

Progress Update

Wairarapa Line Recovery Plan

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|--------------------|---|
| Date: | 13 th May 2025 |
| Author: | Transdev Wellington Operations |
| Approved By | Brandon Robins – General Manager Operations |
| Status | Final |

Objective

Return to consistent provision of full train services on the Wairarapa Line as soon as possible.

Summary

Train Manager availability on the Wairarapa Line remains constrained, with only 4–5 Train Managers available each week out of a master roster of 12. This is due to two vacancies and several staff away due to illness or injury.

Three Train Manager trainees in the current school are progressing well—one is expected to enter full service in June, with the remaining two joining in September. A returning Train Manager is currently undertaking retraining, with a planned return to service in August. One staff member, initially expected to return on 7 May, is now not anticipated to return this year.

Recruitment is in its final stages, with two new Train Managers scheduled to begin training in the June school. This will support improved service stability from September onwards. Discussions are ongoing regarding the return of a qualified Wellington-based relief Train Manager to assist with Wairarapa services.

Weekday peak services remain the priority. The 3:38 pm Masterton–Wellington and 6:18 pm Wellington–Masterton services continue to be replaced with buses and have low patronage. Transdev Wellington and Greater Wellington Regional Council remain focused on keeping customers informed of any changes as early as possible.

Locomotive issues caused several service delays last week. KiwiRail has investigated each incident, and the team is reviewing the faults to determine whether any systemic issues need to be addressed.

During the Easter Block of Line, rusty rail conditions (which are explained [here](#)) resulted in significant delays, and commuters were not warned in advance. A process change has now been implemented to ensure such issues are identified early and communicated ahead of time. Transdev Wellington is working closely with KiwiRail to mitigate the impact of rusty rail conditions following work on the track and acknowledges the previous lack of warning. Steps have been taken to prevent a recurrence.

Staff wellbeing remains a priority. We are actively managing fatigue by limiting overtime and ensuring the 12-day maximum consecutive work rule is followed. Regular staff check-ins are underway, and we continue to ask passengers for their patience and support of our frontline teams.

Weekly Operational Review

- Reliable = Ran as a train.

| Monday | | Departure | Service Details | Actions Taken |
|--------|-----|-----------|---|---|
| | AM | 05:46 | Reliable, 8 minutes and 27 seconds late Delay Reasons: Passenger dwells, Speed restrictions | Conducting time study for travel through worksites to determine extent of delay |
| | | 06:20 | Bus Replaced due to a KiwiRail Locomotive Engine mechanical issue. | Following up with KiwiRail regarding spare loco allocation |
| | | 06:47 | Reliable, 21 minutes and 32 seconds late Delay Reasons: Train size built up due to 6:20 service bus replacement | Following up with KiwiRail regarding spare loco allocation |
| | I/P | 08:21 | Bus replaced between Wellington and Upper Hutt due to 1603 bus replacement. 16 minutes and 45 seconds late. Delay Reasons: Late bus connection at Upper Hutt, Speed restrictions | Following up with KiwiRail regarding spare loco allocation |
| | | 12:45 | Pre-planned, bus replacement due to staff unavailability | Active training of additional onboard staff |
| | | 10:30 | Reliable, 19 minutes and 59 seconds late Delay Reasons: Speed restrictions, Passenger dwells | Conducting time study for travel through worksites to determine extent of delay |
| | | 15:38 | Pre-planned, bus replacement due to staff unavailability | Active training of additional onboard staff |
| | PM | 16:25 | Reliable, 23 minutes and 38 seconds late Delay Reason: Coupling (connection) issue with KiwiRail Locomotive Engine | Investigating specific cause and reasoning of fault |
| | | 17:30 | Reliable, 19 minutes and 52 seconds late Delay Reason: KiwiRail Locomotive Engine late due to 16:25 service delays | Investigating specific cause and reasoning of fault |
| | | 18:18 | Pre-planned, bus replacement due to staff unavailability | Active training of additional onboard staff |

| Tuesday | | Departure | Service Details | Actions Taken |
|---------|-----|-----------|--|--|
| | AM | 05:46 | Reliable, 1 hour and 24 seconds late Delay Reasons: Locomotive Engine late due to a points fault, and ICONIS (Train Control) system signalling issues at Taita | Additional testing of ICONIS (Train Control) system (KR) and moved back to Real Flex (old train control system) in the meantime, investigating options for changing loco allocation |
| | | 06:20 | Reliable, 35 minutes and 17 seconds late. Delay Reasons: Waited for 5:30 service to clear section of track before receiving track warrant (Track warrant provides authority for the train to be on the single line track) | Additional testing of ICONIS (Train Control) system (KR) and move back to RealFlex (old train control system) in the meantime |
| | | 06:47 | Reliable, 50 minutes and 39 seconds late. Delay Reasons: Waited for 6:20 service to clear section of track before receiving track warrant (Track warrant provides authority for the train to be on the single line track); ICONIS (Train Control) system signalling issues at Taita | Additional testing of ICONIS (Train Control) system (KR) and move back to RealFlex (old train control system) in the meantime |
| | I/P | 08:21 | Reliable, 1 hour 19 minutes and 31 seconds late Delay Reasons: Crew arrived from the 6:20 service, KiwiRail Worksite delay at Featherston | Additional testing of ICONIS (Train Control) system (KR) and move back to RealFlex (old train control system) in the meantime. Discussing worksite delays with KiwiRail. |
| | | 12:45 | Reliable, 2 hour 41 and 5 seconds late. Unable to define delay reasons due to missing data between Wellington and Woodside | Additional testing of ICONIS (Train Control) system (KR) and move back to RealFlex (old train control system) in the meantime. Discussing worksite delays with KiwiRail. Data source under investigation |
| | | 10:30 | Bus replaced due to 12:45 service delayed | Additional testing of ICONIS (Train Control) system (KR) and move back to RealFlex (old train control system) in the meantime. |
| | | 15:38 | Pre-planned, bus replacement due to staff unavailability | Active training of additional onboard staff |
| | PM | 16:25 | Pre-planned train size reduction due to staff unavailability. 4 minutes and 55 seconds late | Active training of additional onboard staff |
| | | 17:30 | Reliable. 20 minutes and 43 seconds late. Delay Reasons: ICONIS (Train Control) system signalling issues at Featherston | Additional testing of ICONIS (Train Control) system (KR) and move back to RealFlex (old train control system) in the meantime. |
| | | 18:18 | Pre-planned, bus replacement due to staff unavailability | Active training of additional onboard staff |

| Wednesday | | Departure | Service Details | Actions Taken |
|-----------|-----|-----------|---|---|
| | AM | 05:30 | Reliable, 20 minutes and 36 seconds late Delay Reasons: KiwiRail Locomotive Engine late from a Non-Metlink Freight service | Investigating options for changing loco allocation |
| | | 06:20 | Reliable, 6 minutes and 19 seconds late Delay Reasons: Waited for 5:30 service to clear section of track before receiving track warrant (Track warrant provides authority for the train to be on the single line track) | Investigating options for changing loco allocation |
| | | 06:47 | Reliable, 20 minutes and 15 seconds late Delay Reasons: Waited for 6:20 service to clear section of track before receiving track warrant (Track warrant provides authority for the train to be on the single line track) | Investigating options for changing loco allocation |
| | I/P | 08:21 | Reliable, 11 minutes and 32 seconds Delay Reasons: Speed restrictions, KiwiRail Worksite delay at Carterton | Conducting time study for travel through worksites to determine extent of delay |
| | | 12:45 | Reliable, 33 minutes and 18 seconds late Delay Reasons: Speed restrictions, Train carriages were formed by the 10:30 service | Investigating reason for delay in departure, following up with Train Control |
| | | 10:30 | Reliable, 28 minutes and 2 seconds late Delay Reasons: Speed restrictions, Waited for departure signal at Upper Hutt | Investigating reason for delay in departure, following up with Train Control |
| | | 15:38 | Pre-planned, bus replacement due to staff unavailability | Active training of additional onboard staff |
| | PM | 16:25 | Pre-planned train size reduction due to staff unavailability. 3 minutes and 46 seconds late | Active training of additional onboard staff |
| | | 17:30 | Reliable. 2 minutes and 11 seconds late | On-time |
| | | 18:18 | Pre-planned, bus replacement due to staff unavailability | Active training of additional onboard staff |

