

Submission
No 170

THE TRANSPORT NEEDS OF SYDNEY'S NORTH-WEST SECTOR

Name: Suppressed
Date received: 17/10/2008

Partially Confidential

In response to the request for submissions on transport needs for Sydney's North-West sector, I provide the below summarised notes in regards to the existing services;

* Trains on CityRail Western line are infrequent, at half hourly intervals during peak periods, then resuming hourly intervals on week days, resulting in over crowding and prompting a preference to drive. Train frequency is partly restricted by the single rail line to Richmond which needs dual lines. There is also inadequate designated parking areas near the stations for those how persist with the train schedules.

* Hillsbus city service to Rouse Hill is infrequent and lengthy in travel time compared to driving to the Baulkham Hills Junction main interchange for the express bus service. Again the Baulkham Hills interchange venue requires additional parking to cater for the increasing number of passengers.

* SAFETY concerns with the overcrowding of Hillsbus city services forcing passengers to stand for the duration of a 1hr journey with minimal hand rails in a vehicle travelling up to 100km/hr (often after waiting in queue for up to 30 minutes). PASSENGERS ARE OFTEN STANDING ADJACENT THE DRIVER WITH NO RESTRAINT. There is a need for additional services at peak times to improve passenger safety.

* SAFETY concern over busses with elevated seating towards the back which include steps in the aisle, creating a trip hazard for standing passengers when the bus accelerates or decelerates rapidly.

* SAFETY concerns over bus suitability for standing passengers. Minimal hand rails are provided, which are often positioned at inappropriate heights.

* Majority of Hillsbus city services terminate at QVB, forcing passengers who wish to continue to Railway Square to change services, however the interchange is unreliable and often not to timetable.

* Although the bus express lane on the western section of the M2 improves bus travel times, the Hillsbus city services are slowed by traffic, mainly at the M2 tunnel lane merger and at York Street due to congestion with the excessive number of government buses and general traffic. This could be improved should the planned widening of the M2 tunnel include a bus lane. Also designating York Street for busses only during peak morning traffic, or preventing street parking, could possibly reduce travel time by 30min during those periods in heavy traffic conditions.

* Automatic ticketing for the HillsBus service could also reduce boarding times at the major interchanges. Noting there is currently an operator service at some venues during short peak periods only (up to approx 8am).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment.