

Cape Town's Metrorail trains to shutter free SMS alert service from August

By Andy Walker

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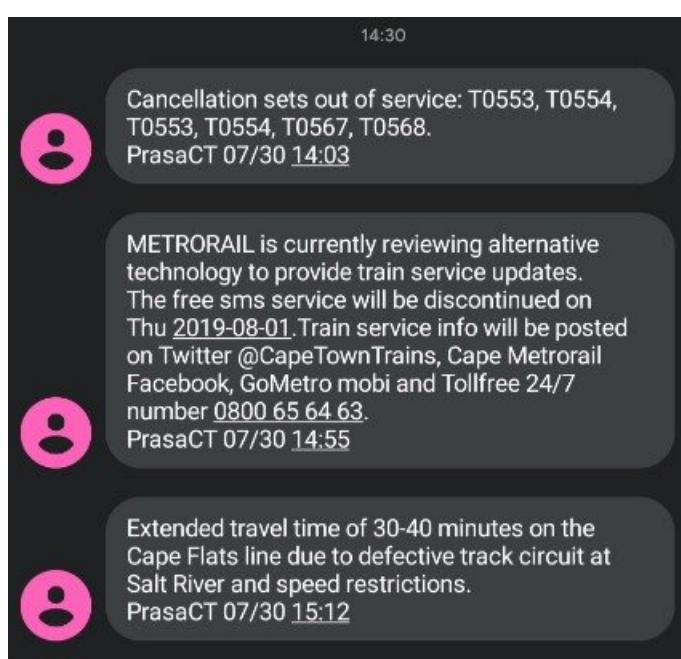
Cape Town's Metrorail train service announced in a communication with commuters on Tuesday that it will soon shutter its free SMS notification service.



Image credit: Metrorail Western Cape.

Users currently enrolled in the SMS service receive free info bites through the system, including train delays and the status of Metrorail's operations.

But this free service will be shuttered on 1 August, as the company looks to "alternative technology to provide train service updates."



A screenshot of the SMS sent to commuters on Tuesday, detailing the changes to Metrorail's SMS notification service.

"Train service info will be posted on Twitter [@CapeTownTrains](#), [Cape Metrorail Facebook](#), GoMetro mobi, and Tollfree 24/7 number 0800 65 64 63," it alerted users, ironically, via SMS.

It's a blow to commuters with feature phones and who are unable to access the internet, Facebook or Twitter.

Additionally, from personal experience as a train commuter in Cape Town, responses via Twitter and Facebook can often be delayed beyond usefulness.

The former also only functions during peak hours too, leaving commuters during lunchtime, or after dark, in the dark.

“ Good evening. The [#TrainReport](#) team is signing off. We'll be back tomorrow morning to assist you with your early commute from 05:30 - 09:30 pic.twitter.com/pU0yMCv2B1— Metrorail W/Cape (@CapeTownTrains) July 30, 2019 ”

It's not clear if the "alternative technology" Metrorail is referring to are the aforementioned replacements to the SMS service, or if it's something entirely different. We'd welcome something like [Google Maps' updates to train services](#) in other parts of the world.

Metrorail has been battling a number of issues in the past year, [including a number of train fires](#) and vandalism, that have cost it train sets and infrastructure.



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In this regard, communication with commuters has become an essential part of travelling by train in Cape Town. But expect to see a lot more users struggling to find their trains come August.

ABOUT ANDY WALKER

Camper by day, run-and-gunner by night, Andy is editor at Memeburn and prefers his toast like his coffee -- dark and crunchy. Specialising in spotting the next big Instagram cat star, Andy also dabbles in smartphone and game reviews over on Gearburn.

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