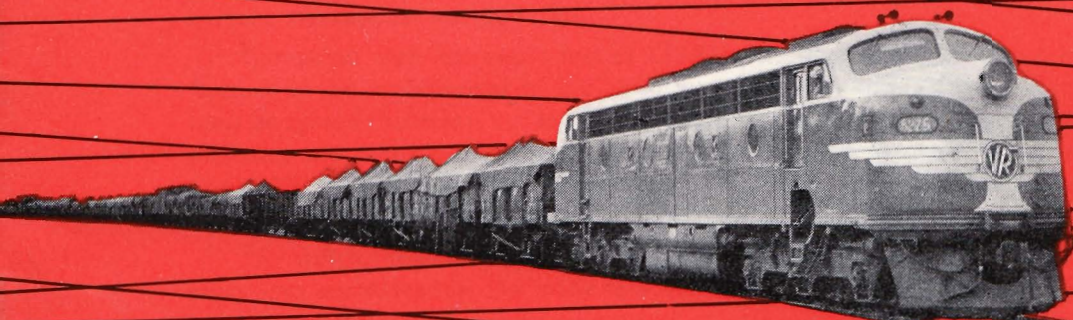


1959 • 60

# **G**oing **A**head



VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

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## **modernization**

Measures taken by the Victorian Railways to keep passenger and freight services in tune with the changing times are proving successful.

As each year passes, the effect of improvements, that started as a trickle, following the launching in the post-war years of the great modernization plan "Operation Phoenix," becomes more apparent. The progressive elimination of steam by diesel-electric locomotives, introduction of improved operating methods generally, extension of automatic signalling, duplication of sections of line, are all contributing to utilization of railway resources to the best possible advantage, and wise pruning of insufficiently used branch lines has brought appreciable benefits.

As a result the railway network has become more efficient in operation and more flexible in meeting the needs of traders and travellers alike.

The 1959/60 annual report reveals that your railways are very far from a spent force. On the contrary, they are going ahead and continuing to plan for the future to meet successfully the challenge of competitors for transport business.

## **revenue increase**

Revenue from all sources during the year amounted to £39,240,397—an increase of £993,512 by comparison with the previous year. Of this increase, approximately £400,000 was attributable to an increase in fares and freight as from March 6, 1960, and the balance to an overall improvement in goods traffic.

Working expenses at £39,616,378 were £1,348,666 higher, so that the loss on current operations was £375,981.

Compared with last year's loss of £20,826 this may appear to be a serious reflection of the management of the railways but, when the full facts are known, it must be agreed that this is not so. For instance, as a result of basic wage and marginal increases and other awards, wage costs increased during the year by no less than £1,682,000. To this has to be added other uncontrollable increases aggregating over £300,000 for such items as payroll tax, superannuation, etc.

The deficit, however, should be placed in its correct perspective. When one takes into consideration the many fare and freight concessions borne by the Department on community, social or sympathetic grounds, to assist primary producers and to implement the Government's decentralization policy, and the prosperity that the Victorian Railways, as a developmental agency, has brought to the State over the years, the published deficit is by no means a true reflection of the value of the railways to Victoria.

## **country trains improved**

With the completion of additional air-conditioned carriages, it is now generally possible to include as least one first and one second-class air-conditioned carriage on each of the longer distance country trains.

But, despite the fact that all main line country passenger trains have been modernized and are hauled by fast diesel-electric locomotives, a further substantial decrease in passenger traffic has occurred. This, however, follows the trend reported by overseas railways. The results were also affected by the cuts in country train services that, unfortunately, had to be made as a result of union limitation of overtime during the service grants dispute, and by customer resistance that invariably follows fare increases.

Furthermore, curtailment of train services severely restricted campaigns to win more passenger business, especially in the field of organized party travel at week-ends. Until such time as all regular services can be restored, there is little prospect of any improvement in country passenger traffic.

The marked increase in the number of private cars appearing on the road also had an undeniable effect on the downward trend in suburban train travel. Other contributory factors were cancellation of Sunday services owing to the industrial dispute, and increased fares. The drift from the rail by those who travel to and from work in private cars is being countered to some extent by the policy of making more free car parking areas available at suburban stations. Car owners are showing a growing appreciation of the facility.

## **more freight business**

Speeding diesels hauling long freight trains provide tangible evidence of the increasing popularity of rail goods services both within Victoria and on interstate runs.

