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Two train fatalities within 24 hours

TWO people, including a 13-year-old boy, have been killed after being struck by trains in Victoria in less than 24 hours. Friends watched in horror as Kyneton boy Jamie Golden was hit by an express train while trying to cross the railway tracks at Riddells Creek station in the Macedon Ranges, northwest of Melbourne, about 2.30pm on Sunday. A man whose name has not yet been released was killed at Moreland station in Coburg, in Melbourne's north, after becoming trapped between the platform and the carriage of an outbound train shortly after 7am yesterday. Family and friends have told of their grief for Jamie, who died at the scene after being struck by the Bendigo-bound express train, which was travelling in excess of 120km/h.

Claims crowding figures 'fudged'

MELBOURNE'S trains have become more crowded under the Coalition government despite official passenger counts showing a decrease in peak-hour overcrowding, according to analysis by state Greens leader Greg Barber. The Public Transport Victoria survey, released in May, found peak-hour overcrowding had dropped from 15.3 per cent of services in May last year to 11 per cent this year. But after obtaining the documents under Freedom of Information laws, the Greens say many trains affected by the knock-on effect of a cancelled or delayed service have been excluded from the results. Of 437 trains surveyed, 113 were excluded. Public Transport Victoria has denied it misrepresented the data, saying it was necessary to exclude cancelled and delayed services for accuracy.

Home invader jailed for five years

A MAN cleared of taking part in a terrorist plot to attack the Holsworthy Army Barracks in Sydney has been jailed for a minimum of three years and refused leave to appeal, after attacking a young woman and her father during a drug-fuelled home invasion in April last year. Fifteen months after being acquitted over the Holsworthy plot, 25-year-old Yacqub Khayre broke into a house in Dallas, on Melbourne's northern fringe, armed with a flick knife and high on the drug ice. Khayre, who had a torch and was wearing gloves, stole an iPod, watch, laptop, handbag, jewellery and money tins from two bedrooms, before being discovered by the young woman as she returned home from a night out to find him in her bedroom about 2.40am. Khayre punched the woman in the stomach and back as he tried to pass her, later punching her father and head-butting him with sufficient force to make his nose bleed. Khayre pleaded guilty to aggravated burglary, theft, intentionally causing injury, recklessly causing injury and giving a false name. Yesterday, Court of Appeal judges Marcia Neave and Paul Coghlan refused Khayre's application for leave to appeal his sentence of five years and six months' jail.

Bushranger's stolen pistol recovered

A STOLEN pistol that belonged to bushranger Martin Cash has been found buried in northern Tasmania. Cash's six-shooter, dating from the 1860s, was taken 10 days ago in a smash and grab raid at the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery in Launceston. Police using metal detectors found it and another historic pistol, stolen in the same raid, during a weekend search of eight sites around the city. "They appear to be in excellent condition and just as good as what they were when stolen," said Detective Acting Sergeant Dwayne Kirkby. "They were wrapped up in plastic and tied up in a plastic supermarket shopping bag." No charges have been laid. Police and the museum had stressed their priority was securing the return of the pistols, ahead of catching the culprits.