| Thursday | | Departure | Service Details | Actions Taken |
|----------|-----|-----------|---|---|
| | AM | 05:30 | Reliable. 3 minutes and 20 seconds late | Within KPI |
| | | 06:20 | Reliable. 1 minute and 36 seconds late | Within KPI |
| | | 06:47 | Reliable. 21 minutes and 30 seconds late Delay Reasons: Waited for 6:20 service to clear section of track before receiving track warrant (Track warrant provides authority for the train to be on the single line track); Speed restrictions | Conducting time study for travel through worksites to determine extent of delay, following up with Train Build (KiwiRail) |
| | I/P | 08:21 | Reliable. 12 minutes and 57 seconds late Delay Reasons: Speed restrictions, KiwiRail Worksite at Carterton | Conducting time study for travel through worksites to determine extent of delay |
| | | 12:45 | Reliable. 21 minutes and 50 seconds late Delay Reasons: Signal issue at Ngauranga; Train carriages were formed by the 10:30 service | Engineering on-site diagnosing issue (KR), following up with KR to determine cause of fault |
| | | 10:30 | Reliable. 30 minutes and 32 seconds late. Delay Reasons: Signal issue at Ngauranga; Train carriages were formed by the 8:21 service | Engineering on-site diagnosing issue (KR), following up with KR to determine cause of fault |
| | | 15:38 | Pre-planned, bus replacement due to staff unavailability | Active training of additional onboard staff |
| | PM | 16:25 | Pre-planned train size reduction due to staff unavailability. 6 minutes and 10 seconds late Delay Reasons: Speed restrictions; Bike loading and unloading | Active training of additional onboard staff |
| | | 17:30 | Reliable. 6 minutes and 39 seconds late Delay Reasons: Train carriages late to Wellington platform | Investigating specific cause and reasoning of fault |
| | | 18:18 | Pre-planned, bus replacement due to staff unavailability | Active training of additional onboard staff |

| Friday | | Departure | Service Details | Actions Taken |
|--------|-----|-----------|--|---|
| | AM | 05:30 | Reliable. 16 minutes and 53 seconds late Delay Reasons: Following late HVL 6:40 service impacted by a signalling issue | Following up with KR to determine cause of fault |
| | | 06:20 | Reliable. 12 minutes and 38 seconds late Delay Reasons: Door issue at Featherston; Held in the Wellington area for the Northern Explorer | Following up with Rotem regarding door issue |
| | | 06:47 | Reliable. 14 minutes late Delay Reasons: Held in the Wellington area for the Capital Connection, Speed restrictions | Flow-on delays caused by signal fault on HVL, following up with KR to determine cause of fault |
| | I/P | 08:21 | Reliable. 35 minutes and 36 seconds late Delay Reasons: Track obstruction north of Upper Hutt, Speed restrictions | Following up with KR to determine cause of signalling fault, delayed 13 mins due to track obstruction |
| | | 12:45 | Reliable. 24 minutes and 24 seconds. Delay Reasons: Train carriages were formed by the 10:30 service, Speed restrictions, Wheelchair ramp utilised. | Flow-on delays from track obstruction (1602) |
| | | 10:30 | Reliable. 26 minutes and 2 seconds. Delay Reasons: Train carriages were formed by the 8:21 service | Flow-on delays from track obstruction (1602) |
| | | 15:38 | Pre-planned, bus replacement due to staff unavailability | Active training of additional onboard staff |
| | PM | 16:25 | Pre-planned train size reduction due to staff unavailability. 2 minutes and 47 seconds. | Active training of additional onboard staff |
| | | 17:30 | Reliable. 1 minutes and 12 seconds late | Within KPI |
| | | 18:18 | Pre-planned, bus replacement due to staff unavailability | Active training of additional onboard staff |
| | | 20:14 | Pre-planned, bus replacement due to staff unavailability | Active training of additional onboard staff |
| | | 22:25 | Pre-planned, bus replacement due to staff unavailability | Active training of additional onboard staff |