This is reflected in the buoyant freight traffic figures. Although the truckings of wheat, barley and other grains declined by 251,000 tons, representing a decrease of 16 per cent compared with the 1958/59 grain traffic, the total tonnage of goods increased by 440,000 to 9,281,000 tons.

Of the increased tonnage, about 75 per cent consisted of traffic in the more highly rated categories. This was particularly satisfactory as the business was won despite fierce competition from road transport operators.

Total revenue received from all classes of goods traffic, with the exception of live-stock, amounted to £21,479,312—an increase of £690,829 compared with 1958/59.

Principal increases in freight revenue were from iron and steel (£303,000), cement (£109,000), petrol (£104,000), timber (£66,000), motor cars and bodies (£60,000), containers (£53,000) and some other highly rated goods (£64,000). As a result of an increase in briquette and fertilizer production, revenue from these traffics rose by £601,000 and £147,000 respectively, but was partly offset by a decline in brown coal tonnage.





*DIESEL-HAULED MAIN-LINE COUNTRY PASSENGER TRAIN*

*FAST FREIGHT TRAIN AT WARRENHEIP, NEAR BALLARAT*



# city railway a reality

A city underground railway is no longer a " pipe dream " of planners.

Enactment by the State Parliament of the City of Melbourne Underground Railway Construction Act is a positive step towards fulfillment of a scheme that has exercised the thoughts of town planning authorities for many years.

Broadly, the Act authorizes construction of an under-ground railway system, comprising four parallel tracks extending from the western end of Latrobe Street to the Treasury Gardens, and connecting with the existing suburban system to form a city railway loop. Provision is also made for four conveniently situated under-ground stations, three of which will be located in Latrobe Street, and one in the vicinity of the Treasury Gardens.

Because of the vast amount of detailed planning and preliminary investigation involved, and the necessity to complete improvements to existing suburban lines to enable them to handle the anticipated increase in traffic, construction of the proposed city underground railway, on present indications, will not begin until 1967 ; the whole project being completed by 1972.

By providing facilities for the distribution of passenger traffic to a number of convenient points throughout the city, the underground lines will overcome the most serious deficiency of the present metropolitan railway system—concentration of passengers at Flinders Street and, to a lesser extent, Spencer Street stations.

Combined with improved track and signalling facilities on the busiest suburban lines and free car parks at many stations, the underground railway will enable the Department to provide services of a standard that will offer every inducement to motorists to keep their cars out of the city area and thus reduce street congestion.

Limitations of street transport, especially where the bulk of the traffic comprises private motor cars, are clearly demonstrated by the experience of many large American cities, where it has been proved that elaborate road facilities are not only far more costly than equivalent rail services, but create more traffic problems than they solve.

It is significant that the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transit Authority is studying a proposal involving hundreds of millions of dollars to develop 74 route miles of underground, ground level and overhead rail transit routes to network the sprawling metropolis.

The probable course of events is as follows :

1960/61–1966/67 : complete works to improve existing suburban lines ; begin construction of connecting flyovers in North Melbourne–Richmond and Jolimont–Princes Bridge areas ; carry out detailed planning and preliminary investigation for underground.

1967/68–1971/72 : construct underground railway ; build 50 more suburban trains to meet the needs of increased traffic.



STANDARD GAUGE TRACK LAYING

## **standard gauge in 1961**

The Melbourne-Sydney uniform gauge railway will be ready for preliminary use by freight trains at the end of 1961.

Good progress was made during the year with the duplication of existing bridges for the standard gauge project. Earthworks for the new track are well in hand.

Because ballast did not come forward from contractors in the expected quantities, progress with tracklaying during the year was less than had been expected but, between Wodonga and Glenrowan, about 10 miles of track were laid in sections and materials were placed in readiness for further tracklaying.

A contract was let for automatic signalling, with centralized traffic control, on the standard gauge line.

A considerable amount of work is involved in the erection of a new pole route to carry telephone and power lines and in re-arrangement of station yards, with consequent re-location of structures, alterations to sidings, crossing facilities, etc. These works are well advanced.

A tender was also accepted for the construction of carriages for two super luxury sleeping trains. The sleepers will be similar in style to new roomette and twinette carriages that are being built for the Sydney-Brisbane journey and will bring the same high standard of travel comfort to the Melbourne-Sydney run that "The Overland" now provides between Melbourne and Adelaide.

