

Jenny Aitchison

Minister for Regional Transport and Roads



Media Release

North Coast community to have a say on proposed coach timetable

Monday, 13 January 2025

The North Coast community is invited to have a say on proposed NSW TrainLink coach timetable changes due to come into effect in mid-2026 to better meet the needs of the travelling public.

NSW TrainLink is the state's long distance regional public transport provider.

Its coach network services an area including Casino, Grafton, Port Macquarie, Taree, Newcastle, Ballina, Tweed Heads, Murwillumbah, and Lismore on the North Coast, connecting communities and providing links to rail services and larger centres.

The proposed changes to NSW TrainLink's coach network include adjusted timetables to meet passenger needs, streamlined routes to improve journey times and improved connectivity at key transport hubs.

There would be increased frequency on some more popular routes, new stops on some journeys and many locations will enjoy improved journey times.

Ballina would be better serviced with day and night services in both directions connecting with trains at Casino.

An enhanced service between Port Macquarie and Wauchope would enable passengers to travel to and from Port Macquarie to centres such as Grafton, Coffs Harbour, the Northern Rivers, the Gold Coast and Brisbane, for the first time. Connections to and from Sydney would also be improved.

A new route is proposed to operate on Tuesday, Friday and Sunday between Armidale and Port Macquarie and return, providing an Armidale to North Coast connection for the first time. At Wauchope the coach connects with rail services giving access to and from Coffs Harbour, Grafton, the Northern Rivers, Gold Coast and Brisbane.

Connections between Taree and Newcastle and return would increase in frequency from Monday to Friday to daily and there would be new stops at Manning Street, Taree, and Newcastle Interchange.

A new Monday to Friday day-return service is proposed between Tamworth and Newcastle, via rail interchange at Muswellbrook.

Some routes servicing the far north coast are proposed to be simplified or merged due to lower passenger demand, however passengers will still have access to coach services to connect them to local centres and trains to and from Sydney.

Two locations are proposed to be removed from the NSW TrainLink coach network: Robina would no longer be serviced because other transport options exist for passengers, including the Gold Coast bus network; and Eltham due to low passenger demand and ongoing issues with local road conditions.

The planned changes are based on extensive community and stakeholder feedback from a range of sources including regular customer and operator feedback, and the NSW Bus Taskforce. The proposed coach timetable would not impact train times or services.

Following public consultation, a final service plan will be developed and coach operators will be able to apply for new NSW TrainLink contracts that are proposed to take effect from mid 2026.

Community members can find details of the proposed routes and provide feedback at haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au/trainlink-coach-network-review until Friday, 14 February.

Across the NSW TrainLink network there are currently 571 coach services each week across 39 routes, with over 420,000 passenger journeys made each year.

Minister for Regional Transport and Roads Jenny Aitchison said:

“The proposed NSW TrainLink coach plan will deliver improved connections to strategic centres and major cities.

“This will lead to better transport integration with other modes such as train, bus and plane so that members of the community are better able to access vital services including health, education and employment.

“Improved NSW TrainLink coach services also allow community members to stay connected with family and friends and enjoy entertainment and recreation in major centres, so there are numerous wellbeing benefits.

“We know that the NSW TrainLink coach network particularly helps some of the most disadvantaged in our society, including those in rural and remote areas and Aboriginal communities, who often have little or no access to other forms of affordable, accessible transport.

“I encourage everyone to provide feedback so we can best plan for future need and make sure people can get where they need to go when they need to travel.”