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NEWS

# Eyes on bus services under new regional transport minister

**Rachel Chamberlain**

SOME of the 500 Bathurst bus services introduced by Paul Toole during his time as the regional transport minister could be altered or dropped under the new Labor-led state government.

The suite of new weekly

services was launched in 2021, and touted by Mr Toole as "reaching those areas that may not have seen a bus service in the past".

But the current Regional Transport Minister, Jenny Aitchison, raised concerns that the services are not working as effectively as they

could be during her recent visit to Bathurst.

Through her community consultation, she has learned that many services aren't well patronised and crucial gaps still exist.

Ms Aitchison said she had heard of a need for more direct services to Bathurst's

public hospital, as well as services to industrial areas and other locations frequented by apprentices.

"Hearing about apprentices in Kelso not being able to get on a bus, people not being able to get direct buses, they're things that are really quite important to us as it's

such an enabler for health, education, and then for jobs and opportunities," she said.

It's something that she wants to address, saying that a restructure of services might be needed to better serve Bathurst. "The roll out of any new program, there's obviously going to be teeth-

ing problems or things that didn't quite work as they were envisaged," she said, referring to the addition of 500 services in 2021. What we want to do is make sure all these programs are responsive to community, so we're inviting community to give us feedback."