Resourcing forward look

Immediate risks to service delivery

- Staff member who was off medium-term is now likely to be off long-term.
- Another staff member is on leave 15/16 May which may continue to impact services in the short term
- Staff member completing return to work programme needs to be re-certified

Estimated Availability as at 12/5

- 6 Train Managers are required to run all services per weekday, but as we are bus replacing the 3:38 pm Masterton–Wellington and 6:18 pm Wellington–Masterton services, 5 are required.
- Transdev is looking at contingency options for the 22nd & 23rd May.

| | | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
|--------------------------|-----------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| 12th - 18th May | Available | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| | Required | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| | Delta | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 19th - 25th May | Available | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| | Required | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| | Delta | 0 | 0 | 0 | -1 | -1 | 0 | 0 |
| 26th May - 1 June | Available | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| | Required | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| | Delta | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2nd - 8th June | Available | 2 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| | Required | 2 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| | Delta | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

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|--------|-------------------------------------|
| Green | Full plus cover |
| Yellow | Full no cover |
| Orange | Not full but options still possible |
| Red | Not full, cover unlikely |

Recovery Plan - Short and Medium Term Workstreams

The purpose of these workstreams is to:

- increase the number of Train Managers as quickly and safely as possible, and
- investigate whether there are any operational improvements that could reduce the number of Train Managers required to work while there is a shortage.

| Workstream | Activity | Notes/Update | Due Date | Status |
|---------------------------|---|---|-----------|--------|
| Recruitment | 2 x new recruits for June TM School | We had advertised for WRL recruitment on 07.04.25 and closed on 28.04.25. We have started the process of shortlisting and interviews. Have two candidates for interviews on Thursday 1 st May. | June | |
| | New trainer | At this stage we're unable to start training another Trainer as our current Trainer is busy delivering training. This will need to be a long-term plan and we would need to advertise it internally. Consider alternatives | August | |
| Training | 2 x new recruits in TM Training | Completed their WRL PO training started the WRL classroom training from 28.04.25. Expected to start their On Job Training from 29 th May 2025. | June | |
| | RO in training as TM | RO and union have agreed to Wai TM training. Currently completing TM On Board OJT. He is progressing well completed 22 out of 35 tasks/competencies/practical. Will have more update on his progress on 12 th May. Waiting for 2 person training due to LE availability from KiwiRail. | June | |
| | Return 1 x Long Term Sick | As per estimated, TM has returned to full duties from 28.04.2025 | April | |
| | Return 1 x sick | Due to being off for longer period has to go through the proper training process to get him recertified. Expected to full duties by end of June. | TBC | |
| | Upskill Wai POs | A number of current POs are retired TMs so will not be willing or are not capable of returning to the role. Will check in with other POs, but will need all licences (around 4 months) | August | |
| | Upskill Wai Team Leader to be a trainer | Current Wai TL has all licences and already is a tutor and has all licences | June | |
| Operations Changes | Full Time Wai RO to do shunting and pull points | Short Term - Unlikely to assist with current resourcing issues as only saves time pre-first shift. Long term potentially an option in conjunction with timetable changes | Sept 2025 | |
| | Use KiwiRail ROs in Masterton | Unlikely to assist with current resourcing issues as only saves time pre-first shift. Potential for current shunter to assist if option is viable. | Sept 2025 | |
| | Use double loco | Unlikely to assist with current resourcing issues as only saves shunting time in Masterton not TM availability | May 2025 | |

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|------------------|---|--|----------|--|
| | | | | |
| | Use Wellington EMU LEs to retrain as TMs | No current interest from LEs to retrain as TMs. | May 2025 | |
| | Terminate at HVL and move to bus or train service | Customer feedback indicates preference to not change vehicles or modes during single journey. Does not alleviate current issues as requires TM on board and return journeys would need to stay to original timeline, therefore require stabling at UH | May 2025 | |
| Reporting | Bus Replacement numbers not highlighted in monthly reporting | TDW to change monthly reporting to have BRT specific reporting. Example attached as Appendix A | April | |

Key

| | |
|--------|----------------------|
| Green | On track |
| Orange | At Risk |
| Red | Delayed/Not possible |

Risks

| Risk | Detail | Notes/Update | Status |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--------|
| People and Welfare | Current FTE falling ill or otherwise unavailable to work | Regular welfare checks are being conducted by the Onboard team | |
| | Notice requirement for staff is only 2 weeks | Risk of stress of current environment making it more likely for TMs to leave the role | |
| KiwiRail LEs | Further disruption if LE availability drops | In contact with KiwiRail | |
| Train Availability | Further disruption if loco and carriage availability drops | Trains and carriages have been recently serviced | |
| | Graffiti on the trains requires them to be removed from service and cleaned. | There is not a great issue with graffiti on this line. If it occurs, we will consult with GW before removal | |
| Tunnel gas incident | If tunnel gas readings are higher than the threshold, passenger services will not be allowed to run through the Remutaka tunnel. | Our staff are equipped with gas monitors they check regularly, and they receive an alarm for any high readings. | |
| Disruption on Hutt Valley line | Any disruption to the Hutt Valley line has the potential to affect Wairarapa line services. | We prioritise Wairarapa line services to come into Wellington where possible. The Wairarapa line is naturally more resilient in issues to do with overhead disruption due to being a locomotive pulled service. | |

Recovery Plan – Long Term Workstreams

The purpose of these workstreams is to create a sustainable model for the Wairarapa that enables reliable running of the timetable with minimal bus replacement.

| Workstream | Activity | Notes/Update | Due Date | Status |
|--------------------------------|--|---|----------|---|
| Recruitment | Adapt requirements to include physical capability for shunting and changing points | New recruits for March school included physical yard test and physiological assessment as well as customer skills. Action Review once school complete | March | Complete |
| | Right size – ascertain correct establishment numbers for TMs and POs | Context has changed across the network since bid. More track disruptions and speed restrictions as well as additional sick leave and Matariki Public holiday. Action Assess right numbers for on-board staff at Wai Depot | June | Part of contract extension negotiations |
| | Relief Trainer, Team Leader, TMs and POs | As above but for relief available from other parts of network. Action Assess right numbers of relief for all roles | June | Part of contract extension negotiations |
| Training | Review need for all licences | Consider whether second person training is required, or assess extent of training. Action Raise with KiwiRail | June | Response from KR and NZTA unknown |
| | Yard and Shunting | TM training reduced if not required to shunt or shift points. See action below to separate roles | June | |
| People & Capability | Assess process for long term sick | Understand current situation (across TDW) and why staff on long term sick/ACC. Look at: - policy around return to work - status of LTS in establishment - cost implications | June | |
| Operations Changes | Full Time Wai RO to do shunting and pull points | Long term potential savings in shift times, length of training and H&S risk in dual roles. Could enable timetable changes. Will require assessment of level of staffing and additional funding Action | Sept | |
| | Use KiwiRail ROs in Masterton | As above but using KiwiRail ROs. Action Assess appetite from KR | Sept | |
| | Use double loco | Action Investigate and provide assessment of any efficiency gains | June | |
| | Terminate at HVL and move to bus or train service | Customer feedback indicates preference to not change vehicles or modes during single journey. Action Investigate and provide assessment of any efficiency gains and customer feedback | June | |

