

ESSENTIAL

POTENTIAL



VICTORIAN RAILWAYS

1958•9

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essential potential

In the present Jet Age of supersonic speeds and lunar rockets there is still a vital need for fast, cheap, reliable surface transport capable of moving passengers and freight in volume.

Despite tremendous sums spent on road development, the railway remains pre-eminent as the most efficient means of surface transport available.

Dieselization opened a new era in economic rail transport, and, since then, improved passenger vehicles and high speed goods wagons have enabled improvements to be continually made in the services offered to the public.

The Victorian Railways, during the past year, have continued their policy of continuous modernization. New locomotives, carriages, goods vehicles, track equipment and station buildings are a visible token of their efforts in this respect.

The rapidly increasing population of Victoria has been adequately provided for both in country and metropolitan areas, but unfortunately the use of private motor cars has had a noticeable effect on the revenue received.

Although inherently the best means yet evolved for moving large bodies of people quickly, cheaply, and efficiently, the function of the railways is being duplicated to a rapidly increasing extent by road transport. This not only imposes an increasing burden on the taxpayer but is slowly strangling the road outlets from the city.

decreased deficit

Railway revenue from all sources at £38,246,885 (£36,060,303 for the previous year) was nearly balanced by working expenses at £38,267,711 (£38,351,510). Interest charges and expenses, exchange on interest payments and redemption, and contribution to the National Debt Sinking Fund totalled £3,816,322 (£3,596,499). There was thus a deficit on the year's operations of £3,837,148 (£5,881,706). This was an improvement of just over £2 million compared with the previous 12 months.

Ample equipment is now available to meet any traffic offering—better services should obtain a bigger share of traffic now being carried by road and thus further reduce a deficit which is, in the final analysis, a charge on the general public.

passenger traffic

Modern air-conditioned steel carriages were introduced on additional country lines in an effort to induce country residents to relinquish the use of their motor cars in favour of rail travel. That this was not successful is evidenced by a decrease of 160,000 in the number of passengers carried.

This reduction took place despite the operation for some months of special day return fares that represented a saving of 20% on ordinary return fares. These fares failed to attract sufficient additional patronage to offset the reduced revenue received and for this reason were withdrawn.

A new trend, noticeable over recent years, has been the practice of many travellers living in outer suburban areas to adopt the American habit of using their motor car to travel to the nearest railway station and then continuing their journey to the city by rail.

This is not only cheaper but also less nerve wracking than continually facing the hazards of road travel after a hard day's work.

To encourage this form of travel the Department has provided parking areas at many stations. With the continual spread of housing in fringe areas there is no doubt that combined road and rail travel will increase in the future.

A revised scale of suburban fares based on one-class travel was instrumental in improving revenue by £897,568, but the total number of passengers using the suburban services decreased by 4,018,901 to 158,612,835, largely it is felt, owing to resistance to the increased fares.

Every effort is being made to encourage train travel and, as well as a sustained canvassing campaign by Commercial Agents who contact schools, sporting, and social groups for excursion bookings, arrangements have been made with privately operated Travel Agencies who book country and interstate rail journeys on a commission basis.

goods traffic

Revenue rose by £1,460,138 largely due to an increase of 250,000 tons of wheat hauled.

Although substantial improvements were obtained in the carriage of such commodities as petrol, cement, galvanized iron, iron and steel bar and rod, timber and Forwarding Agent's traffic, these figures were offset to some extent by declines in revenue from coal traffic, live-stock, wool, flour and bran.

The amount of wool carried during the year was only 1,575 tons below the total for 1957/58 but revenue from this source showed a reduction of £43,000, due mainly to the necessity to grant reduced freight rates at a number of locations to secure traffic from competing road services. This is typical of the many anomalies stemming from unrestricted road competition.

The virtual non-regulation of interstate road transport, coupled with the fact that the operators of the heavy vehicles do not pay a fair share of the cost of road construction and maintenance, continues to result in large tonnages of goods being transported by road that could be moved by rail at less cost to the community.



XAVIER COLLEGE STUDENTS ON WAY TO BOAT RACES

LATEST TYPE T CLASS DIESEL-ELECTRIC LOCOMOTIVE



commercial activities

The introduction of incentive rates for bulk loading handled through Forwarding Agents between Melbourne and Sydney—with door-to-door deliveries—proved so successful that a similar arrangement was extended to traffic between Melbourne and Adelaide and subsequently between Melbourne and Brisbane.

More than 108,000 tons of traffic were handled between Melbourne and Sydney for a revenue return of approximately £681,000—an increase of nearly 30% on the previous year's figures.

