	✓
	Peak pm from Melb	15:31-18:30	6	5.14	✓
		18:31-19:30	12	8.57	✓

Contracts vs. Reality

This is the second in a series of articles reviewing the public transport franchise agreements, and comparing them to the actual services run by the operating companies.

The first article (October 2001) looked at Bayside/M>Train's contract. We found a number of shortcomings, particularly to do with trains on the Dandenong and Frankston lines, especially the number of expresses skipping stops. Although M>Train have just introduced new timetables, these concerns have not yet been addressed.

Yarra Trams

This article looks at the franchise agreement for Yarra Trams. Again, we have only examined peak services, as the off-peak service requirements are generally very simple to check, and are less likely broken – intentionally or accidentally.

We have compared the current timetables published on the Yarra Trams web site, to the franchise agreement (part 5) found on the Victorian Government Major Contracts web site. (Note that the latter is quite hard to obtain because the relevant link actually mistakenly points to a V/Line document!)

Some of the franchise agreement is no longer relevant, for instance it suggests that route 86 was to have been extended south to City Road, instead of to Colonial Stadium. In these cases we have examined the timetables under the conditions specified in the contract.

In Summary

Yarra Trams current timetables generally meet the franchise requirements. In fact in many cases for the peak hour services we examined, they exceed it.

There are a handful of cases where they appear to breach the contract. Obviously the City Circle services are a continuing problem due to lack of W class trams. This is apparently also causing a shortfall in LaTrobe Street off-peak services.

Otherwise the only point of note is that Route 112 services to St Kilda do not quite meet the required frequency between 6:31pm and 7:30pm. There is also a reduced capacity on Collins Street in peak hour because of routes 11 and 12 being run together.

We trust that Yarra are carefully monitoring passenger levels, so that their services reflect not only their franchisee obligations, but also meet the needs of their customers, and enable them to increase patronage on their routes.

[← Summary figures – previous page](#)

☺ Humour: Who is the PTUA a front for?

As you can see from the following quotes, there was some confusion last year as to who the PTUA is really a front for.

Peter Batchelor, Minister for Transport:

"It is not on our radar. It is a proposal in the minds of people like the federal member for Menzies and the president of the Public Transport Users Association (PTUA), who is an adviser to the Liberal Party and the shadow Minister for Transport."

Kim Wells, MLA for Wantirna:

"Therefore I was initially surprised when I discovered that the leaflet, which contains misleading statements, had been circulated. But I was no longer surprised when I realised the leaflet had been published by the Public Transport Users Association (PTUA), which is associated with the Labor Party."

Stephen Mayne of Crikey.com.au

"Now that is what you call a complete shafting of Kevin Andrews by some tree-huggers who claim to be independent but are really just a front for the Greens."

So, who are we really a front for? We thought we were meant to be independent!

Privatisation lecture

The 2002 RMIT Sir Robert Risson Memorial Lecture will be held in Storey Hall 324-338 Swanston Street on Tuesday 30th April 2002, commencing at 5.30pm.

Noted Melbourne transport historian Keith Kings will deliver the 2002 Lecture on the theme: "The Privatisation of Melbourne's Transport then and now".

Bookings: contact Graeme Turnbull 9925 5473, email graeme.turnbull@rmit.edu.au or fax RMIT Transport Research Centre 9925 1313

Thank you

Thanks to the following people who have supported the PTUA financially in the current appeal:

Robin Arnold
R. Clemens
Philip Crohn
Pat Grainger
Ivy Hart
Meg Higgins
Winsome Hunt
E. R. Jacobs
Killip family
Peter Krohn
Lillian Lewis
Mary McGivern-Shaw
J Marshall
Annemarie Mutton
Ted Parker
Julie Peters
D. Pottage
T. Spencer
J. Stringer
Raymonds Turss
R. Watt
Blake Zent

We also received a number of anonymous donations - thanks to those people as well.

If your membership is due for renewal, please consider becoming a Donor member if you can afford it.

PTUA News

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If undeliverable, return to:

PTUA Office, Second Floor, 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne 3000

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Welcome to all new members!

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Make sure your PTUA News follows you when you move!
Cut out or photocopy this form, fill in and return to us at:
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Responsibility for electoral comment in PTUA News is taken by Vaughan Williams, 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne.