

West Australian Railscene e-Mag

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West Australian Railscene e-Mag is published weekly by Jim Bisdee on rail happenings on West Australian Railroads

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Wrecked BHPBio AC6000 class leader 6070 still at the derailment site at 120km on Mt Newman mainline on June 20th with bogies removed, already partially stripped for parts awaiting scrapping. Photo Jim Bisdee

G&W 2210 ran AK car inspection train Barton to Rawlinna on 12th, Rawlinna Kalgoorlie on 13th, was scheduled to run Kalgoorlie to Avon Yard to stable but owing to minor derailment at 354km Bodallin was only able to run to Merredin. On 15th AK cars ran Merredin to Forrestfield arriving about 8:15am where 2210 was detached and LZ3105 attached for run to North Port Fremantle, Kwinana CBH loop then to flashbutt Bellevue to run Midland to East Perth Terminal then to Forrestfield to attach 2210 and stable. The AK cars ran Forrestfield to Kalgoorlie on 16th, Kalgoorlie to Esperance on 17th owing to no room in yard stabled on Shell Siding line then ran Esperance to Kalgoorlie on 18th. AK cars departed for Loongana on 20th then onto Barton on 21st.

Avonlink Railcars ran 5T11 trial to Toodyay West on June 23rd following fitting overhauled bogies.



H5 & H2 running light engine SSRS yard Bellevue to SCT Forrestfield June 15th. Photo Simon Barber



AB1503 & P2506 entering on grain train Windmill Hill cutting June 11th. Photo Sean McGarraghy



AC4305 on 6430 empty sulphur train exiting Windmill Hill cutting on June 11th. Photo Sean McGarraghy



9402, 7095 & 7063 on loaded Robe River ore train at Western Creek on June 2nd with the Hamersley Iron Tom Price line connection in the foreground. Photo Toad Montgomery



009 & 903 on FMG fuel train south of Chapman siding on June 20th.

Photo Jim Bisdee



P2507 & P2502 on empty grain entering Windmill Hill cutting on June 11th.

Photo Sean McGarraghy



LZ3105 on 4C5 AK car inspection train at Woodbridge rounding triangle on June 15th. Photo Simon Barber

Comment on Oakajee Port and Rail; with the announcement on June 23rd of the Chinese owned Sinosteel Midwest Corporation [SMC] withdrawing from negotiations with Oakajee Port and Rail [OPR] owned by Murchison Metal and Japanese backed Mitsubishi Developments that has had some \$160 million been spent to date on the project.

The mainstream media seem misinformed about this decision and its potential impact on other miners with some reports claiming Mount Gibson Mining, Gindalbie Metals, Cleveland Cliffs and Grange resources would be impacted by this decision. Mount Gibson Mining on a number of occasions has stated it is not interested in moving to Oakajee as it has invested heavily in its operations at Port of Geraldton. Gindalbie Metals has also committed to Port of Geraldton for stage 1 & 2 of its production up to 16mtpa its later 30 million target would require Oakajee. Cleveland Cliffs export out of Port of Esperance with Grange Resources planning to export from Port of Albany.

What does the pull out of SMC really mean? Potentially the question has three answers.

As stated in its release SMC have deferred their project until there is more certainty on Oakajee and have not walked away from their Weld Range project as Sinosteel has invested over \$1.4 billion in SMC so far. They will continue to operate their Koolanooka mine near Morawa and have stated could ramp up production that just delays their mine development at Blue Hills.

Previously SMC have tried to acquire Murchison Metals [part parent company of Oakajee Port and Rail] and this could trigger another move on Murchison at a substantially lower market value.

SMC are 100% Chinese owned and it could also be a move to force OPR/ state government to break the project into smaller components to allow the Chinese to get a significant stake in the infrastructure.

QR Nationals CEO has also stated an interest in taking on the rail component and the waters get muddier so where now for Oakajee?

Originally there were only two miners wanting to use OPR being SMC and Murchison for a total of 30mtpa, Gindalbie arrived and pushed the first stage plan to 45mtpa. Maybe the project will be scaled back to original 30mtpa, or infrastructure segments broken up to allow other companies to participate?

What ever happens the Oakajee project is far from dead and how it plays out will be interesting as Mount Gibson plans to bring Extension Hill on stream shortly at 3mtpa through Port of Geraldton. Gindalbie Metals initial 10mtpa production will be exported through Port of Geraldton as will the planned increase to 16mtpa. SMC has announced that its Blue Hills deposit will also come on stream via Geraldton and that it is seeking more deposits in the vicinity of its existing operations to enable further expansion.



8127, 7072 & 8111 on loaded ore at 17km near NWC crossing June 2nd.

Photo Toad Montgomery

QR 4147 and 4148 now classed ACN4147 and ACN4148 for use on QRN West Australian operations were loaded onto multi wheel floats at QRN Redbank workshops to be hauled to Forrestfield on June 24th. The two locomotives departed Redbank for WA during afternoon of 25th with them anticipated to arrive in about five days.

SCT shunter H5 that underwent overhaul at SSRS/ Gemco Yard in Bellevue ran back to SCT Forrestfield on June 15th with H2 as SCT2 that had earlier hauled H3 to SSRS/ Gemco yard as SCT1 engine movement.

A new connection to BP terminal and PTA yard at Kewdale is under construction that will give direct access to these points by coming off Forrestfield Kewdale bidirectional main in vicinity of Tonkin Highway Bridge. When completed the diagonal lines at Kewdale will be under control of Pacific National who will no longer have to share these lines with PTA or ARG.



Shunter 1761D shunts ACN4148 around Redbank workshops yard on June 24th.

Photo Alan Ward



ACN4147 on multi wheel float departing QRN Redbank workshop June 25th.

Photo Alan Ward



4301 awaiting recovery and wrecked ore cars to be scraped at 120km on June 20th.

Photo Jim Bisdee

Avonlink Railcars returned to service on June 24th after successful trial 5T11 on 23rd following its bogie overhaul. Spare Prospector cars used on the Avonlink service were returned to operating East Perth to Kalgoorlie with all cars in service on the weekend having three and four cars sets running.

A driver lost control of his Subaru Impreza and rolled the car off the Mitchell Freeway on to Transperth Clarkson line just south of Hutton Street exit in Osborne Park around 9:00pm on June 21st. This crash where the vehicle ended up on its side between the two tracks caused the suspension of services between Perth and Stirling for more than an hour while Fire and Emergency Services Authority removed the vehicle the driver only suffered minor injuries.
