Submission – Draft Regional NSW Services & Infrastructure Plan

Background
Two More Trains for Singleton has reviewed the Draft Regional NSW Services & Infrastructure Plan document and wishes to make a submission. Two More Trains for Singleton is a community group based in Singleton in the Hunter Valley with strong community links. The group represents a large number of Upper Hunter residents and travellers between this area, Newcastle & Sydney.

Comments
Two More Trains for Singleton proposes that the customer outcomes for regional NSW in Section 4 should be changed to make them more specific and meaningful. Suggested outcomes are as follows:

1. A safe transport system for every customer with zero deaths or serious injuries on the network by 2056
2. Transport infrastructure and a system resilient to natural hazards and weather related events especially floods, storms, fog, and bush fires
3. Accessibility to employment and services within regional cities and centres including health, education, retail and cultural activities and linked to land use planning objectives
4. Regular, frequent and reliable passenger train services to provide the backbone of regional and inter-regional public transport links, integrated with local networks to match travel times by private cars
5. A transport system that takes into account and adapts to population changes over time, and supports healthy, active and non-car based transport options.
6. Improve public transport services and frequencies within the Global Gateway Cities of Newcastle and Canberra and their passenger rail links with regional cities and centres
7. Establish a Newcastle Regional Transport Authority to facilitate and operate integrated transport infrastructure within the Hunter Region to support the development of Newcastle/Maitland as a Global Gateway City
8. Co-operate with the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) and other transport service providers to improve passenger train access to ARTC managed track, and invest to prevent conflicts between passenger and freight rail usage

Hunter infrastructure initiatives outlined on pages 33 and 34 should be expanded to include and support the following transport improvements:

1. Secure additional paths for passenger trains on Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) managed track beyond Maitland to Singleton, Muswellbrook, Scone and Dungog to provide increased service frequency.
2. Implement the Two More Trains for Singleton proposal for two additional daily passenger train services between Singleton and Maitland (morning and afternoon) and additional services during weekends. This should be implemented within two years.
3. Provide two hourly train services between Singleton and Maitland daily within 10 years, to complement half hourly services between Maitland, Newcastle and Sydney.
4. Investigate and protect corridors for future long-term rail links, especially the east coast high speed rail link and the Hunter LinkRail proposal for a Glendale to Maitland via Kurri Kurri line generally along former rail corridors and flood free rail connections for the Hunter River.
5. Implement ticketing changes and consistent fares to enable Opal cards to be used on all NSW Trains services between Scone, Maitland and Dungog, to improve travel access.
6. Provide new regional passenger rail carriages to cater for transport of bicycles and luggage.
7. Establish a new passenger rail connection between Newcastle and Dubbo.

The proposed Greater Newcastle Network hierarchy as shown in Figure 72 of the Plan is inadequate and fails to accurately represent existing transport connectivity and modes, and especially regional linkages. Greater Newcastle functions as a largely self-contained urban travel region, with access to employment, education, health services, recreation and other functions, generally within 1 hours’ travel, and extending to Singleton and Dungog.

More attention must be given to transport planning in Newcastle and the Hunter Region. With Newcastle/Maitland identified as a ‘global gateway’ city, transport planning is inconsistent with the Region’s importance, complexity and population size. The Region has a population equivalent to Canberra, Hobart and Darwin combined, and is an urban agglomeration of national significance.

As outlined in previous submissions to Transport for NSW dated July 2017 (attached) and October 2009, there is strong demand for more train services between Singleton and Maitland, evidenced by:

1. Poor existing services, with only two trains in the morning, two in the evening on week days, just one morning and afternoon weekend service, and up to 9 hours between trains.
3. Demographic changes with an increasing aged and disabled population.
4. Increased road traffic congestion and road safety concerns in destinations such as Newcastle.
5. Many specialist health and education facilities are only available in Maitland, and Newcastle.
6. Inequitable services to Singleton compared with similar NSW towns based on size and distance from the metropolitan area. Singleton has 4 trains per day compared with 18 trains per day to Moss Vale and Mittagong, 5 trains per day to Goulburn, 28 trains per day to Kiama, 15 trains per day to Lithgow, and 5 trains per day to Dungog.

Recommendations
This submission identifies a range of practical proposals that should be included in the final Regional NSW Services and Infrastructure Plan.

It is recommended that the exhibited Plan be amended to incorporate the proposals identified, following appropriate investigations.

More information
For further information or details concerning this submission, please contact Two More Trains for Singleton by email – 2moretrains@gmail.com or Facebook at Two-More-Trains-for-Singleton

Submission prepared by Two More Trains for Singleton – 29 November 2017
Two More Trains For Singleton

A campaign for two additional daily passenger rail services from Newcastle to Singleton

SUBMISSION

Improved passenger train services and public transport connectivity to Singleton

Two More Trains For Singleton
Email 2moretrains@gmail.com
Facebook Two More Trains for Singleton

July 2017
Summary

Singleton is on the Hunter line, and part of the Sydney Trains network. The town is at the edge of the Greater Sydney Metropolitan area and land use is strongly influenced by its proximity to Sydney and Newcastle. Singleton is an important urban and employment centre and part of the Upper Hunter Region (population over 80,000). It has a rapidly expanding coal mining workforce and is part of the Hunter Region (population around 800,000).

Current passenger rail services between Singleton, Newcastle and Sydney are infrequent and poorly timed. The present timetable actively discourages passengers to use rail transport due to significant gaps between services and inconvenient times although rail is a quick and efficient means of travel to Sydney.

NSW Government data shows that rail patronage on the Hunter Line including Singleton increased by 20% in the period 2008 to 2013. More recent Opal card data has confirmed a slower passenger growth trend, but demonstrates that demand is constrained by the current limited service provided. Extensive future urban growth and development is anticipated between Maitland and Singleton, including establishment of the Huntlee new town at Branxton with an expected population of 25,000 people. There is a demonstrated demand for rail in an area that is highly car dependent, and where around 50% of the total population are not able to drive. More frequent services would provide a significant community benefit to access health, education and social services.

This submission proposes a long term strategy for more frequent passenger rail services between Singleton, Maitland and Sydney, with two more weekday train services between Singleton and Maitland in the short term. Two more train services between Singleton and Newcastle would significantly improve the service at relatively low cost, and could be expected to substantially increase rail patronage.
1 Background

This submission by Two More Trains for Singleton is an update of previous submissions made to the NSW Government since 2009, including proposals for timetable reviews, the Hunter Region Transport Plan, and the NSW Long Term Transport Masterplan.

Two More Trains for Singleton is a community group based in Singleton in the Upper Hunter Valley with strong community links. The group has made submissions to the NSW Government over the last nine years seeking additional passenger rail services to connect Singleton with Maitland, Newcastle and Sydney. In 2009, over 1,000 people in Singleton and surrounding areas signed a petition supporting two more trains and demonstrating strong community desire for more frequent services.

Submissions and representations to the NSW Government include the following:

- May 2017 Submission to NSW Regional Infrastructure Review
- Feb 2016 Meeting with Member for Upper Hunter and Transport for NSW
- June 2015 Meeting with Michael Johnsen MP, member for Upper Hunter
- Jan 2015 Meeting with Transport for NSW and Singleton Council in Singleton
- Feb 2014 Meeting with Minister for Transport, Gladys Berejiklian in Maitland
- Feb 2013 Meeting with Office of Minister for Transport, Gladys Berejiklian
- May Jun 2012 Meetings with representatives of Transport for NSW in Sydney
- April 2012 Submission to draft NSW Long Term Transport Masterplan
- Dec 2010 Submission to Hunter Transport Inquiry
- Oct 2010 Meeting with then Shadow Minister for Transport, Gladys Berejiklian
- Oct 2010 Meeting with Office of Minister for Transport, John Robertson
- Oct 2010 Submission to ARTC - Hunter Valley Network Access Undertaking
- Oct 2009 Submission to Sydney’s Transport Future
- Aug 2009 Meeting with Minister for Transport and Minister for the Hunter
- April 2009 Submission to CityRail Draft Hunter Line Timetable
- Nov 2008 Proposal to CityRail for additional passenger rail services between Singleton and Newcastle

Two More Trains for Singleton has also organised regular train excursions from Singleton to Muswellbrook to events at Muswellbrook Regional Arts Centre.