Each train of 14 carriages will consist of roomette and twinette sleeping carriages, a dining car, a club car, a brake-van, and a power car that will generate electricity for heating, lighting, cooking and air-conditioning.

The trains, that will be hauled by 1,800 h.p. diesel-electric locomotives, will represent an investment of nearly £2 million.

## **suburban improvements**

Although the Department was seriously hampered by lack of staff, and restricted by the availability of money, considerable progress was made on track work and electrification extensions to improve the capacity of the suburban system and improve train services, particularly those to outer suburban areas.

Reconstruction of Richmond station reached an advanced stage, two more island platforms being completed and brought into operation. This enabled six-track operation to be introduced between Flinders Street and South Yarra.

Further progress was made on third track facilities between Flinders Street and East Camberwell, installation of automatic signalling between Blackburn and Mitcham was continued, work was resumed on the construction of a new station at Patterson Road, between Bentleigh and Moorabbin, track duplication was completed on the Coburg-Fawkner and Reservoir-Keonpark sections of line, and electrification was extended from Fawkner to Upfield, and from Thomastown to Lalor. A new station was provided at Upfield and new station buildings at Reservoir, Lalor and Eltham.

Track facilities were also improved in the country. With the completion of track duplication between Trafalgar and Moe, there is now complete duplication from Dandenong to Moe, with the exception of the Narre Warren-Berwick and Bunyip-Longwarry sections, each  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles long.

During the year there was a net increase of 18.35 miles of electrified track in the suburban and Gippsland areas.

A contract was let for the installation of automatic signalling, with centralized traffic control, between Bacchus Marsh and Ballan.

Earthworks were completed for the extension of track duplication from Newport South to Laverton, but further work on the project was deferred because of shortage of loan money.

## **power stepped up**

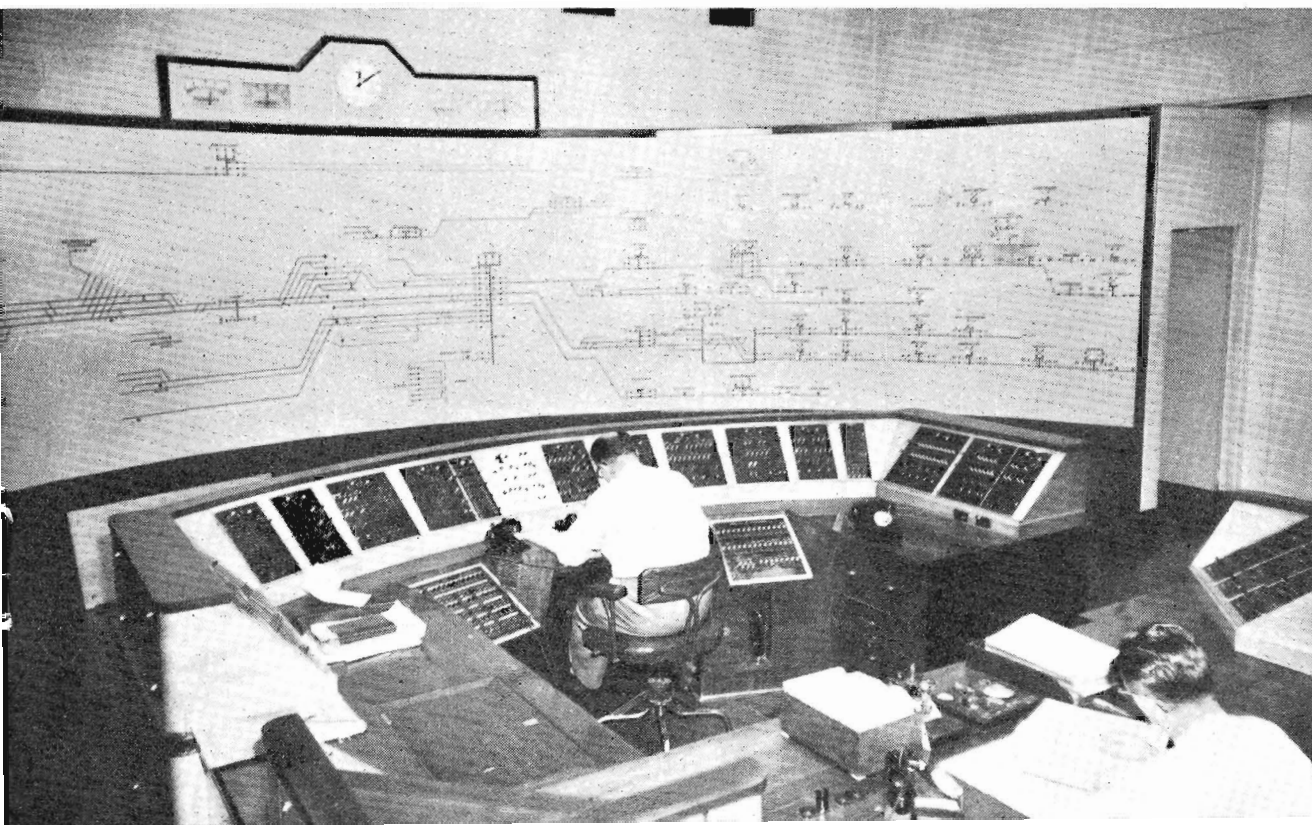
Work was continued on the replacement of obsolete 25 cycle rotary converter sub-stations with modern 50 cycle equipment to increase sub-station capacity. A new sub-station was commissioned at Albion, and at East Camberwell the existing sub-station building was re-equipped. A new sub-station at Thomastown and a tie-station at Diamond Creek were completed, and at Dudley Street a new sub-station was put in to provide power for the servicing of air-conditioned carriages.