Background Information

Key

| Acronym | Description |
|---------|---|
| GW | Greater Wellington Regional Council (Metlink) |
| TDW | Transdev Wellington (Service Operator and maintain carriages) |
| KR | KiwiRail – maintain tracks and signals, provide and drive locomotives (engines) |
| Loco | Locomotive Engine |
| TM | Train Manager – Licenced to manage train |
| PO | Passenger Operator – Assists the Train Manager |
| RO | Rail Operator – Trained to shunt and move points |
| OJT | On the Job Training |

Required Staffing Levels

| | |
|---|---|
| Train Managers | 12 |
| Passenger Operators | 11 |
| Team Leader | 1 |
| Relief Train Managers | 1 (under review) |
| FTE required to run full weekday services | 7 (6 for the services plus 1 for cover) |
| FTE required to run full weekend services | 4 (2 for the services plus 2 for cover) |

Timetable

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|------------------|--|
| Weekday Schedule | 10 services – 5 x return trips + 2 (late return) on Friday |
| Weekend Schedule | 4 services – 2 x return trips |

Wairarapa TM Qualifications

Competency Training Requirements

- Licence U1 (on board service train manager for carriage trains)
- Licence EAI (electrification awareness, for Hutt line)
- Licence E1 (train inspections passenger)
- Licence F1 (shunting duties passenger)
- Licence G (core stationary shunting)
- Licence AC (second person duties– if LE incapacitated the TM can move train to safety, use comms and effect safe shut down (tunnel))
- Licence 1 – TO (Tunnel Operations Metro Passenger)

Training Schedule

| Location | Content | Duration |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Classroom | <ul style="list-style-type: none">On board Train ManagementYard Training | 1 month |
| On the Job Training (OJT) | | 3 months |
| OJT On Board | <ul style="list-style-type: none">SafetyCustomerCommunicationsEmergency responseTunnel training | 3 – 4 weeks |
| OJT Yard | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Yard safetyTrain inspectionsShuntingPoints | 7 – 8 weeks |
| TOTAL | | 3 – 4 months |