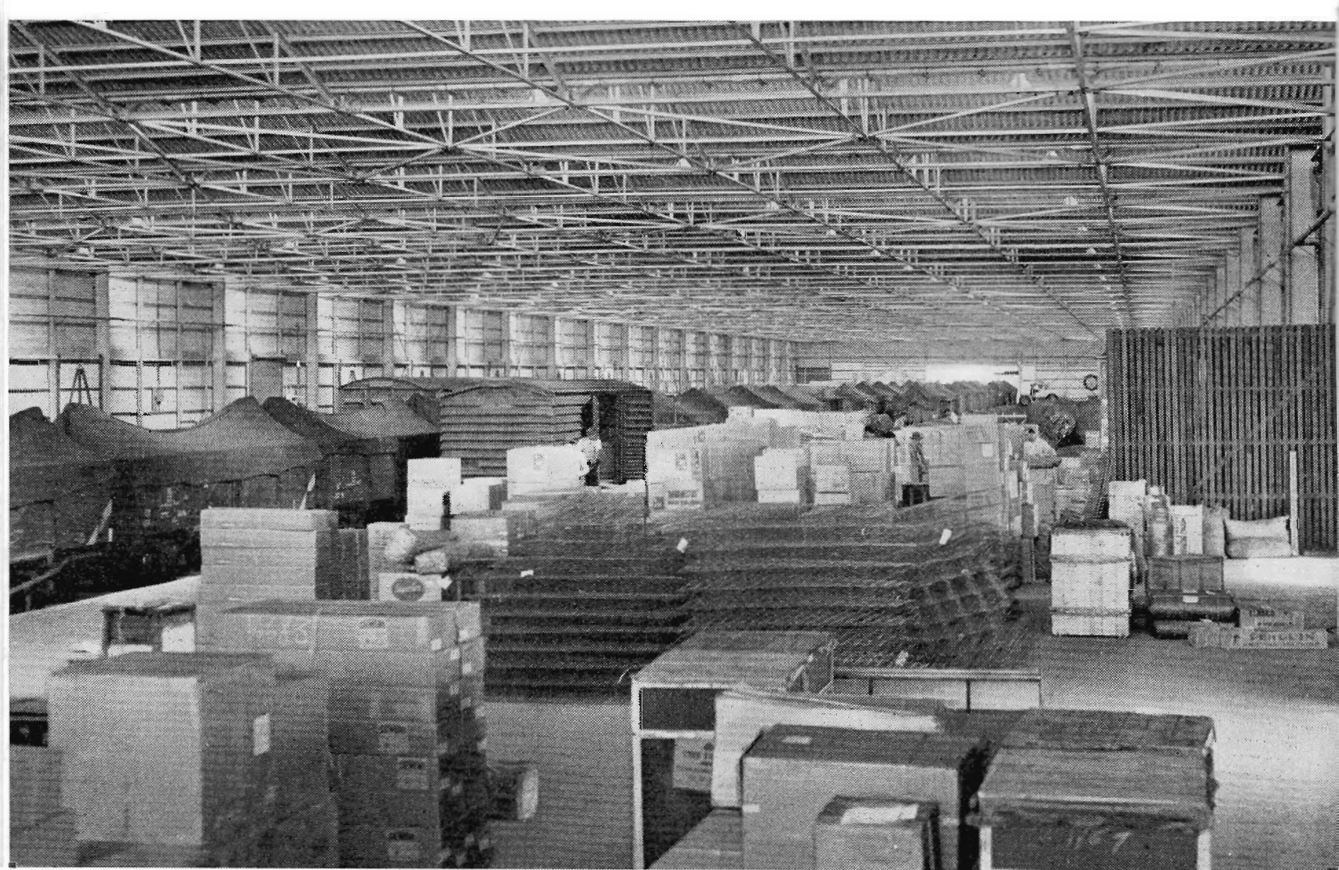
Containers are playing an increasingly important role on interstate rail routes. Constructed in three sizes, either 7' 0", 14' 5" or 21' 10" long, they enable goods to be factory packed in Melbourne and delivered to their destination in Sydney without further handling. Special cylindrical containers have been constructed for bulk liquid traffic.

The introduction of special rates for wool and petrol consignments have had an immediate effect on traffic offering for conveyance by rail. Rebates on carriage of bulk petrol are based on freight payments in excess of those made in 1957, and, when applicable, save the consignor 33-1/3%. The introduction of this concession has definitely checked the diversion of bulk petrol traffic to the road.

Stowing and handling methods are constantly under review by experts, and the increasing use of pneumatic dunnage, consisting of rubber bags with nylon reinforcement that act as cushions for fragile loads, has been highly successful.

Riding qualities of traffic vehicles are studied by impact recording machines. Small and easily handled, these machines reveal any lateral shocks that are likely to damage fragile consignments. Prompt investigation by Commercial Branch officers keep such irregularities to a minimum.

BUSY SCENE AT INTERSTATE GOODS SHED, SOUTH DYNON





BRIDGE BUILDING ON STANDARD GAUGE RAILWAY

standard gauge progress

Construction of the new standard gauge track between Albury and Melbourne is proceeding apace.

With 927 staff on the job, good progress is being made with duplication of bridges and other essential work.