" HARRIS TRAIN " CROSSING EAST CAMBERWELL FLYOVER

POWER OPERATIONS ROOM



## **rail fights back**

Although the competition was intense, the railways were successful in gaining considerable new business, much of it from road and sea transport operators. In July 1959, an agreement was signed with a leading manufacturer for the carriage in train loads of a minimum of 100,000 tons of steel and tin plate per year from Port Kembla, N.S.W., to Melbourne and Geelong. The minimum tonnage was, in fact, exceeded in just over nine months.

This contract was additional to others under which iron and steel have for some years been carried from Port Kembla to Melbourne, Geelong and Adelaide, and which were recently renewed on a basis that will result in substantial increases in traffic.

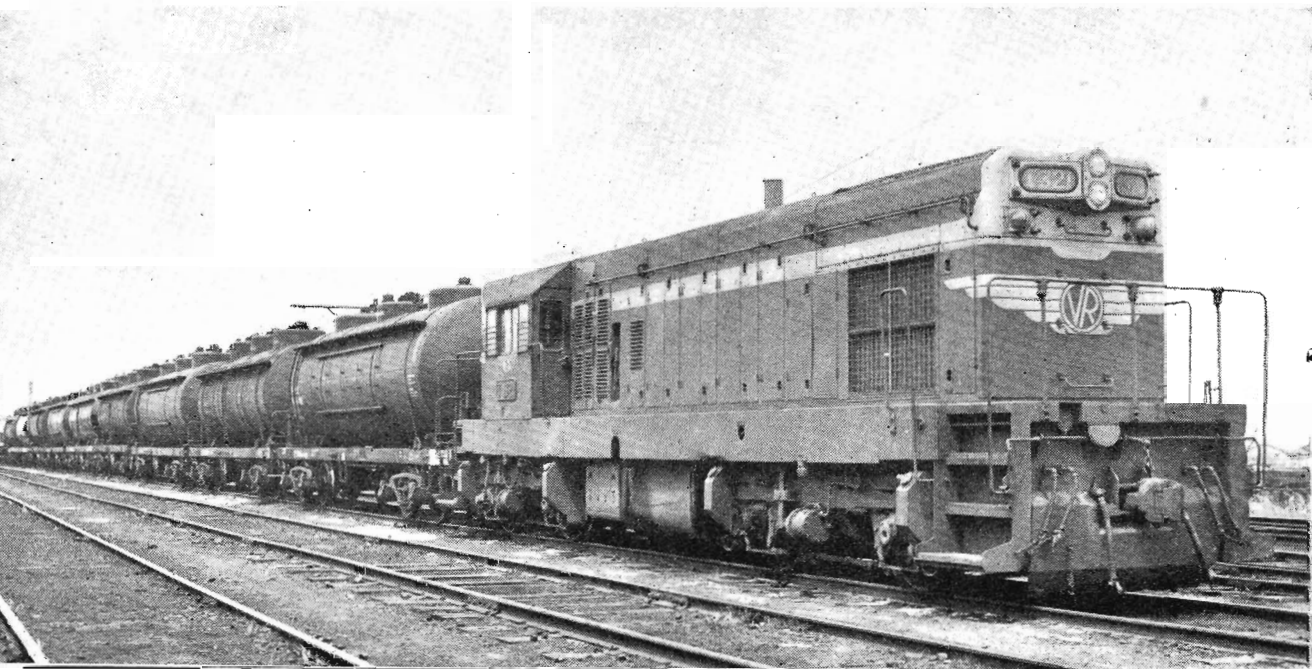
Other large contracts negotiated include the carriage of a minimum of 40,000 tons a year of scrap iron and steel from Melbourne to Port Kembla, the transport of about 9,000 tons a year of food products, formerly dispatched by either sea or road from Melbourne to other state capitals, and for the addition of about 16,000 tons a year to the interstate bulk and bagged malt traffic.