Licence Requirements and Competency Assessments

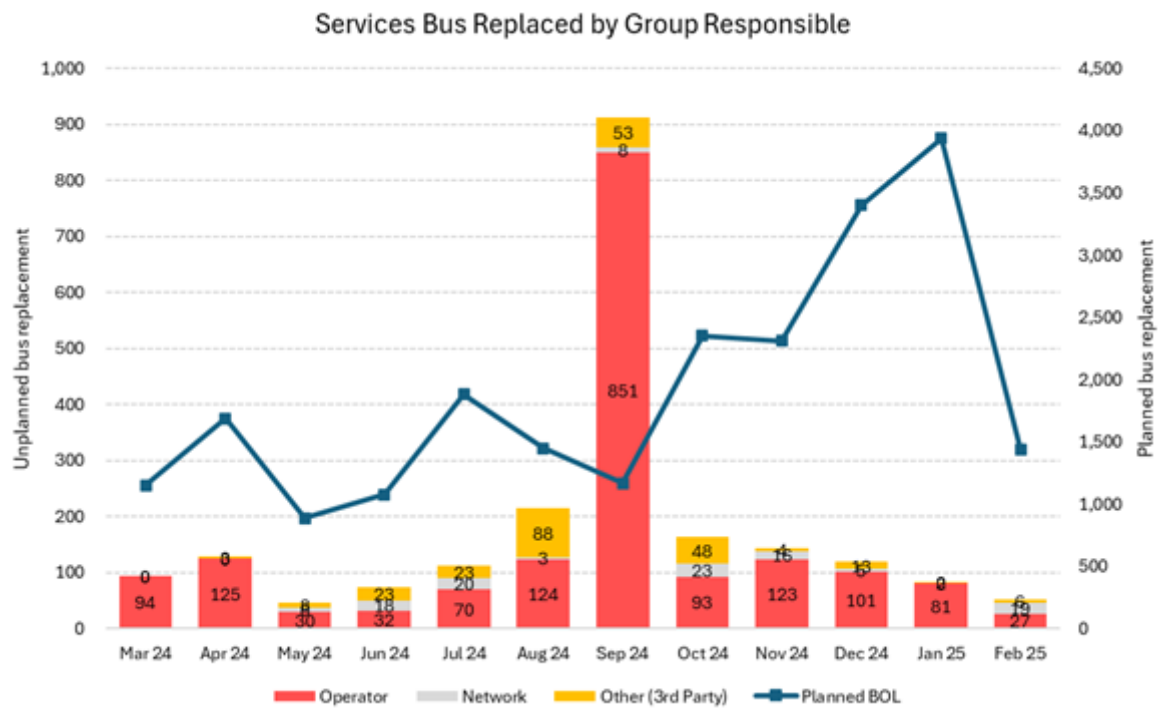
- Practical – complete:
 - A minimum of 20 x shunting shifts, and
 - A minimum of 10 x train inspections
- Need a rating of all 5s for:
 - A minimum of 6x consecutive shunting shifts, and
 - A minimum of 4x consecutive train inspections
- Competency Assessments to be passed within 6 months from commencement of on job training. If not complete / competent, move to non-TM role

Refresher Training and Compliance

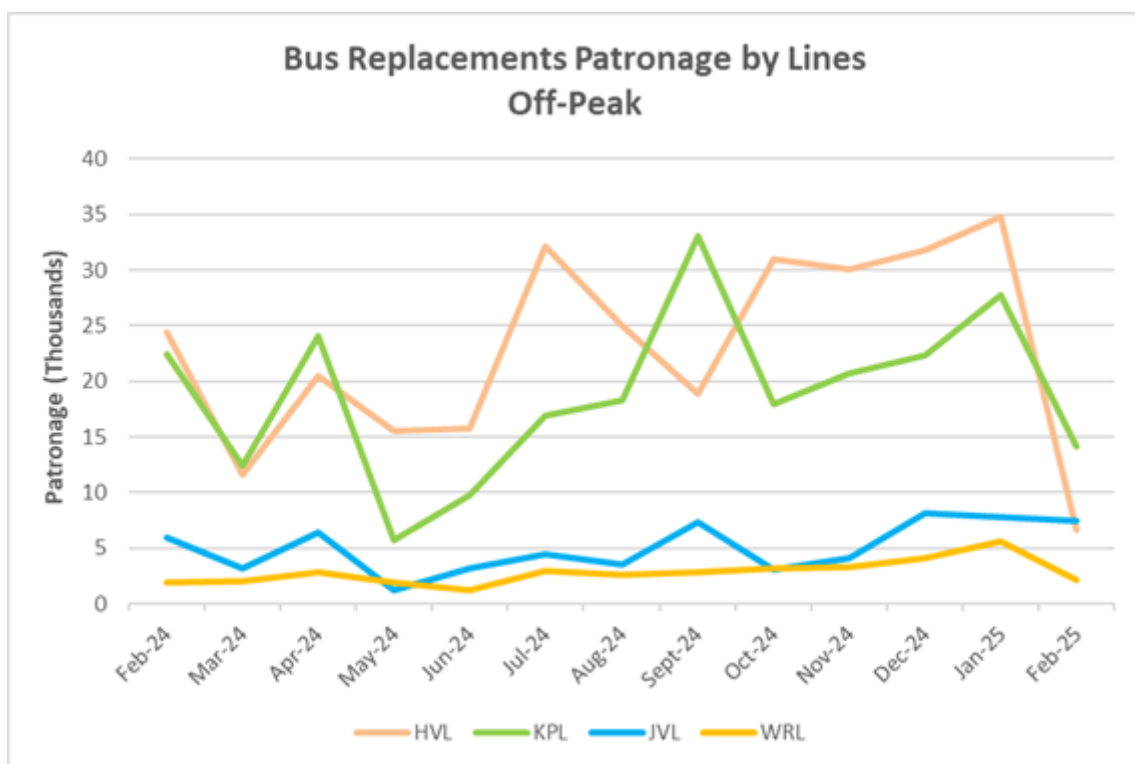
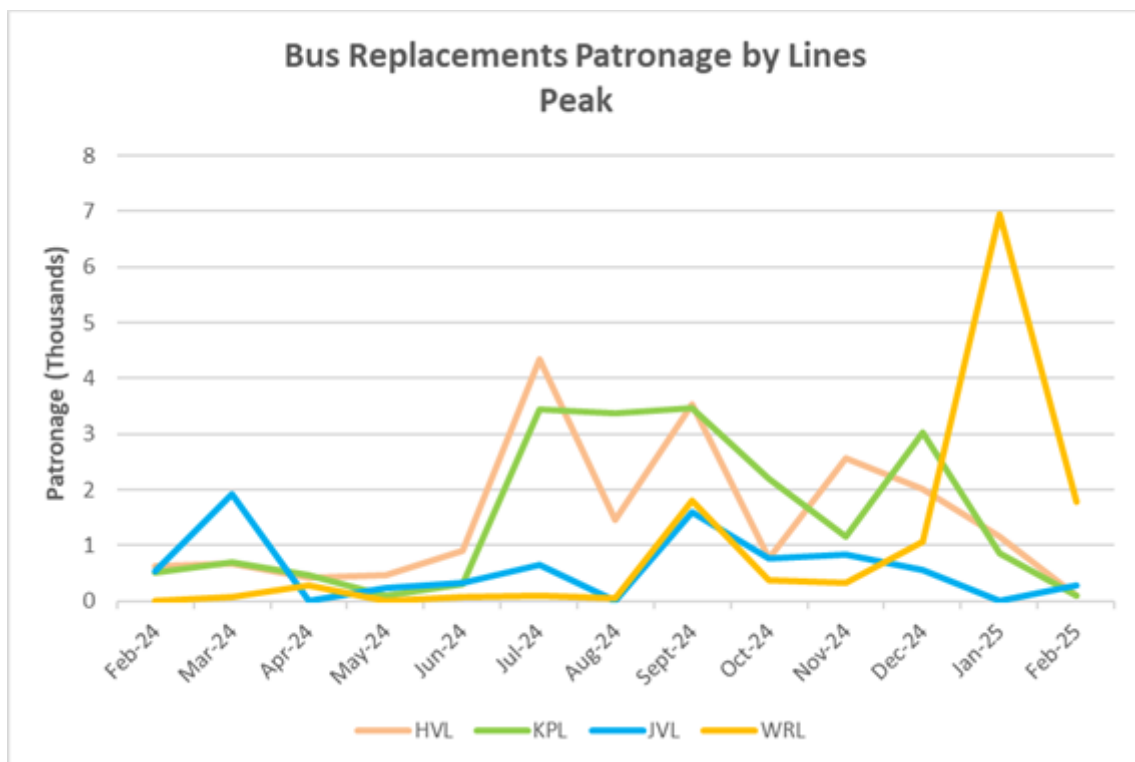
- Safety observations – completed on the job every 8 months
 - Tunnel Theory, training and assessment – annually
 - Theory assessment – every two years
 - First aid – every two years
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Appendix A

These graphs represent the number of services being bus replaced due to Network (KiwiRail), Operator (TDW), Other (3rd Party), and Planned BOL.



The following graphs shows the number of bus replacement patronage by lines.



Combined