This submission reviews passenger rail requirements for Singleton, an area with a local population of about 23,000, and a larger regional population. Providing more frequent train services to Singleton is consistent with NSW Government long term strategies and can be
relatively easily achieved. The submission also reviews potential opportunities for express bus services connecting with trains at Maitland which could potentially provide interim transport connectivity until passenger trains are provided.

The proposed services will also directly benefit the towns of Branxton, Huntlee, Greta, Lochinvar and Maitland, as well as Muswellbrook and the Hunter Region as a whole.

2 Principles for Singleton’s public transport accessibility

The principles for long term transport planning for Singleton should be as follows and incorporated in Hunter Region and local transport planning:

• As a significant urban centre close to the Lower Hunter, Singleton requires a regular rail service linked to the Sydney and Newcastle metropolitan systems.

• Public transport in Singleton is underpinned by the passenger rail network, with connecting bus services, and better provision for bicycles and luggage on trains.

• Bus and rail services to and within Singleton must be configured to offer a viable alternative to the car for key transport routes.

• Create a rail and bus network that is easy to navigate, well advertised and offers a reliable and regular service frequency.

• Maintain the current speed advantage for rail over road traffic along the main transport corridor (ie Muswellbrook - Singleton – Maitland – Newcastle).

• Ensure Singleton Council facilitates integrated land use planning, capital investment and service planning, including making provision for a future train station for Singleton Heights.
3 Existing passenger rail services to Singleton

Singleton currently has four weekday NSW TrainLink train departures and arrivals and a smaller number on weekends. Weekday services are reviewed in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Arrival time from Newcastle</th>
<th>Approx time since previous train</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.31 am</td>
<td>9.30 hrs</td>
<td>Extremely inconvenient time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.19 am</td>
<td>5.00 hrs</td>
<td>Arrives too late for employees to work in Singleton (eg school teachers, office workers, apprentices, shop assistants, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.34 pm</td>
<td>8.00 hrs</td>
<td>Currently well used service, especially by university and school students. Useful for attending short early evening functions in Muswellbrook, returning same evening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.04 pm</td>
<td>1.30 hrs</td>
<td>Reasonably well used service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Departure time to Newcastle</th>
<th>Approx time to next train</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.56 am</td>
<td>4.00 hrs</td>
<td>Currently well used service, with connection to Sydney service. However, too early for some Newcastle University students, and early for families with young children and many seniors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.40 am</td>
<td>9.00 hrs</td>
<td>Reasonably well used, but has been cancelled due to trackwork and arrives too late in Newcastle to allow adequate time to return in the afternoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.55 pm</td>
<td>2.00 hrs</td>
<td>Inconvenient time, with low patronage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.40 pm</td>
<td>9.00 hrs</td>
<td>Extremely inconvenient time, with low patronage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no long term strategy for passenger rail services in the Hunter, despite documented increases in demand in recent years. Hunter Line train patronage dropped significantly (by around 30 – 40% following the closure of the railway line between Hamilton and Newcastle and its replacement with a bus service, demonstrating the sensitivity of passengers to transport mode changes and inconvenience. Characteristics of the existing timetable are:

1. People from Newcastle and the Lower Hunter are unable to travel by train to work in Singleton.
2. Most services operate at inconvenient times for potential users of the service (especially school students, parents with young children and seniors).
3. There is no regularity in the frequency of services.
4. Three of the four daily weekday services operate at such inconvenient times that they have very low patronage.
5  The weekend service is even less frequent, and effectively non existent and requiring a minimum return trip time of 12 hours.

As outlined below, important service deficiencies can be readily easily remedied by the provision of two or three additional train services per day. Weekend services should be increased to operate at the same times as on week days to provide a consistent timetable.

4 Singleton customer needs and preferences

Current passenger rail services are used for:
- Social and recreational needs, including travel to Newcastle Beach, and day trips to Sydney and Newcastle.
- Travelling to medical appointments. Because of the current poor service, many people now need others to drive them to specialist appointments
- Commuting to work.
- Business travel to Sydney.
- Educational travel to schools and Newcastle University.
- Travel to Sydney Airport for interstate and overseas journeys.

NSW TrainLink passenger data show a 20% increase in Hunter Line rail patronage in over the 5 years to 2012, including Singleton. Six main factors are driving increased demand for train services linking Singleton, the Lower Hunter and Sydney. These are:

1  High continuing and projected development and population growth trends in Singleton and the Lower Hunter.
2  Demographic changes with in an increasing proportion of the population being aged and/or disabled.
3  Increased road traffic congestion and road safety concerns.
4  Increasing fuel prices and projected supply shortages.
5  Many specialist facilities are only available in Maitland and Newcastle, including health and medical services such as oncology, haematology, orthopaedic, diabetic, and paediatric services.
6  Centralisation of local specialist community services (eg health and education) in major centres such as Newcastle or Sydney requiring increasing travel.

Hunter Line Opal card public transport data recently provided to Two More Trains for Singleton for the 21 months to April 2017, provide new insight into passenger train journeys from Singleton.
The Opal card data show travel destinations from Singleton Railway Station are much more widespread than previously assumed, with journeys including Bathurst, Kiama, Goulburn, and the Blue Mountains. Analysis of the data shows that demand for services on the Hunter Line is higher than assumed, and significantly limited by lack of passenger services operating. An average of 550 people per month departed Singleton Station since Opal cards were introduced in July 2015 to April 2017, with the number of journeys increasing over time with the progressive introduction of the Opal system.

Hunter Line stations account for 65% of all trips, with the top 3 destinations from Singleton being Hamilton (36%), Warrabrook (14%) and Maitland Stations (8%).” The data show the importance of trains for Singleton residents travelling to Newcastle University, with about 1 in 7 journeys being to Warrabrook Station, the second most popular destination.

Travel to Sydney stations accounts for over a quarter of all journeys (27%), with nearly 1% of all trips being to Sydney Airport. A big surprise is that return journeys to Singleton average 23% less than those originating from Singleton. Travelers are finding alternative ways to return to Singleton including cars, because return train services are at inconvenient times and so infrequent. The Opal data do not include NSW TrainLink regional services which would increase total train passenger numbers from Singleton.

Importantly, the Opal transport data demonstrate that passenger numbers are directly related to the quality and frequency of service.

More frequent services would allow potential for train trips for shopping purposes, and fulfill other social needs such as providing local and regional connections. This would be enhanced if rail is regarded as the backbone of long distance transport, and if local bus services can be integrated with rail services which currently they are not.

The long term strategy must be to utilise existing infrastructure to provide a reliable regional and long distance public transport system with good links to Sydney and Newcastle, with particular focus being placed on measures (such as reliability and regularity) to make public transport the first preference for more customers.
5  Service comparison with comparable towns

