

West Australian Railscene e-Mag

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West Australian Railscene e-Mag is published weekly by Jim Bisdee on rail happenings on West Australian railroads.

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S3302 that appears by damage to the cab to have had a run in with a loading chute runs 7824 loaded alumina up the grade at Burekup its way to Bunbury Inner harbour on May 30th. Photo Alex Mackay

In order to reduce a revenue shortfall of \$14 billion the Queensland government announced on June 2nd the sale of a number of state assets including Queensland Rail's non passenger operations. This will also mean QR National subsidiary Australian Railway Group will be sold again, the third time the rail freight business in WA has been sold since 2000. How or when ARG will be put up for sale is not clear as ARG may not be offered for some years being part of the second phase of Queensland government asset sales.

WestNet Rail who own the lease to the states freight railway network announced on June 3rd that four wheatbelt lines would close on June 16th unless the government provides \$50m funding to lay new sleepers on GSR line from Northam to Albany. The lines slated to close are York Quairading, Katanning Nyabing, Tambellup Gnowangerup and Merredin Trayning about 340km. Nyabing and Gnowangerup lines have seen little if any use in recent years and both require extensive repair and maintenance while Quairading line requires the large timber trestle bridge over the Avon River at York replaced.



L3115 & LZ3107 cab run 6197 cement lime and container train through Thornlie on May 29th, LZ3107 was being hauled dead attached from North Port Fremantle to Forrestfield. Photo Brendan Cherry



DD2355 and AB1504 both cab forward run empty caustic soda tankers through Picton on way to Bunbury Inner harbour to be loaded on May 30th. Photo Alex Mackay



AC4301, AC4304 & 2208 on D457 light engine trail on June 5th from United Group Rail to Telarah in NSW Hunter region seen passing through Tarro. Photo Peter Cousins



AC4304, AC4301 both long end leading and 2208 run D458 return light engine trial going back to United Group Rail Broadmeadow passing through Warabrook on June 5th. Photo Peter Cousins

Delivery of new ore cars to Dampier continues which allows withdrawal the original Hamersley Iron M series cars to take place with them being scrapped.

All eleven new Rio Tinto Evo locomotives 8140 to 8150 entered service by end of May in three triple sets and two locomotives in mixed sets. This has seen all Robe River CM40-8M locomotives at Dampier withdrawn with 9414, 9417, 9420, 9424 and 9425 decommissioned while 9410 and 9419 are stored.

Transport Minister announced on June 5th from June 28th there will be changes to Mandurah, Clarkson, Midland and Fremantle services that will enable the introduction of new railcars into service. The main change will see Whitfords-Cockburn shuttle services now not run between about 0930 and 1430, some timetable alterations will also occur on Midland and Fremantle lines. Transperth will save about \$2million annually by this move that will also see more A series EMU allocated to Fremantle and Midland lines that will eventually increase morning and evening peak capacity by about 20%.

A joint announcement was made by BHPBIO and Rio Tinto on June 5th that their Pilbara iron ore mining operations are to be combined in a joint venture that will produce \$12billion in savings.

On June 3rd 4058 wheat train ran a DP test train with Q4019 on the head end and Q4003 on the rear from Merredin to Forrestfield this was the first run of a loaded distributed power train.

Resleepering is taking place both east and west of Midland station, on suburban system west of the station with Midland line concrete sleeper programme underway. While east of the station with sleeper replacement taking place between Lloyd Street and opposite the station on dual gauge Avon Valley route.

Light engine trials of ARG new AC4300 units continue out of UGR Broadmeadow with AC4301 and AC4304 running a trial with 2208 to Telarah on June 5th.

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The Queensland Rail electric traction driving simulator has been in Esperance for past couple of weeks for Distributed Power driver training. Although the simulator is set up for QR electric locomotives the DPU system is similar, which enables drivers to become familiar with it. The simulator will then go to Kalgoorlie in a couple of weeks for DPU driver tuition there.

For those who have always dreamed of owning their own steam locomotive here is the chance with not one but two narrow gauge [1067mm] locomotives being offered for sale as is where is by Rail Heritage WA together with some carriages and wagons. Full details of items being offered for sale together with terms and conditions of sale are available at <http://railheritagewa.org.au/> .