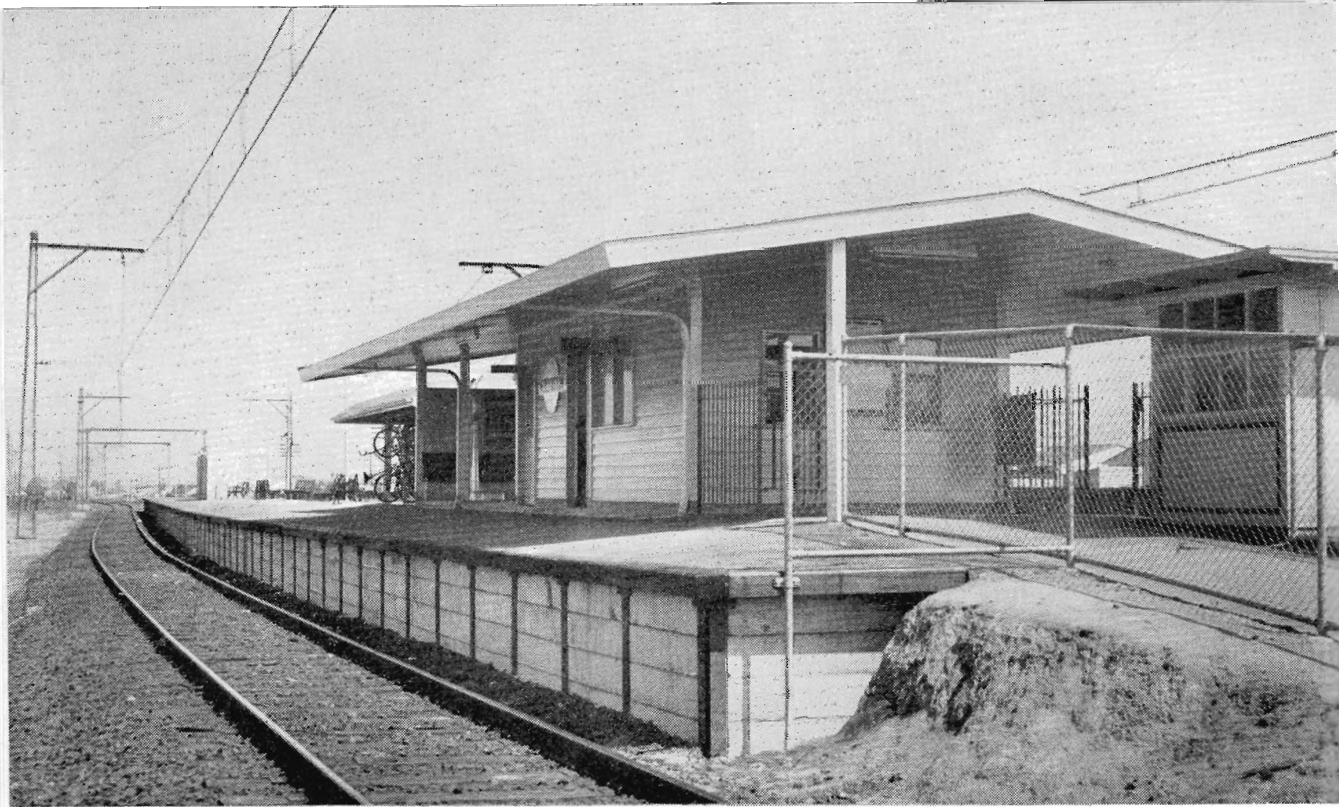
Substructure work has been completed on 94 bridges, earthworks commenced on 16, while duplication of a further 37 has been started. Bridge steelwork is being supplied by the Department of Railways, New South Wales.

Earthworks associated with the new line are being carried out under contract.

Arrangements have been made for Victoria and New South Wales to jointly finance the construction of two new air-conditioned trains for which thirty-four carriages of the most modern design will be supplied.

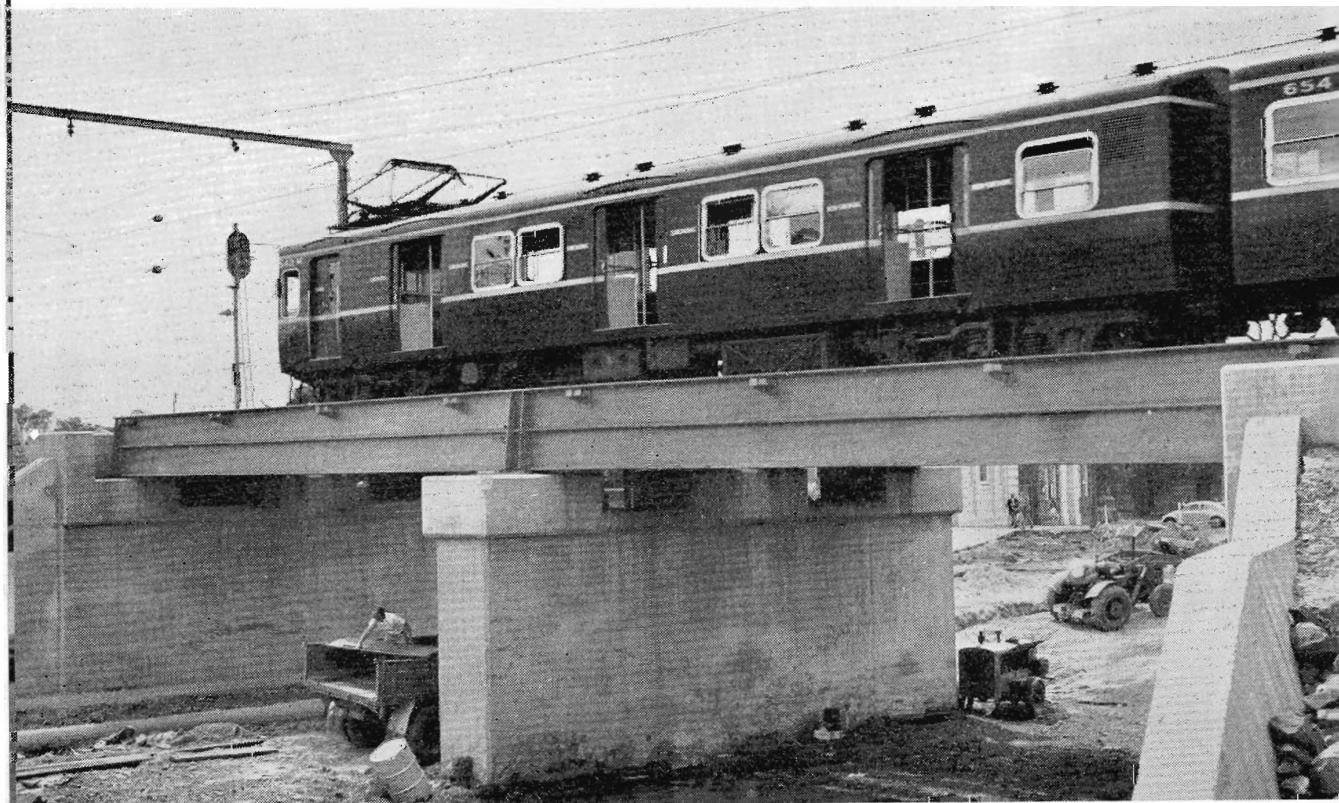
Trains will be hauled between Melbourne-Sydney by diesel-electric locomotives and the through run will be accomplished in substantially less time than at present.