When compared with other outer metropolitan lines in the CityRail network, Singleton and the Upper Hunter has by far the worst service in terms of both frequency and frequency by population. This is shown in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Population 2011 (LGA)</th>
<th>Employment 2006 (LGA)</th>
<th>CityRail service frequency</th>
<th>Equity of service (population per service per day)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singleton (80 km)</td>
<td>22,694</td>
<td>12,367</td>
<td>4 trains/day (approx 3 – 7 hrs between trains)</td>
<td>5,673 persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dungog (89 km)</td>
<td>8,318</td>
<td>2,037</td>
<td>5 trains/day (approx 2 – 5 hrs between trains)</td>
<td>1,663 persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithgow (141 km)</td>
<td>20,160</td>
<td>6,850</td>
<td>14 trains/day (approx 2 hourly)</td>
<td>1,440 persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiama (120 km)</td>
<td>19,986</td>
<td>4,321</td>
<td>28 trains/day (approx hourly)</td>
<td>713 persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goulburn (197 km)</td>
<td>27,481</td>
<td>10,300</td>
<td>5 trains/day (approx 2 – 5 hrs between trains)</td>
<td>5,496 persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moss Vale/ Bowral/ Mittagong (127 km)</td>
<td>44,395</td>
<td>14,722</td>
<td>18 trains/day (approx 1 – 2 hr frequency)</td>
<td>2,466 persons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The data show that the NSW TrainLink passenger service frequency to Singleton is much lower than comparable fringe metropolitan areas such as Lithgow, Moss Vale and Kiama. Employment data also show that Singleton is a regional generator of jobs with a far higher proportion of jobs and therefore inbound commuting than compared with similar areas. Furthermore, there were 386 tertiary students living in Singleton in 2011, the majority attending Newcastle University which has an accessible railway station at Warrabrook.

The equity of the provision of public transport services can be determined based on total population and employment. The calculations show a wide variation in the equity of public transport provision. The relative service equity calculation shows that residents of Lithgow and Dungog have about four times the number of services per person per day compared to Singleton.
6 Existing and proposed timetable

A proposed new timetable for train services between Singleton and Newcastle is shown below using the 2013 train timetable, with proposed new services in **bold** type. The additional train services link with the timetable between Maitland and Newcastle.

### Newcastle to Singleton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Monday to Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>3.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maitland</td>
<td>3.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branxton</td>
<td>4.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Singleton to Newcastle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Monday to Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>am</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branxton</td>
<td>7.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>7.58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The timetable above is for weekday services. It is proposed that this should be extended to weekend services to provide a consistent and predictable services, with a long term (10 year) objective for a 2 hourly train service between Singleton and Maitland between 6.00 am and 6.00 pm.

Investigations by Two More Trains for Singleton show that the new timetable proposed above can be implemented with the existing track capacity and rolling stock. However, purchase of one train set of 2 additional carriages is desirable to provide reliability of service in the longer term and would allow for more frequent services in the longer term.
7 Proposals for the 2018 train timetable review

The most recent Hunter Line train timetable changes have increased travel times and inconvenience to passengers using these trains, especially those from Singleton. It is necessary to fully review the times of trains and the connections with other services as a result of unsatisfactory current situation. This needs to be considered during the current service review with a new timetable scheduled for introduction in 2018.

The introduction of the current Hunter Line train timetable in October 2010 led to significant changes in services, particularly in increasing waiting times for Sydney train connections and making the 16.32 afternoon Hamilton to Singleton service over 30 minutes later. The effect of the timetable change has been to discourage travel between Singleton and Sydney with waiting times for train connections between 20 – 30 minutes, and up to 60 minutes for connections to local stations between Hamilton and Morisset. The closure of the rail line between Hamilton and Newcastle in 2015 increased travel times to these stations by around 15 minutes in an easterly direction and about 30 minutes in the westerly direction.

Proposals for the 2018 Sydney Trains timetable review are as follows:

1. Introduce a timetable with two or three additional train services at approximately the times proposed in this submission, to provide a daytime train frequency of a service between every 2 – 4 hours during the day as outlined in Section 6.
2. Plan for a preferred rail service frequency to Singleton for the short term (2-4 hourly service over the next 2 - 10 years) and long term (2 hourly service).
3. Introduce a weekend and public holiday service on the Hunter Line that is identical to the weekday service.
4. Ensure all trains from and to Singleton and beyond connect at Hamilton with Sydney services, with a preferred wait time of 10 minutes, and a maximum wait time of 20 minutes. Sydney connection should allow for the train to arrive at Hornsby by 10.00 am and Sydney by 10.30.
5. Reduce wait times for Singleton train connections for local train services stopping all stations Hamilton to Morisset to a maximum of 30 minutes.
6. Allow Opal card users to travel on NSW Trains (Countrylink) services between Singleton and Maitland.
7. Make provision in the timetable for Singleton passengers to alight at Metford to access the new hospital to be constructed nearby.
8 Transport interconnections & options for bus services

A key issue in future public transport provision in Singleton is the interconnection of public transport modes with the rail system. An analysis of timetables and travel times by Two More Trains for Singleton demonstrates that provision of a limited number of additional train services provides the most effective underpinning for public transport, which can then be linked to bus service provision. As an interim measure, opportunities exist to provide express bus services to Maitland and Morisset to improve connectivity. Feasible bus service arrangements in lieu of trains are shown in the second set of tables below. These tables allow comparison between trains and buses in terms of service times, regularity and travel times.

Table of proposed train services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key to table</th>
<th>Existing train service</th>
<th>Proposed train service</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newcastle to Singleton (trains)</th>
<th>Monday to Friday</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>am</td>
<td>(New train!)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>6.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maitland</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>7.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branxton</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>7.41 - new</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next train arriving Singleton</td>
<td>3.30 hrs</td>
<td>1.26hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton wait time for Sydney connection</td>
<td>38 min</td>
<td>15 min</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments</td>
<td>Would be preferable for this train to leave 40 mins earlier</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The table above shows the preferred short term train services that will provide adequate passenger train connectivity, and are expected to significantly improve train patronage because times between trains are substantially reduced. The exact times should considered in conjunction with a timetable review to reduce connection delays to Sydney train services.
# Table of alternative bus options (Maitland – Singleton & Morisset - Singleton)

## Newcastle to Singleton (express buses) Monday to Friday

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>am</th>
<th>(New bus 1)</th>
<th>am</th>
<th>(New bus 2)</th>
<th>(New bus 3)</th>
<th>(New bus 4)</th>
<th>(New bus 5)</th>
<th>pm</th>
<th>pm</th>
<th>Morisset – Singleton bus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maitland</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>7.26 - train</td>
<td>8.47</td>
<td>10.26 – train</td>
<td>13.01 – train</td>
<td>15.01 – train</td>
<td>15.57 – train</td>
<td>17.02</td>
<td>18.32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branxton</td>
<td>4.16</td>
<td>8.02 - bus</td>
<td>9.04</td>
<td>10.36 - bus</td>
<td>13.11 - bus</td>
<td>15.11 - bus</td>
<td>16.07 - bus</td>
<td>17.19</td>
<td>18.49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Next train arriving Singleton</td>
<td>3.30 hrs</td>
<td>4.15 hrs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.30 hrs</td>
<td>9.19 hrs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton wait time for Sydney connection</td>
<td>38 min</td>
<td>15 min</td>
<td>7 min</td>
<td>14 min Syd and local</td>
<td>47 min Syd</td>
<td>50 min Syd</td>
<td>37 min Syd</td>
<td>34 min Syd</td>
<td>17 min Syd, 58 min local</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Comments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>45 min drive plus allow 10 minutes change at Maitland and 5 mins Branxton (travel time is 42 mins – 62% longer than train)</th>
<th>45 min drive plus allow 10 minutes change at Maitland and 5 mins Branxton (travel time is 42 mins – 65% longer than train)</th>
<th>Would be preferable for this train to leave 40 mins earlier</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Bus travel time**

| Morisset to Singleton 1 hr 10 mins |

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**Notes:**

This table shows the most suitable timetable options for providing additional train services to Singleton and options for connecting bus services to Singleton, utilising the NSW TrainLink timetable current at June 2017.

