



# South Australian Regional Rail Alliance

*getting Regional SA  
back on track!*

**Welcome to 2019, all our SARRA followers! From the SARRA team, we hope you all had a great Christmas and an even better New Year!**

SARRA is climbing back onto the footplate and stoking the boilers to carry our campaign for rejuvenated and reinvigorated regional and rural passenger and freight rail services into 2019. Over the next few weeks, we'll be shrugging off the festive season and setting off left-over sparklers and 'penny bungers' up the nether regions of our State politicians to spark some action over rural rail.

To facilitate a fresh 2019 beginning, we'll be cleaning up our website and archiving the stories of 2018 -- they'll still be there, but we'll be beginning a new chapter in the SARRA campaign for 2019.

***We hope your holidays have been blessed by clear tracks and accurate timetables - and by way of commencing the new year, we're looking at some of the carry-over issues - and the activities our wayward politicians.***

## **OUR 2019 PREDICTIONS:**

1. Sadly, baby Transport Minister Stephan Knoll did not get his train-set for Christmas - otherwise we would have all heard about it by now! Instead, his efforts to take buses off the road continues apace. Expect further degradation of public transport services under the Marshall Government.
2. The conundrum of what will happen to the Barossa Wine Train continues unabated. The BWT three-car Bluebird set has been moved from the National Railway Museum site to DPTI land nearby as negotiations continue over its fate. On the surface and with no 'insider' information, it appears as though the BWT wreck might be moved by its owner (Chateau Tanunda) to the Tanunda Rail precinct (where it might be turned into 'backpacker' accommodation), or it will head to Simms Scrap Metal. The BWT's owner should not be subsidised by the State for that movement (given the State would not even pay \$300k to retain The Overland). Should the State roll over and pay for the BWT move, such action could be seen as 'feather-bedding' the Barossa electorate - and we don't believe its MP, Stephan Knoll, should or would be a party to that. Either way, the (existing) BWT's fate is likely to be decided within the next two to three months.
3. An announcement on the future of the 'grain trains' on the Eyre Peninsula is imminent. Eyre Peninsulans are livid that the grain trains will be shut down, in an exit-agreement between Viterra and Genesee Wyoming Australia - forcing the 750,000 tonnes per-annum grain movement onto an already ailing rural road

network. Should this happen, GWA (apart from its Tarcoola line) will have *no viable train-lines in SA*, despite its Contract with the State that ALL regional and rural rail-lines under its control must be maintained to operational standard.

If GWA abandons the EP Lines, the question is: WILL IT ABANDON ITS RESPONSIBILITIES over all rural rail under its Lease in SA? Will GWA leave the State? Will it move its HQ to the East (where it has other more viable interests)? We can only hope! If this was to occur, it indeed would be a blessing in disguise for SA - with GWA OUT OF THE WAY (abandoning their interests in SA), the Lease is broken and the State would then officially resume control of all the 'above ground' rail assets currently held by GWA (remember the State owns the so-called *below-ground* assets - the land on which the lines leased to GWA sit).

This would be a WIN-WIN for South Australians as we would then be dealing with the Govt, NOT some bunch of cowboys from America!

4. The Labor Party has announced over the holiday hiatus (when it can get some media traction in a period when most voters are distracted by Christmas leftovers) that it's ".....LISTENING.....!" To what, will be interesting! Have they got their ear on the abandoned rural rail-lines, hearing the distant thunder of discontent from regional and rural voters who want passenger and rail freight services reinstated in SA? And are they listening to rural SA (...home to 25% or SA's population - which is screaming out for rail services?) Are they LISTENING to the enormous economic benefit rail-service reinstatement would have on regional and metropolitan economies?? Are they LISTENING to those South Australians who can't travel by car or by cramped bus and who NEED rail public transport services? Are they LISTENING to rural businesses which would immeasurably benefit by the tourism opportunities regional/rural rail services would bring to the State?

SARRA has approached the SA Labor Leader Peter Malinauskas to bring all these issues to his personal attention, and give him the ammunition to 'wipe Labor's slate clean' from the disastrous Weatherill years. Will he LISTEN to us? Time will tell!! (We'll keep you advised!).

5. We also note that The Federal Shadow Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development and Shadow Minister for Tourism, Anthony Albanese, has been making noises about developing SA's regions....We'll be contacting him too, but at this stage, talk is cheap....Albanese's Federal Labor Party has to win office first....
6. Will there be opportunities to bring back rail services to the Iron Triangle (given Whyalla's projected growth over the years ahead), and Murray Bridge/Tailem Bend (to support Sam Shahin's race-track and tourist development at Tailem Bend)?

Will there be renewed efforts to reinstate passenger and tourist train services to the Barossa Valley, given the Barossa's growth and its iconic tourist status? (As mentioned above, the old Barossa Wine Train is no longer up to the task given its condition, so might there be a new train in the offing?)

Of course we must remember that we are still three or so years away from the next State election, so don't expect ANY love for regional and rural rail by the Marshall Govt in the next 12/24 months.

Thus it falls to SARRA to keep the pressure on for the 'long haul'. We will not be giving up, and with your help and support, we will do everything we can to ensure regional and rural rail is reinstated in SA.

We ask our thousands of supporters to keep the issue alive! We look forward to your continuing support. Spread our message amongst your friends and alert them to our Facebook page and our website ([www.saregionaltrainscampaign.com](http://www.saregionaltrainscampaign.com)). ONLY with your help can we bring the utmost pressure on our weak-kneed politicians, whichever party they belong too.

Stay tuned for further developments in 2019!!

Cheers

THE SARRA TEAM