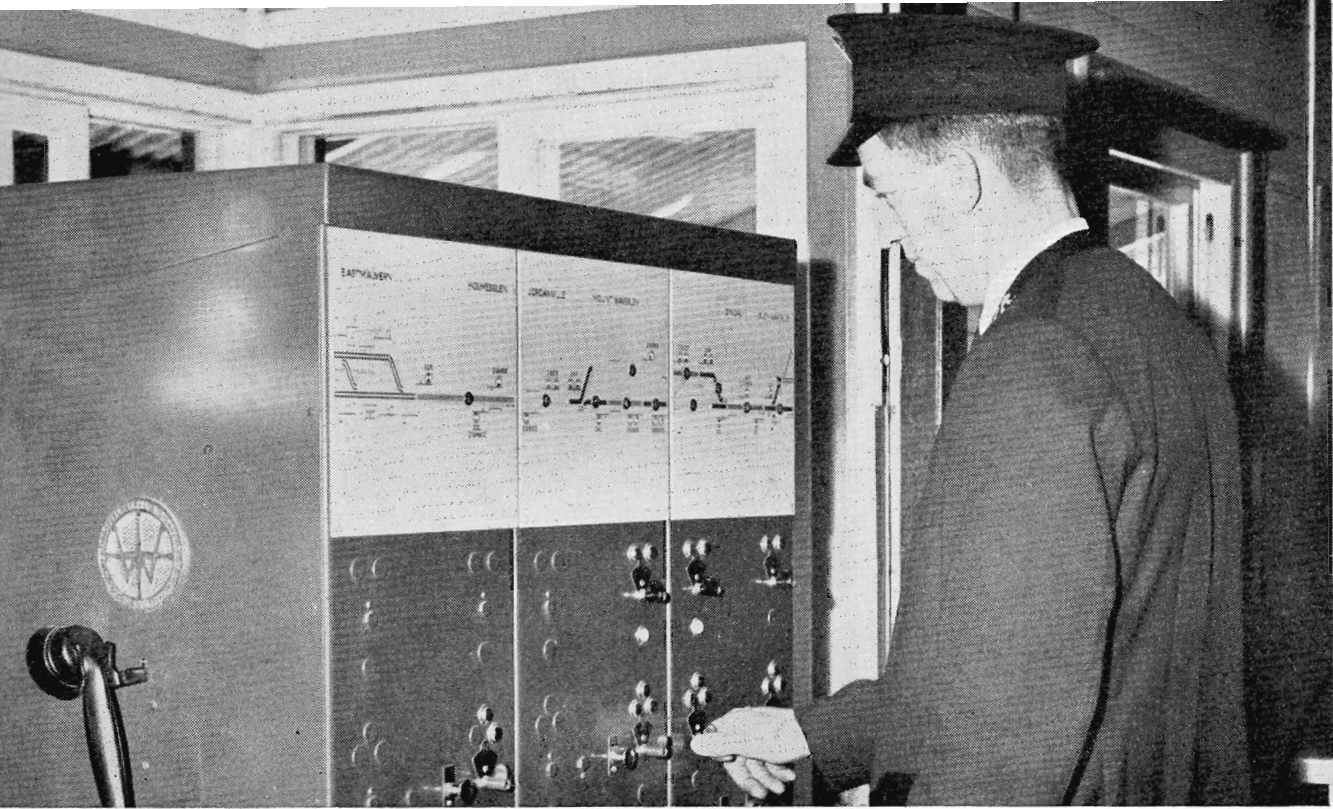
Since the inception of work in 1957, £2,095,622 has been expended on this project.