**Key to table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing train service</th>
<th>Potential Singleton – Maitland express bus to meet train</th>
<th>Express bus Singleton - Morisset for early &amp; late Sydney connection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
**Singleton to Newcastle (express buses) Monday to Friday**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Bus Time</th>
<th>(New bus 1)</th>
<th>(New bus 2)</th>
<th>(New bus 3)</th>
<th>(New bus 4)</th>
<th>(New bus 5)</th>
<th>am</th>
<th>pm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singleton</td>
<td>6.45 am</td>
<td>6.56 am</td>
<td>10.40 am</td>
<td>11.56 pm</td>
<td>14.31 pm</td>
<td>16.29 pm</td>
<td>19.55 pm</td>
<td>21.40 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Branxton</td>
<td>7.10 am</td>
<td>9.25 - bus</td>
<td>10.54 am</td>
<td>12.25 pm</td>
<td>14.52 pm</td>
<td>16.50 pm</td>
<td>20.09 pm</td>
<td>21.54 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maitland</td>
<td>7.29 am</td>
<td>10.00 - bus</td>
<td>11.13 pm</td>
<td>13.00 - bus</td>
<td>15.31 - bus</td>
<td>17.29 pm</td>
<td>20.28 pm</td>
<td>22.13 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>7.58 am</td>
<td>10.43 - train</td>
<td>11.42 pm</td>
<td>13.42 - train</td>
<td>16.15 - train</td>
<td>18.14 - train</td>
<td>20.57 pm</td>
<td>22.42 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>8.15 am</td>
<td>(prev 8.04)</td>
<td>1.06 hrs</td>
<td>11.59 pm</td>
<td>(prev 11.48)</td>
<td></td>
<td>21.20 pm</td>
<td>22.59 pm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Next train departing Singleton**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Wait Time for Sydney Connection</th>
<th>Travel Time</th>
<th>Bus travel time to Morisset (New bus 1)</th>
<th>42 mins Sydney and local</th>
<th>46 mins Sydney and local</th>
<th>41 mins Sydney and local</th>
<th>9 mins Sydney and 22 mins local</th>
<th>10 mins Sydney and 21 mins local</th>
<th>41 mins Sydney and local</th>
<th>56 mins to Gosford only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>28 mins Sydney, 38 min local</td>
<td>42 mins</td>
<td>46 mins Sydney and local</td>
<td>41 mins Sydney and local</td>
<td>9 mins Sydney and 22 mins local</td>
<td>10 mins Sydney and 21 mins local</td>
<td>41 mins Sydney and local</td>
<td>56 mins to Gosford only</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>(prev 21.03)</td>
<td>41 mins</td>
<td>9 mins Sydney and 22 mins local</td>
<td>10 mins Sydney and 21 mins local</td>
<td>41 mins Sydney and local</td>
<td>56 mins to Gosford only</td>
<td>41 mins Sydney and local</td>
<td>56 mins to Gosford only</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Comments**

- Bus travel time to Morisset 1 hr 47 mins (57% longer)
- Travel time 1 hr 46 mins (56% longer)
The tables above show that:

1. An extended train service from Maitland to Singleton can integrate into the existing Hunter Line hourly service well with minimal timetable adjustment, since the travel time is about 30 minutes. It is not possible to extend the service to Muswellbrook or Scone without significant timetable changes.

2. A journey between Hamilton to Singleton with express bus service between Maitland and Singleton adds about 60% extra travel time over the train (From 1 hour to 1hr 45 mins). This significant additional travel time plus the inconvenience of changing transport modes is likely to be a major deterrent to patronage.

3. Because of the additional travel time of express buses between Maitland and Singleton, this service is difficult to integrate effectively with the train timetable. This means that 3 trains operates a comparable but much more efficient service than 5 buses.

4. A significant disadvantage of express buses between Maitland and Singleton is that the timetable is extremely irregular, and problematic if there are service disruptions.

A major issue with current bus routes in Singleton, especially those connecting with trains arriving and departing Singleton Station is that these are not publicised and difficult to find. This is a contributor to the number of buses travelling with no or few passengers. An essential part of any public transport strategy must be to ensure consistent, reliable and visible service provision so that the general public is aware of the options available.

