

27 June 2022



Ms Abigail Boyd MLC  
Chair, Portfolio Committee 6  
Parliament House  
Macquarie St  
Sydney NSW 2000

Via email: [portfoliocommittee6@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:portfoliocommittee6@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Chair

**Keolis Downer to the NSW Legislative Council's inquiry into the privatisation of bus services  
– Questions on Notice and Supplementary Questions**

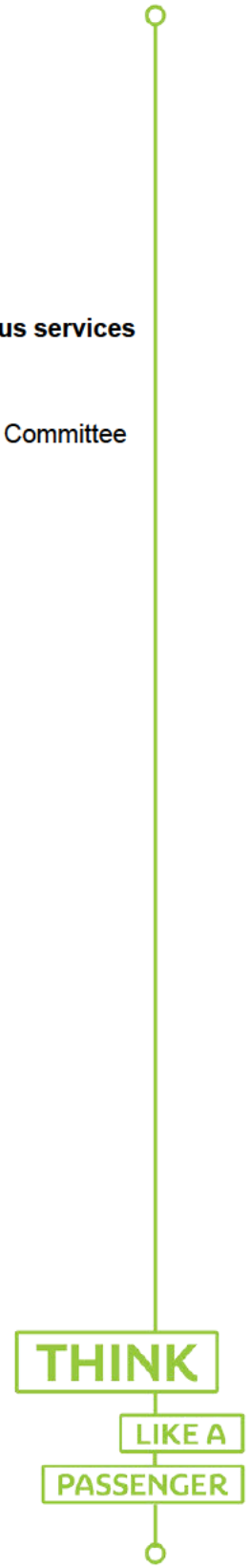
Please find enclosed Keolis Downer's answers to the NSW Legislative Council Portfolio Committee No.6's inquiry supplementary questions.

Yours sincerely,

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Keolis Downer

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## Supplementary Questions

### 1. Size of operation

*What is the largest bus operation you have run and how does it compare in terms of staff and bus numbers to the latest Sydney metro contract you have been awarded?*

Keolis is a major international public transport operator with very large bus operations globally. In total Keolis operates 23,000 buses and coaches in nine countries. We have limited the response to Australian operations and point to our Western Australian operation which are of a comparable scale. In Western Australia, Keolis Downer operates under the trading name of Path Transit and has held this Contract since 29<sup>th</sup> September 1996.

The KD Path Transit operation includes:

- 6 depots
- 451 buses
- 770+ employees

In comparison to the KD Northern Beaches and Lower North Shore operations:

- 3 depots
- 418 buses
- 950 employees

### 2. Asset ownership

*Transport for NSW maintains ownership of the assets; what inspection regime do they maintain to ensure compliance?*

Clause 67 of the Road Transport (Vehicle Registration) Regulation 2017 requires buses to be inspected twice yearly by external TfNSW Heavy Vehicle Inspectors.

In addition, as part of the Request for Tender (RFT), Keolis Downer was asked to prepare a strategic asset management plan in accordance with the requirements of the NSW Assets Standards Authority. Compliance is also checked to ensure that Keolis Downer's is delivering the asset management commitments as per this plan.

### 3. Training

*How does your driver training compare with the 2 week, one on one training that was offered by STA?*

KDNB undertakes 12 days of initial training, which includes Classroom, Driver Capability, Trainers and then Driver Coaches in depot. This training is delivered within the Northern Beaches and lower north shore region by a team of 4 learning and development specialists.

Note that the time with the driver coaches is based on individual assessment and is extended if an individual requires additional time to ensure competency against the

required standards.

New drivers are then put on a reduced set of driving shifts to allow them to become fully familiar with all driving aspects before expanding their exposure to and knowledge of other routes operated. Should any additional support and training be required beyond this onboarding period, a range of training methods and options are available to address the need throughout employment.

#### **4. 41, 43 and 48 routes**

*What form of community consultation was undertaken by Keolis Downer and Transport for NSW when the decision was made to cut the 41, 43, and 48 routes and replace them with on demand services?*

Over the 12 months prior to the expansion of the On Demand area in June 2019, Keolis Downer listened to community and customer feedback, collected data from trips and took on board feedback from staff to understand how to continue to deliver improved transport services for Newcastle and Lake Macquarie communities.

The review included:

- Incorporating feedback from customers, stakeholders and the community received via the Newcastle Transport Hub, shopping centre activations and individual meetings
- Engaging with our drivers on the network through daily reports and staff sessions.
- Analysing over 200,000 individual trips to understand customer travel patterns.

#### **5. Under the current contract structures, is it conceivable that a situation could arise wherein it is more cost effective to the operator to cancel services than to run them?**

No. The NISC and GSBC contracting frameworks are designed to pay operators for services delivered, given the operator payments are not derived from farebox or revenue. There are three specific KPIs – cancelled trips, on time running, and customer satisfaction – that could lead to KPI Default and Contract Termination, if the services aren't operated and the KPIs are not met.

#### **6. Would it be common for Keolis Downer to lobby Government for changes to bus services in the service of your interests as a for-profit entity?**

No, Keolis Downer works closely with Transport for NSW to deliver the best outcome for our customers through the efficient use of resources available.

Whilst we may propose service changes and enhancements within our contracts, these are intended to improve services for the majority of the travelling public.

#### **6.1. What is the process for Keolis Downer to request a change to bus services from Transport for NSW?**

A Bus Service Alteration Request (BSAR) is submitted to TfNSW with supporting

rationale for the change. This is reviewed and formally signed off by TfNSW if accepted. TfNSW owns the overall service plan and decides which service changes are acceptable and which are not given it operates an integrated multi-modal transport network.

**6.2. How often have Keolis Downer submitted such requests?**

Keolis Downer Northern Beaches

A total of three (3) nonmaterial (zero cost) Bus Service Requests have been submitted in relation to route/school services operated.

Keolis Downer Hunter

There are regular BSAR submissions throughout the year for special events, minor and major network changes as well as route diversions. In April this year we have added more than 160 services to the Newcastle Transport timetable including the new 10X bus service from Charlestown to Newcastle CBD, as part of an enhanced service plan,