NEW STATION BUILDINGS AT MERLYNSTON

GRADE SEPARATION WORK AT NAPIER STREET, FOOTSCRAY





CENTRALIZED TRAFFIC CONTROL PANEL AT EASTMALVERN

CAR PARK AT CHELTENHAM



new fast goods service

Introduced in October, 1958, the "Fruit Flier" service from Mildura to Melbourne was an instant success.

Fresh fruit, vegetables and other perishable commodities complete the journey of 356 miles from the Mildura area in 10 hours 50 minutes, enabling their sale at the Ballarat and Melbourne markets the morning after their dispatch.

Originally scheduled to operate on a three day weekly basis, public demand required the service to be increased to five trains weekly in each direction.

Operating from Melbourne to Mildura, a similar express service permits goods consigned at 3 p.m. to be available for delivery in Mildura at 8 a.m. the following day.

new rolling stock

The gradual replacement of steam locomotives with modern diesel-powered locomotives was taken a further step by the purchase of an additional ten 900 h.p. 'T' class diesel-electric locomotives. The first of the new locomotives went into service in June and the order will be completed by the end of the year.

As they reach obsolescence, steam shunting locomotives are being progressively replaced by diesel power. For the same horse power, diesel-hydraulic units have been found to involve a lower capital cost than diesel-electric locomotives for this kind of work. Orders have therefore been placed for twenty-five 650 h.p. diesel-hydraulic units.

Two diesel-hydraulic shunting locomotives of 150 h.p. were constructed at Newport Workshops during the year and these are proving very successful.

For light shunting movements, seven rail tractors, featuring internal combustion power units and chain drive, were constructed by the Department.

Six of the fifteen additional air-conditioned carriages authorized were constructed and placed in traffic.

Where necessary, the lighting in existing carriages is being improved and gas-lit carriages will be equipped with electric lighting.

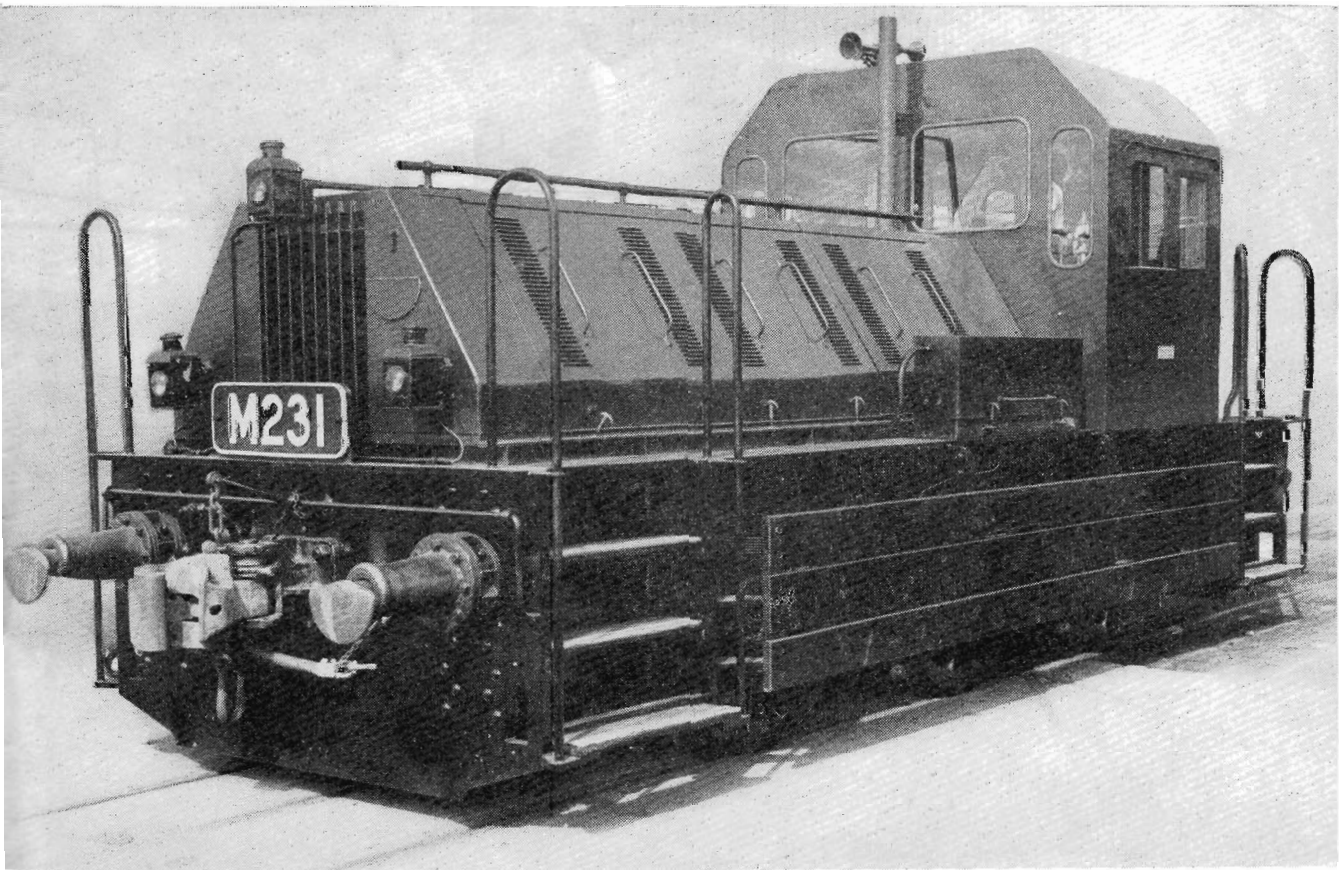
Passengers in diesel-rail cars will appreciate the new air circulating units installed. These will heat the air in cold weather and provide a better circulation of atmosphere in the summer.