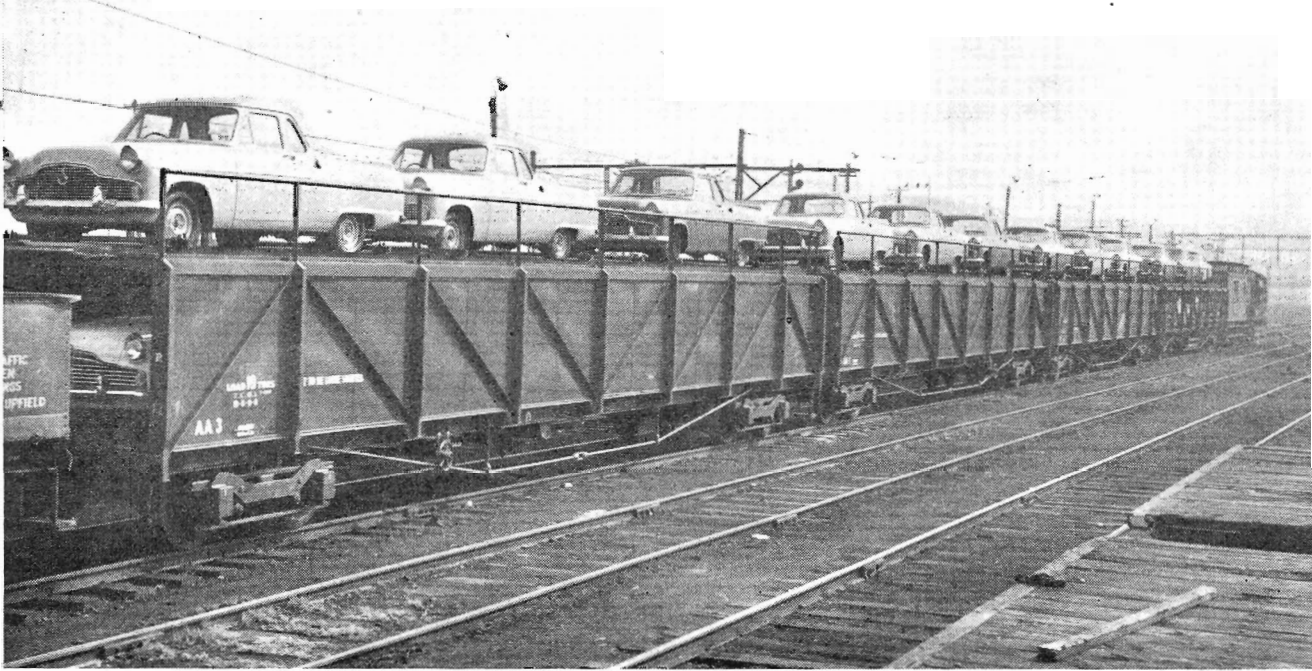
Traffic carried between capital cities, under the forwarding agents' bulk wagon load scheme again increased. The incentive rate introduced late in 1957 for wagon load consignments, in excess of prescribed minimum tonnage between Melbourne and Sydney, proved highly successful. During the year a similar scheme was introduced for this type of traffic between Melbourne and Adelaide.

Following the establishment at Upfield, near Broadmeadows, of a large motor car manufacturing plant, considerable numbers of motor bodies and completed cars were railed to Homebush, N.S.W., and South Brisbane.

