

May 27 2022

To: Portfolio Committee 6

Dear Ms Boyd and members.

I would like to thank the committee for taking the time to listen to my concerns and those of others in my community.

I have read through the transcripts with interest, and this has reduced the number of Conspiracy theories circulating in our community as to why so much has changed when it comes to our buses.

I have some further comments to table that I think you might find interesting.

I would have liked to answer the question from the Hon Wes Fang about the bus into Wagga from the location where he grew up.

I would have said that I doubt very much that there would be a such bus. I know this because recently my daughter was in Wagga, working at one of the Nursing homes. She was studying Nursing at CSU in Bathurst and the appointment was part of her course. I have found owning a car in inner Sydney of limited use as my main destinations are a warehouse in Lidcombe and Macquarie Park (for work), Balmoral Beach(sailing) and Linley Point (band). There is never sufficient parking at any of these destinations, so I rely on public transport or a bicycle for 99% of my transport. For our daughter living mostly in Bathurst and visiting towns such as Wagga life is almost impossible without a vehicle, for example last I heard there is not even UBER in Bathurst. So, I lent the car to our daughter and haven't seen it since.

I also wish to comment on a statement by Howard Collins on Day 2;

HOWARD COLLINS: I will start with a bit of an opening answer to that and then I might ask my colleague Ms Fontana to help me with this. I think in maybe the 40 years I have been involved in rail and bus operations the old stories of buses going from one side of Sydney, or one side of London, all the way across to the other have proved to be very unreliable. You get caught in traffic, you end up with long, long bus journeys of over two hours and it is very inefficient. So the main motivation for shorter bus routes has nothing to do with the franchising or regions but it actually provides services which are more reliable and also is getting people to journeys which they want. Most people either go on radial routes or go in and out of the CBD. They do not get on a bus at Maroubra and end up at Chatswood generally because they are very long journeys. So that really is the strategy. I do not know if Daniela wants to talk a little bit about that?

Regarding "They do not get on a bus at Maroubra and end up at Chatswood". I agree with this but not the reason, I'm thinking that might also because there is no direct bus from Maroubra to Chatswood.

I note that we did have a direct bus from Chatswood to Bondi Junction, that ran via the Warringah freeway, using the very successful bus lane. People did catch this bus until it was withdrawn in the run up to privatisation.

The 340 (aka M40) was the subject of one of our change org petitions, in this case organised by Karen Lewis a regular passenger. You can view the petition here. [340 bus petition](#). I have copied the 80 odd comments lodged in the petition by people who were in the habit of catching this service before it was withdrawn in the lead up to privatisation. You can view them at the bottom of this document. I do understand that our local representatives may have simply ignored this petition and not passed it on to Howard Collins and would be grateful if somehow this could be organised by the committee.

I would also like to comment on the notion that shorter journeys are more reliable. I agree totally with this if you are looking at individual KPIs for the two or more bus trips that make up a journey from Chatswood to Bondi, if traffic affects one of the legs then only that bus runs late and the others run on time. The same cannot be said for the passenger experience as the lateness of one bus inevitable leads to a missed connection and a considerably longer travel time.

Lastly in note the comment from Howard on gathering feedback regarding customer satisfaction.

HOWARD COLLINS: People go around—our questionnaire goes around—they talk to customers actually on the route. Obviously very recently we have not been able to do that because of COVID restrictions. But I have seen that operating in practice and certainly it gets us a good customer sample size and it also helps us identify areas where we think we are not doing so well, and certainly State Transit, for example, utilise that data very regularly to understand that.

I'm wondering how this would work were a service is cancelled. For example how is it that the public dissatisfaction with the cancellation of the 257 by (articulated in my petition to Gladys ([click here to see the 257 petition](#))) be picked up by Transport for NSW.

Until this enquiry I'm not sure that there is one and this includes the letter I wrote the planning minister expressing my concerns about the approval of 460 new residential units (some without carparking) based in part on a traffic report for the development which referenced the then cancelled 257. I note that the letter was intercepted by a _____ from Transport for NSW and never made it to Rob Stokes.

My other concern is that in future, what is to stop Transport for NSW, rather than working with bus priority measures etc, simply cancelling services which receive negative feedback. In the same way that unreliability on the longer routes has been addressed by dividing them up into shorter trips. Further I note that there has been a lot in the communications from Transport for NSW in relation to the extensive bus changes about additional services, but I wonder if this is not just more propaganda in that if you take a bus route and divide it in two, you can then argue that you have twice the number of services.

I do hope that this inquiry will lead to a better, more efficient transport system for, in particular, the inner city of Sydney.

Many in our community, who have signed petitions, have been reluctant to provide email addresses as requested by Gladys. In the end we chose not to do this based on the fear expressed that there would be repercussions in relation to employment for government employees.

I certainly hope that, in future, we are not faced with the situation where commuters are reluctant to comment negatively about a bus service in case the government or bus operator then solves the issue by cancelling it. As far as I can tell there are no current safeguards in place to prevent this from happening.

Yours Sincerely

Ken Wilson