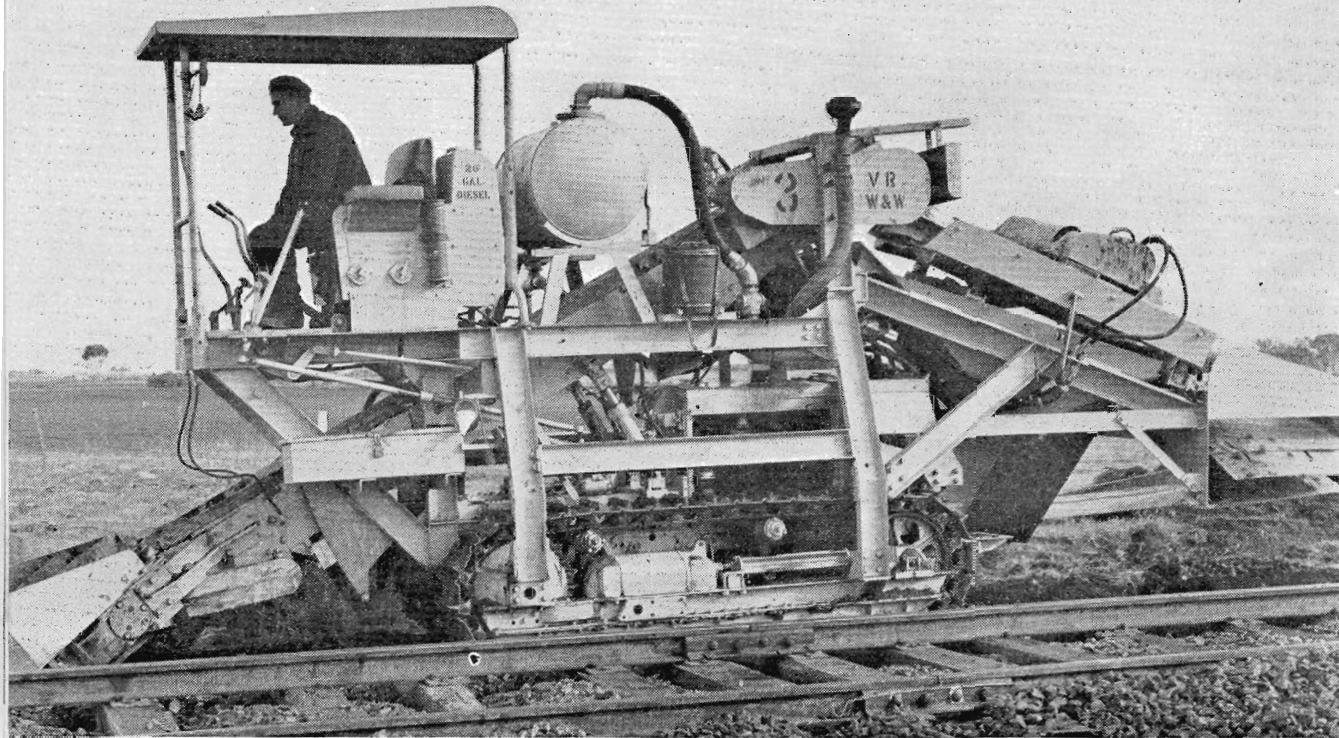
A second group of thirty suburban seven-car "Harris" trains is now on order. These will have seating for 50 more passengers than the original trains of this type.



FAST GOODS TRAIN AT INGLISTON

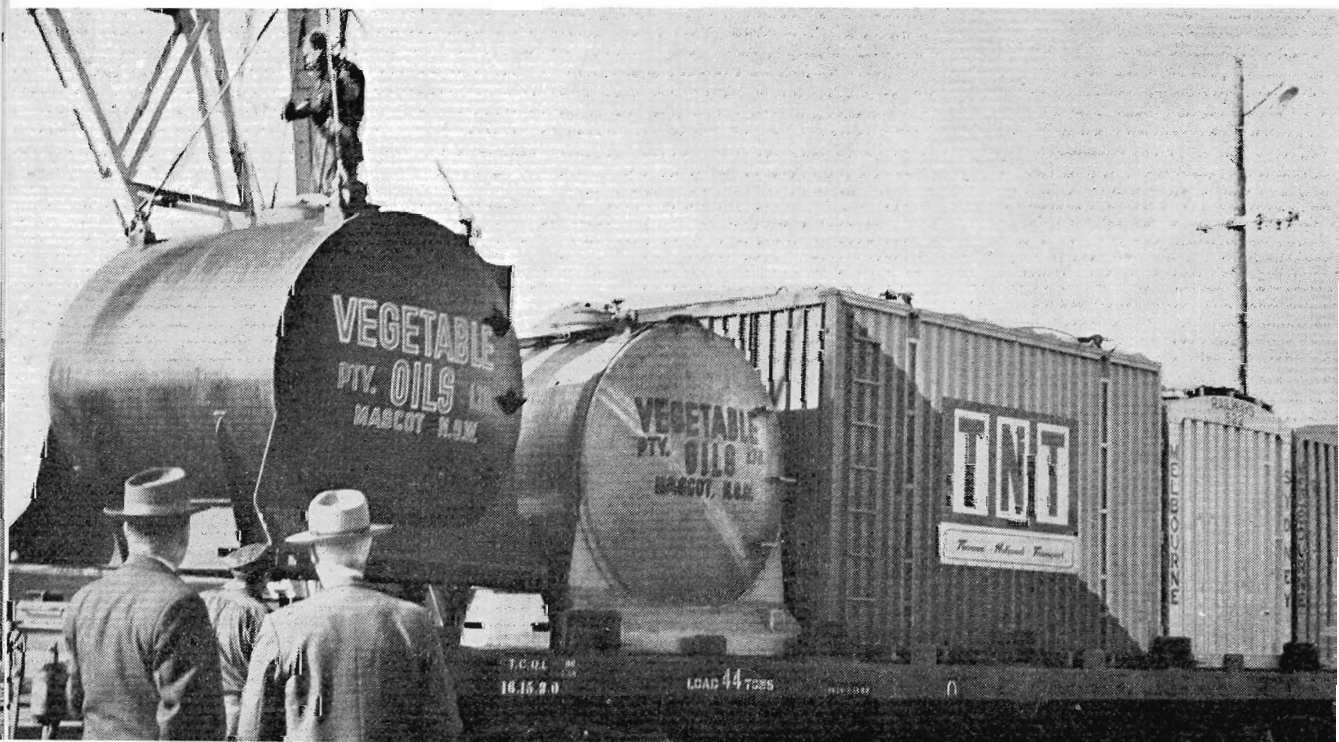
M CLASS V.R. BUILT DIESEL-HYDRAULIC LOCOMOTIVE





"SUPER MOLE" BALLAST CLEANING MACHINE

REPRESENTATIVE CONTAINER TYPES ON QC FLAT WAGON



track and other works

Mechanization of track laying gangs enabled 110 miles of track to be relaid, including 22 miles in the suburban area. In the country, 45 miles were relaid on the north-western line, 29 miles on the Tocumwal and south-eastern lines, the remaining 14 miles comprising small sections on various other lines.

An important economy measure was the purchase of a "Super Mole" ballast cleaning machine. This machine reclaims dirty ballast, screens out the dirt and returns the clean ballast to the track. As dirty ballast was previously discarded, the saving of 400 cubic yards of ballast for each mile of track is a great improvement on old methods.

During the year 194,332 cubic yards of ballast, 653,285 sleepers and 15,824 tons of rail were used on track maintenance and relaying operations.

Duplication of track work was carried out on further sections of the Gippsland line as well as on the Geelong, South Yarra, East Camberwell and Fawkner lines.

Grade separation jobs at Napier Street, Footscray, and Frankston Road, Dandenong, were completed and similar works at Nepean Highway and South Road, Moorabbin, were well advanced. Work was commenced at Glenhuntly Road., Elsternwick, and plans were prepared for eliminating the Melbourne Road, Newport, level crossing which will be completed by the end of 1960.

Electrification was extended from Fawkner to Upfield where a new station to serve the Ford Motor Co. plant was under construction. This extension involved a new sub-station at Campbellfield and a tie-station at Fawkner.

oil consumption increases

Furnace oil consumption rose by 8,921 tons during the year to 39,636 tons or 9,526,365 gallons.

Diesel fuel consumed in diesel-electric locomotives and rail motors totalled 30,085 tons (8,182,990 gallons), an increase of 3,336 tons on previous figures.

Coal was still used by the Department, but the quantity is steadily diminishing as dieselization is extended. During the year 114,557 tons of large and 464 tons of small coal was consumed.

material stocks

As a result of the rigid supervision exercised over stores held, the value of material on hand at the end of the year was reduced to £4,623,379 or £518,274 less than at the end of the previous year.

Some idea of the value of railway purchases to the country's economy can be discerned from the fact that issues and sales from stock held by the Department totalled £15,875,960, with a stock turnover of 3.4 times.

