

RAILWAY STUDY FORUM

Australia study tour



The Barangaroo Development will be a dedicated public space encompassing a continuous Sydney Harbour promenade, expansive parklands, plazas and coves

Our tour began on Monday 14th October with a morning of seminars. Host Howard Collins CEO, Sydney Trains, discussed the vertically integrated organisation and the challenge of catering for one million more people by 2024. We also had presentations on New South Wales Trainlink and its various projects. The afternoon included a visit to the Olympic Park to ride on a connected automated vehicle.

Tuesday started with an introduction from Jon Lamonte, CEO, Sydney Metro. He explained the State Transit Authority runs the bus service, but the other public transport operations are franchised. We saw new trams being tested on the Sydney Light Rail section near Central station, due to open in December 2019. We then travelled on the new Metro line to Tallawong and visited its depot and operations centre. The driverless trains provide a four-minute-interval service.

On Wednesday, we visited the Transport Management Centre, which leads planning and coordination for proactive real-time management across the network. A recent positive development had been closer engagement with Sydney airport. We also visited the new Railway Operations Centre.

Thursday involved a train journey to Newcastle for presentations on the Hunter Valley Coal Chain Co-ordinator function. This covers over 30 mines, some over 100 miles away and operates 24/7. This was followed by a tour of Port Waratah Coal terminal.

On Friday, we visited the Barangaroo Development Authority, a massive development on the site of a former gas works and container terminal. The new metro station will be opening in 2024 to service a working population of 23,000.

Our second week in Melbourne started with a day of seminars hosted by the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. The first was on Australia's high-productivity road vehicles, which have nine axles and a weight limit of 62.5t. We heard about the Melbourne Rail Plan 2019–2050. This advocates rail and intermodal solutions for public transport to cater for the huge growth in the area. We also learnt about the Inland Rail Project to provide a direct standard gauge rail route from Melbourne to Brisbane. The aim is for 62% of freight to travel by rail by 2050.

Other interesting talks included those on the Puffing Billy heritage railway, urban light rail in Britain, and fares and ticketing on Britain's railways.

The final presentation was from Luke Ripley describing his month-long journey from London to Brisbane by train and freighter ship.

On a boat trip on Tuesday, we heard about Australia's largest container and general cargo port in Melbourne, where 6,000 vessel movements and 2.6 million containers are handled annually.

On Thursday, we visited the Yarra Trams hub in Melbourne. This claims to be the largest tram network in the world with 250km of double track, 75% of which is shared with road vehicles. It operates 5,000 services a day with 475 trams.

The final morning included a tour of and presentation on the MaxiTrans factory, which manufactures lorry trailers.

I shall be giving a presentation on this tour on 9th December.

Further information:
www.ciltuk.org.uk/RSFaus

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▲ Sydney Metro opened in May 2019 and runs from Rouse Hill to Chatswood, consisting of 13 stations and 36km of track



▲ The Port of Melbourne is Australia's largest container and general cargo port