

PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE NO. 6 - TRANSPORT AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

SYDENHAM-BANKSTOWN LINE CONVERSION

Responses to Supplementary Questions

Hearing – 10 December 2019

1. Can you outline the benefits of Metro for residents along the alignment?

Response:

I am advised:

This information is publicly available.

Sydney Metro is delivering a step-change in the capacity and customer experience of Sydney's rail network by providing a fully automated metro rail system— an Australian first. The City & Southwest project will deliver significant benefits not only directly to customers using the Metro, but also to customers on other rail lines and across the transport network.

The T3 Bankstown Line is being upgraded to modern metro rail standards between Sydenham and Bankstown. This means:

- an air-conditioned train every four minutes in each direction in the peak - Train services will be more than tripled at stations like Hurlstone Park, Canterbury and Wiley Park, which currently get as few as four trains an hour in the peak;
- all upgraded stations will be fully accessible with lifts as well as level access between the train and the platform, removing the step up into the train;
- safer platform environments, with improved CCTV surveillance;
- platform screen doors – this technology, used for the first time in Australia but common around the world, keeps people and objects like prams away from the tracks and allows trains to enter and leave platforms much faster;
- minimal gaps between platforms and trains;
- new or upgraded concourses, greater circulation space, including a new concourse to connect Metro with Light Rail at Dulwich Hill;
- new station entries better located to connect with local town centres;
- improved public domain;
- improved station interchange facilities;
- all trains stopping at all local stations – no waiting for the right train;
- less time spent waiting due to higher frequency services (four minutes instead of the current wait of six to nine minutes in the peak, and 10 minutes instead of up to 30 minutes in the off-peak);
- safe and efficient connections during the peak and off-peak periods between key centres;
- reduced travel times to key destinations such as Central and Town Hall;
- new direct and fast services to Martin Place, Barangaroo, North Sydney, Chatswood and Macquarie Park; and
- interchanges to other rail services at Bankstown, Sydenham, Central and Martin Place.

All Sydney Metro stations and trains will be fully accessible, with lifts to be installed for the first time Dulwich Hill, Hurlstone Park, Canterbury, Wiley Park and Punchbowl stations.

Customers will not have to wait until 2024 for this improved access: upgraded stations will be opened progressively from 2020.

2. How will Metro take the pressure off the existing Sydney Trains and City Circle network?

Response:

I am advised:

This information is publicly available.

The upgrade of the 125-year-old T3 Bankstown Line to metro rail is integral to taking the pressure off the rest of Sydney's suburban rail system. Currently, this line creates a significant bottleneck for the existing rail network. It slows down the network where it merges with other railway lines close to the Sydney CBD, including the T8 Airport and South Line and the T2 Inner West and Leppington Line.

Sydney Metro is delivering a step-change in the capacity and customer experience of Sydney's rail network by providing a fully automated metro rail system— an Australian first. The City & Southwest project will deliver significant benefits not only directly to customers using the Metro, but also to customers on other rail lines and across the transport network.

Not upgrading the T3 Bankstown Line would mean that in the years to come the NSW Government would not be able to look to provide the following on the existing Sydney Trains heavy rail network when the NSW Government next looks to invest in additional fleet and infrastructure as part of the More Trains, More Services program:

T4 Illawarra & Eastern Suburbs and South Coast Line:

- If all T8 Airport & South Line services cannot operate via the Airport tunnel, longer New Intercity Fleet trains will not be able to be deployed to the South Coast so existing services will be reduced as shorter trains will need to be used.
- 3 additional service per hour in the peaks, providing additional capacity for 3,600 more people.
- 1 additional South Coast to City service per hour in the peaks, providing an additional 1,200 seats, and a 15 minute service frequency for Intercity hub stations such as Wollongong, North Wollongong, Thirroul and Helensburgh in the peaks.
- 1 additional Waterfall train per hour, providing an additional 1,200 seats in the peaks and providing a 15 minute peak period frequency for customers at Waterfall, Heathcote, Engadine and Loftus.
- 2 additional suburban trains per hour, providing an additional 2,400 seats per hour.
- Unable to increase the frequency of services into the future to 24 trains per hour, providing additional capacity for 4,800 more people in the peaks.
- Once Sydney Metro City & Southwest is operational, customers will be able to interchange between Sydney Trains and Sydney Metro services at Sydenham, Martin Place and Central to access new stations in the CBD, North Sydney and Macquarie Park. T4 customers between Sydenham and the City will benefit from reduced crowding.

T2 Leppington & Inner West Lines:

- 4 additional services per hour from Liverpool, providing additional capacity for 4,800 more people in the peaks for customers between the Inner West and Lidcombe.
- Unable to increase the frequency of services into the future to 24 trains per hour, providing additional capacity for 7,200 more people in the peaks.

- Once Sydney Metro City & Southwest is operational, customers of these lines, which currently share the City Circle with the T3 Bankstown Line, will benefit from reduced crowding, improved reliability and the scope for additional services when T3 Bankstown Line services are removed.

T1 Western Line:

- 4 additional services per hour between Parramatta and the Sydney CBD, providing additional capacity for 4,800 more people in the peaks.
- Potential doubling of frequency and capacity to and from Penrith.
- Once Sydney Metro City & Southwest is operational, customers on these lines will experience reduced crowding on trains and platforms as passengers switch to Metro services. The project also provides an alternative option for customers during unplanned and planned events, which may force closure of other CBD and cross-harbour links.

T1 North Shore Line, T9 Northern Line and Intercity Lines:

- Once Sydney Metro City & Southwest is operational, customers on these lines will experience reduced crowding on trains and platforms as passengers switch to Metro services, for example south of Chatswood on the T1 North Shore Line and T9 Northern Line. The project also provides an alternative option for customers during unplanned and planned events, which may force closure of other CBD and cross-harbour links.

3. There has been much discussion regarding changing trains at Bankstown to catch the new Metro. Can you outline an equivalent change for passengers at say Central? What's the distance between say platform 1 and platform 25 at Central?

Response:

I am advised:

At Bankstown Station, the existing platforms will be extended so that essentially the front of a metro train pulls up near the back of a suburban train. Subject to final design development, there will be a short, flat, level walk from the front of one train to the back of the other. Interchanging at train stations is a normal part of commuting in modern cities around the world.

The distance from the back of one train to the front of the other is expected to be just over 100 metres. This is comparable to the walking distance from the Northern end of Platform 20 at Central to the Central Station Grand Concourse.

The walking distance from Platform 1 to Platform 25 is estimated to be between 300 metres to 350 metres, depending on whether stairs and the escalator or solely lifts are used to move through Central Station.

4. Much has been made by some of 'problems' on the Metro North West. But can you tell us the percentage of all trips that have been affected by a disruption since operations commenced?

Response:

I am advised:

Bringing a new railway line into service is a complex task. All major infrastructure projects take time to bed in once in operation.

As at 18 December 2019, Sydney Metro has carried over 13 million passenger journeys on the North West Metro in just under seven months since it opened.

Sydney Metro has operated more than 57,300 services.

There have been only 20 significant incidents since services began (that is, service disruption of more than 30 minutes duration for a section of track). This works out to less than 0.035% of all services delivered.

5. How are you minimising disruption for commuters whilst you build the Metro?

Response:

I am advised:

This information is publicly available.

The T3 Bankstown Line will remain open during the majority of construction of the Sydney Metro City & Southwest Project. Works to upgrade and convert the Sydenham to Bankstown section of the T3 Bankstown Line to Metro standards are being coordinated with regular weekend track work to minimise customer impacts.