The Reclamation Depot, Spotswood, played an important part in railway economics with materials reclaimed for railway use or sold returning £431,523.

refreshment services show profit

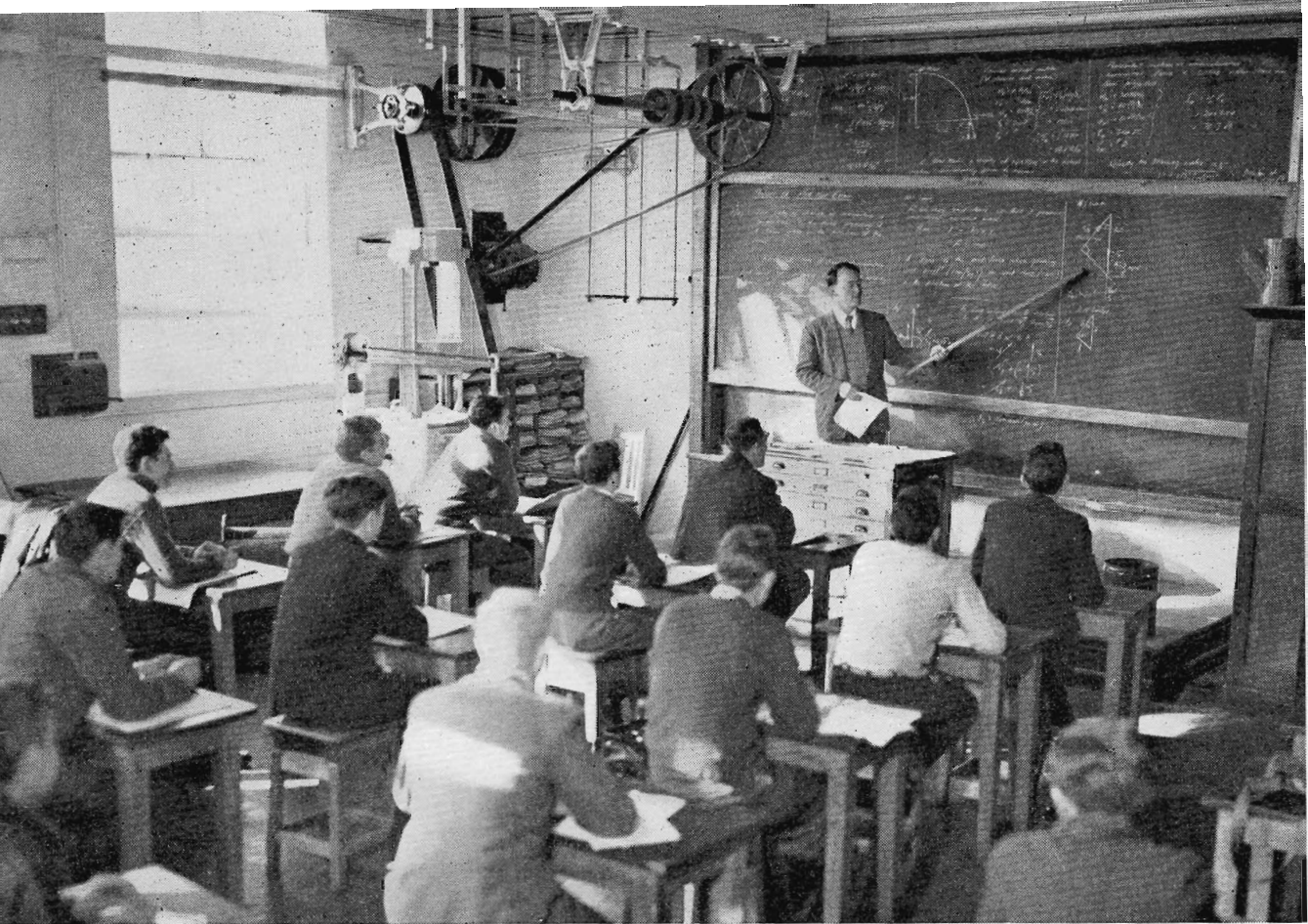
With a revenue of £1,975,228, the Refreshment Services Branch improved their 1957/58 figures by £48,066. Most of this increase came from fruit, confectionery, drink and bookstalls at Flinders Street.

Mobile refreshment trolley services continued to attract good business on "The Daylight" and "Mildura Sunlight" as well as on the Ararat and Camperdown lines.

Mt. Buffalo Chalet retained its position as Victoria's premier holiday resort. Its lead in this respect should be further enhanced with the opening of the new swimming pool, now under construction, that will literally allow guests to swim above the clouds.

REFRESHMENT TROLLEY SERVICE IN AZ CAR





APPRENTICESHIP CLASS AT V..R. TECHNICAL COLLEGE

staff position improves

Metal tradesmen and professional staff are still in short supply for railway requirements.

To fill professional staff vacancies, youths were recruited for full-time training at the University or Technical Colleges, or part-time training at Technical Colleges.

There are 54 youths undergoing full-time training in civil or electrical engineering or architecture, while 16 are undergoing part-time training at Technical Colleges in electrical, mechanical, and communications engineering as applied to railway signalling.

Departmental apprentices on full-time scholarships in civil, electrical, and mechanical engineering at Technical Colleges at present total 15.

At the close of the year the staff (including casual labour) totalled 29,120, a decrease of 63 compared with the previous year. During the year a further 193 apprentices were appointed to 23 trades.

In recording their appreciation of the excellent service and co-operation given by all grades, the Commissioners wish to emphasize that only by working as a team can we hope to continue to give that high level of service the travelling public expects.

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