Several test consignments of motor cars from other manufacturers were dispatched to and from Sydney and Brisbane, and also to Adelaide, in specially designed wagons to demonstrate to the companies concerned the railways' ability to handle the traffic, that previously had been almost exclusively road-borne. The special wagons have fully realized expectations.

*OIL COMPANIES PREFER RAIL*





SPECIALLY DESIGNED CAR WAGONS

## oil tank traffic grows

Introduction, in 1957, of an incentive rate for bulk motor spirit and extension of the rate, in 1959, to include bulk kerosene and distillate, has been amply justified by the result. Several oil companies have hired tank wagons from the railways to enable them to increase their rail dispatches of these products, gross revenue from which increased by £211,393 for the 12 months ended December 31, 1959, compared with that for the year immediately before the introduction of the incentive scheme.

More tank wagons have been made available for hire to meet the growing preference of oil companies for this efficient and reliable method of transport.

Enterprising railway commercial agents entered the stronghold of road transport operators in the south-eastern districts of South Australia and in other wool growing areas, and succeeded in obtaining some of the wool business that previously went by road. As the railways are now providing fast diesel-hauled trains for the important wool traffic and are doing everything practicable to meet the needs and wishes of the wool grower, it is anticipated that the rail salesmen will gain more wool business in the future.





MODERN DIESEL-HYDRAULIC LOCOMOTIVE

NEW FLINDERS STREET CAFETERIA



## **diesel fleet expands**

The policy of progressively replacing all steam locomotives with either diesel-electric or diesel-hydraulic locomotives was advanced a further stage with the purchase during the year of nine 900 h.p. diesel-electric and twelve 650 h.p. diesel-hydraulic locomotives. A further 13 diesel-hydraulic units are to be delivered under the same contract during 1960/61, and tenders for the supply of 25 more diesel-powered locomotives in the 650-700 h.p. range are under consideration. Five additional 1,800 h.p. diesel-electrics are also on order to haul crack trains on the Melbourne-Albury standard gauge track when it is ready for operation.

Eight more luxury air-conditioned saloon type carriages went into service on country lines, and construction of 30 extra suburban "Harris Trains" was begun, partly in Departmental workshops and partly by overseas and local contractors.

## **record stock turnover**

Value of stocks held was £4,326,592—a decrease of £296,786 compared with the previous year. Since January 1958, a reduction of more than £1,000,000 has been made in the value of stock holdings as a result of the efforts of the Stores Standardization Committee in reducing stocks by scrapping obsolete materials.

Issue and sales from stock totalled £18,315,098, an increase of £2,439,138 compared with the previous year, while the stock turnover was 4.28 times—a new record. Value of materials reclaimed for railway use and for sale at the Reclamation Depot, Spotswood, increased by £19,566 to £451,089.