Nevertheless, there is a need for some closures of the line while it is being upgraded to Sydney Metro standards. A program of closures is being designed to minimise impacts on customers. During closures, Transport for NSW will provide temporary transport bus services and amended rail services.

As described in section 5 of the NSW Government submission to the Inquiry, and in the project's Submissions and Preferred Infrastructure Report (SPIR) which was prepared to inform the Minister for Planning's Planning Approval, following community feedback, there will be reduced closures. Under the revised plans, there will also be reduced annual track possessions. Temporary possessions are now only planned for two weeks over Christmas school holiday periods when there will be fewer customers on the network. These possessions have reduced from up to six weeks at Christmas to only two.

To complete the Sydenham to Bankstown upgrade a final closure of between three to six months will be required to do work that can only be done once Sydney Trains has stopped operating on the line. This closure will be just before metro services start in 2024.

To minimise disruption to the community, the first of the rail line closures will occur from Sydenham to Campsie stations between 24 December 2019 and 5 January 2020, over the quieter Christmas/New Year period while most people are on holidays.

During this period, the temporary transport plan will consist of temporary buses operating between Punchbowl and Central stations.

The majority of the T3 Bankstown Line will remain open with rail services operating between Campsie and Central via Regents Park and Lidcombe Stations, maintaining rail access to the City. Customers travelling to the City will be encouraged to use these rail services where possible.

6. Can you reassure the Committee that stations beyond Bankstown will still have access to train services?

Response:

I am advised:

Yes.

This information is publicly available.

T3 Bankstown Line customers may be assured that there are no plans to permanently close any stations on the Line.

All T3 Bankstown Line customers not serviced by Sydney Metro will continue to receive suburban train services once Sydney Metro City & Southwest commences operations in 2024.

7. What options will passengers now have with access to the CBD from Metro? How will this take pressure off say existing stations such as Town Hall?

Response:

I am advised:

This information is publicly available.

For communities in the Bankstown region, Sydney Metro will deliver new and direct access to the city via new stations at Martin Place, Pitt Street and Barangaroo, better connecting customers to Sydney's employment, financial and retail districts.

The new metro station at Barangaroo will also link customers to the Barangaroo Ferry Hub.

Upon opening of Sydney Metro City & Southwest in 2024, customers on the T3 Bankstown Line between Bankstown and Sydenham will no longer need to interchange for stations in Sydney's north and north-west, with metro providing direct services to North Sydney, Crows Nest, Chatswood and out to Rouse Hill.

Customers on the T3 Bankstown Line can continue to access the City Circle by interchanging to Sydney Trains services at stations like Sydenham and Central, or taking the new metro to stations in close proximity. The Martin Place and Pitt Street metro stations are just 300 metres away from St James and Museum stations. Pitt Street station is 130 metres from Town Hall station.

Sydney Trains customers in the CBD will experience reduced crowding at Wynyard, Town Hall and Central, with improved accessibility to all platforms at Central, as a result of the new CBD metro stations and platforms built for the project.

For example, Town Hall station will experience reduced crowding because T4 Eastern Suburbs & Illawarra Line customers will be able to interchange between Sydney Trains and Sydney Metro services at Sydenham, Martin Place and Central to access new stations in the CBD, North Sydney and Macquarie Park, rather than interchanging at Town Hall between the T4 Line and the T1 North Shore and Western and T9 Northern Line.

8. How much more quickly will someone be able to get from Bankstown to the CBD for example compared to on the existing Sydney trains network?

Response:

I am advised:

This information is publicly available.

Customers at Bankstown Station will have a new air-conditioned metro train every four minutes in the peak – that's 15 trains an hour.

The station will be upgraded with level access between platforms and trains, easy interchange with Sydney Trains and platform screen doors to keep people and objects away from the tracks. The existing lifts and entrances will be retained.

Sydney Metro travel time will be 28 minutes between Bankstown and Central Stations, a saving of up to six minutes on the current timetabled travel time, which is up to 34 minutes.