9 Long term strategy for Singleton train services

The NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan must recognise and make full use of current capacity and infrastructure, such as in Singleton which is currently poorly utilised in terms of providing passenger services.

The proposals by Two More Trains for Singleton which should be included in the NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan are as follows:

1. Adopt a 10 year objective of 2 hourly daytime rail service between Singleton and Newcastle.

2. Provide two or three additional day time rail services between Singleton and Newcastle within 2 years.
3 Purchase new train carriages to provide additional passenger capacity, and increase train length to three carriages on crowded early morning trains to Newcastle and early afternoon services to Singleton. New carriages should have additional provision for carrying bikes and luggage.

3 Improve the frequency of weekend passenger train services, preferably to provide one consistent daily service 7 days per week.

4 Within 5 years, fund appropriate studies and land acquisition to enable construction of a new Singleton Heights railway station within 20 years. A potential new station site has been identified and will allow walking and cycle access to rail services from new residential developments and most of the town. The Singleton Land Use Strategy (Singleton Council 2008) proposes investigation of a second railway station for Singleton in Singleton Heights in the long term to provide long term access to rail transport within walking distance of the majority of Singleton residents.

5 Provide joint ticketing and timetabling between Sydney Trains and NSW Trainlink services to Singleton allow use Opal cards on NSW Trainlink services between Broadmeadow, Maitland and Singleton.

6 Provide space on future train carriages for bicycles to support "bike commuting" and bicycle storage facilities at Singleton railway station.

7 Support a feasibility study for the Hunter LinkRail proposal. This is a proposed new rail link using existing closed corridors between Maitland, Kurri Kurri and Glendale which would provide major improvements to freight and passenger rail accessibility in the long term for the whole Hunter Region.

8 Ensure Singleton Railway Station is staffed during daytime hours, preferably by local employees.
10 Proposals for the Hunter Region Transport Plan

With a population of around 800,000 people (more than the combined population of the ACT and Tasmania), the Hunter Region requires its own transport plan and coordinating authority. The Draft NSW Long Term Transport Plan ignores key issues relating to transport in the Hunter, especially its intra regional CityRail services and connections to Sydney and Newcastle. Also ignored are the issues relating to provision of public transport to future urban development, particularly rail access. It also fails to consider the tourism benefits of rail transport.

Key transport objectives for the Hunter Region should be to:

• Promote passenger rail as the long term framework for regional public transport.
• Ensure effective integration of transport modes, especially trains and local buses.
• Make public transport more attractive relative to private transport by increasing frequency of services.
• Long term investment in new routes such as the Hunter LinkRail proposal to connect Glendale, Kurri-Kurri and Maitland and improve overall accessibility, and protection of rail corridors.

A Hunter Region Transport Plan must include the following measures:

• Purchase of additional Hunter railway carriages to provide increased passenger rail frequencies.
• Ensure a rail access agreement with ARTC to provide for passenger rail priority on Hunter lines.
• Two additional train services to Singleton in the short term, with a long term objective to increase the frequency of services to one train every two hours within 10 years.
• Support improved train connections to Sydney and Sydney Airport from Hunter Line services, including high speed rail in the long term.
• Investigation of a railway station site for Singleton Heights, to be integrated into long term land use planning.
• Actions to prevent current service disruptions caused by trackwork.
• Bus timetables to be adjusted to connect with train arrivals and departures.
11 Conclusions

Surveys undertaken by Two More Trains for Singleton show considerable demand and public support for additional services, and significant potential for increased patronage. Current demand is greatly affected by the poor frequency and times of existing services.

Introduction of a new timetable with the two additional train services at approximately the times proposed is desirable and can be justified in the short term. Two additional train services will provide a significant social and economic benefit, and can be achieved relatively cheaply and easily with relatively small investment.

The Hunter Regional Transport Plan long term Transport for NSW strategies must include provision for 2 hourly train services between Singleton and Maitland both weekdays and weekends.
10 References