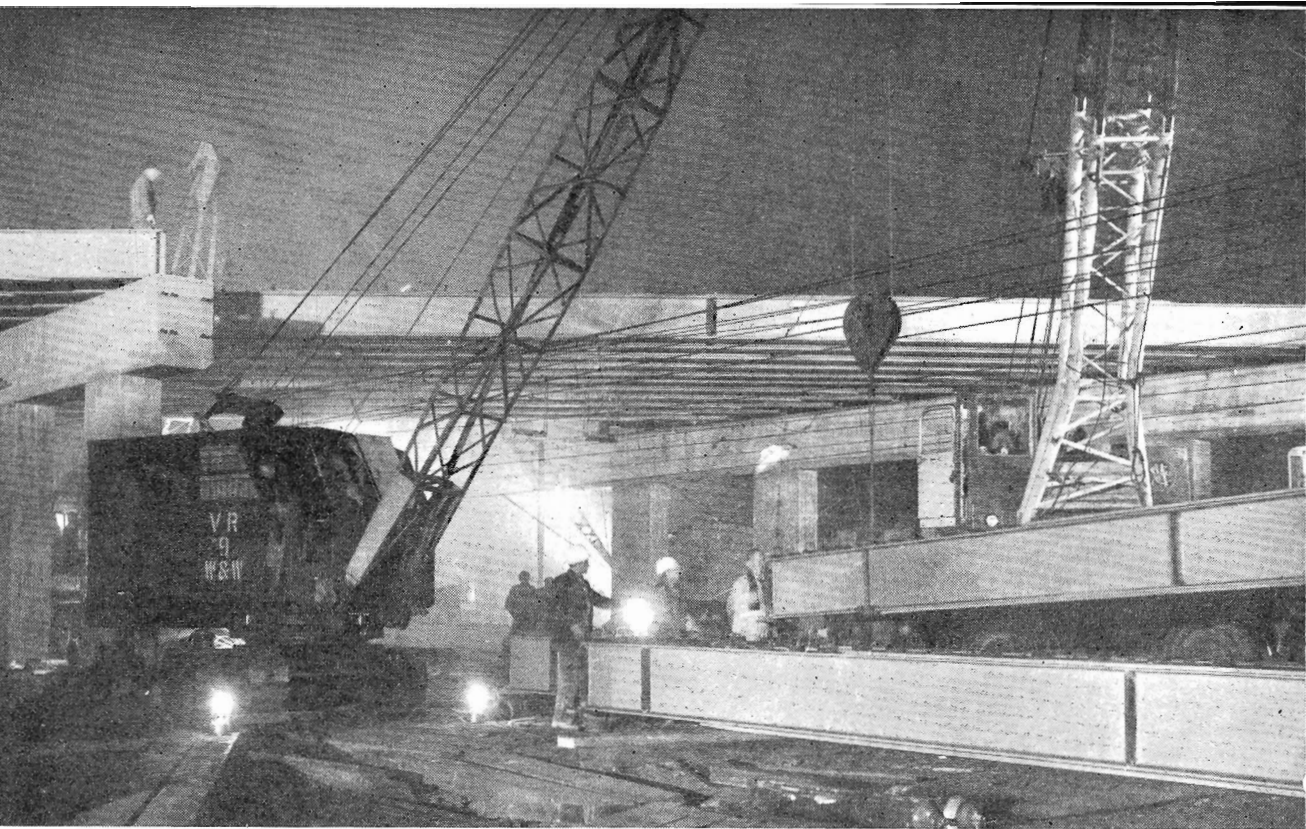
## **refreshment revenue up**

Although the cancellation of Sunday trains and certain other country train services adversely affected the patronage of refreshment rooms and stalls, the revenue of £2,008,110 showed an overall increase of £32,882.

A reduction in working expenses, due to further operating economies, resulted in an improvement of about £5,000 in the trading results of country refreshment rooms, despite a further decline in revenue.

The Chalet, Mt. Buffalo National Park, attracted increased patronage, and modernization of bathroom facilities and provision of a luxury swimming pool have more than ever established The Chalet in the proud position of being Australia's finest mountain holiday resort.





ROUND-THE-CLOCK GRADE SEPARATION WORK

## level crossing abolition

Grade separation projects are gathering momentum. About £1 million annually is now being spent on these works. Actually, the amount of expenditure has risen from about £150,000 a year in 1956 to an estimated figure of over £1 million in 1960/61.

During the year, grade separation undertakings were completed at South Road and Nepean Highway, Moorabbin, and at Princes Highway, Corio.

At Elsternwick, the railway tracks were lowered to pass beneath Glenhuntly Road, and at Newport a road overpass was constructed to replace the Melbourne Road level crossing. Both of these are now being used by road traffic.

Further grade separation works are in progress at Hampshire Road, Sunshine, Beaconsfield Street, Glenrowan, and Anderson Street, Euroa. They are being carried out in conjunction with the Melbourne-Albury standard gauge scheme.

Additional boom barrier installations were made in metropolitan and country areas for the protection of level crossings, and other crossings were equipped with flashing light signals.

The programme to replace existing level crossing signs with modern standard reflectorized signs was almost completed, and at a number of other crossings visibility was improved.

## staff recruiting

The railways share with industry generally the problem of obtaining sufficient staff for all requirements.

In an effort to rectify the shortage, recruiting campaigns were undertaken throughout Victoria, Western Australia and Queensland, and in May of this year an officer was sent overseas to recruit staff for railways and the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board.

The Department's Technical College was rebuilt on modern lines, and a Trade School, in which apprentices receive practical instruction in the trades of their choice, is being developed in conjunction with the College.

At the close of the year, the staff (including casual labour) totalled 27,842. In addition, 777 men were working on the rail standardization project.

*V.R. ATTRACTS A FINE TYPE OF APPRENTICE*



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