



Police boost crime fighting arsenal

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Lights off for Earth Hour

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End of the line



RF188370

WAITING GAME: Dean Bird says train operators should be made more accountable.

By PETER MARSH

A CABOOLTURE train commuter, astounded by delays, cancellations and poor communication, wants public transport operator Translink made accountable.

Dean Bird, who uses the train each day between Caboolture and his job at Auchenflower, has documented a total of 16 hours' delay in the past 13 months.

Train travel off track: commuter

Mr Bird has compiled a list of more than 25 incidents in the past six months alone, where his train has been delayed, cancelled or re-scheduled.

"I'm just sick and tired of the poor service. We had a price increase early in the year but cer-

tainly no service increase," he said.

On January 4, Mr Bird's monthly fare went up from \$180 to \$216.

"As it is, I spend a lot of time and money on public transport. Even the little delays start to add up and become frustrating."

Six out of 10 travellers at the Caboolture station told the *Times* they too had recently experienced delays on the line.

Several times Mr Bird has contacted Translink, but described the response as a "let down".

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RAIL TRAVAILS

- **October 12, 2009, 2:56pm:** Caboolture Train from Auchenflower never arrives. Mr Bird's wife misses a specialist's appointment.
- **October 13, 2009:** Commuters told 5:01pm Caboolture Express would be eight minutes late due to a lightning strike. Train arrives at 5.11pm and commuters then told a car hitting a boom gate caused the delay.
- **November 16, 2009:** 4.56pm Caboolture Express from Auchenflower does not arrive until after 5pm. The service becomes the 5.06pm Shorncliffe, forcing Mr Bird to change trains.
- **December 4, 2009:** Mr Bird in several delays of up to 10 minutes across two trains. He arrives home 40 minutes late.
- **February 23, 2010, 4.26pm:** Caboolture train from Auchenflower is late. Mr Bird misses a connecting bus at Morayfield station. He avoids a 1½-hour delay by arranging alternative transport.
- **March 2, 2010, 4.30pm:** Nambour Express broke down at Fortitude Valley. After a short delay, the train continued but with no lights or airconditioning; standing room only.
- **Total delays:** More than 16 hours in 13 months.



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25 Years of Local Knowledge



Scooting after crime

Tales of help and kindness



UP TO SPEED: Sergeant Melissa Bicanic on one of the new Kymco Super 9 scooters to be deployed by Caboolture police.

Picture: Paul Guy

By ANDRE GRIMAUX

CABOOLTURE police have unveiled a new crime fighting weapon to combat anti-social behaviour and loitering.

Officers at the King St station received two bright Kymco Super 9 scooters on Wednesday that will be used predominantly around the Caboolture CBD and Morayfield Rd shopping strip –

where the use of patrol cars can be restricted.

At a cost of \$3400 each, the scooters were purchased following the Crime Stoppers "Hit Crime for a Six" fundraising challenge last November, at the Caboolture Indoor Sports Centre.

Sponsored by the *Times'* sister paper, the *Caboolture Shire Herald*, the community initiative was instigated by radio station

101.5FM and backed by local Rotary, Apex and Lions clubs, and Victory Press at Bribie Island.

The scooters will be launched on Monday by Caboolture Police District Inspector Michael Brady.

"The scooters are an innovative approach to high-visibility patrols and an alternate option to bicycle and foot patrols," Insp Brady said.

"The primary objective of the scooters is high visibility and mobility in areas where normal patrolling is restricted or difficult.

"Fifty-cc scooters have never been utilised by the Queensland Police Service for this purpose, and I believe they will have a positive impact in helping to combat anti-social behaviour, loitering and property offences.

"The scooters can also be utilised at events held in and around Caboolture during the year, such as Farm Fantastic, the Caboolture Show, the Dreaming Festival and Woodford Folk Festival."

■ **What do you think of the new scooters? Post your comments online at www.northerntimes.com.au or email editorial@northerntimes.com.au.**

Traveller proposes fare refund for late trains

■ From page 1

"I rarely got a swift response from Translink, and most of the time I've just been told that the train was late, which I clearly already knew," Mr Bird said.

He understood that some delays were unavoidable.

"But when there are constant problems I'm left frustrated even when the trains are delayed for legitimate reasons," he said.

After having no success when dealing with Translink, Mr Bird came up with his own solutions.

He wants a refund for services that are delayed for more than 10 minutes or never show up. He also believes the salaries of those responsible for Translink and the rail service should be docked for every minute a train is delayed.

"I realise this solution would never be considered, but it is about creating a greater sense of accountability in our public transport system," Mr Bird said.

The *Times* put Mr Bird's solutions to Translink, but a spokesman for the com-

pany could only say that fare increases allowed new services to be implemented. The Caboolture line has gained three extra services since 2008.

■ **What do you think? Comment at www.northerntimes.com.au.**

NOMINATIONS continue to pour in as Quest searches for the best neighbour in the Caboolture region.

Peter Stephenson has nominated his mother Margaret's neighbours, Brian and Kate Fitzgerald.

He nominated Mr Fitzgerald for helping 85-year-old Mrs Stephenson when her house was flooded in November 2008.

"They emptied their linen closet to try and stop the flooding, helped me sweep my garage out and move furniture so it wasn't damaged," Mrs Stephenson said.

Mr Fitzgerald even offered a room in his house to Mrs Stephenson while the clean-up was finalised.

"It was an incredibly generous offer from someone who was a relative stranger at the time," Mrs Stephenson said.

She said Mr Fitzgerald was a keen gardener and regularly helped her tend to her lawn and garden.

Another story of kindness from a neighbour came from Beachmere's Liz Herber, who nominated Jerry and Merv Merritt.

Mrs Herber found herself in trouble five days before she was due to move out of her house, when she seriously injured her shoulder and spent seven weeks in hospital.

"They looked after everything for me, the removalists, my paintings and even the dog," she said.

To celebrate Neighbour Day on Sunday, Caboolture Neighbourhood Watch will host a free sausage sizzle near the Arboretum Entrance, Norfolk Esplanade, from 10am-1.30pm.

■ **Nominations for this year's Neighbour Day close on Sunday. Email grimauxa@qst.newsitd.com.au.**

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