

**Submission
No 38**

INQUIRY INTO PRIVATISATION OF BUS SERVICES

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Date Received: 31 March 2022

Inquiry into the Public Asset Theft (“Privatisation”) of Bus Services

1a The Modelling, Rationale and Process of stealing bus services.

The theft had several purposes:

1. Facilitating money laundering

The change in routes will enable the closure of bus terminals. These large blocks of land have been/will be sold to property developers whose raison d’être is money laundering. This group is currently fighting any attempt to build ecologically sustainable homes. A weak, complicit and corrupt government supports them.

2. Enabling incompetents to start or expand transport companies and thereby ponce around as princes of capitalism and ‘entrepreneurs’. Both they and their political enablers are functioning on much the same level as Putin and his ‘oilygarchs’ - just with smaller sums of money.

3. Forcing commuters to use the eastern suburbs light rail, which begins nowhere, travels to no destination anyone wants, and does so at walking pace.

4. At a time when other countries are encouraging public transport to reduce air pollution and fossil fuel use, the corruption masquerading as the NSW government has seen fit to steal and trash public transport, and build lots of roads to encourage increased car use. Just as petrol is increasing in price, too.

5. Given the bus livery has remained the same, I doubt if more than a handful of people anywhere in the Sydney region are aware of the theft. This can be seen as another success of the scheme. No pickpocket wants to get caught!

The theft of bus services therefore ticks all the boxes for a successfully completed NSW Government project.

1b The impact on the commuting public.

I can only speak about the theft of Sydney's eastern buses, which I understand were the last to go.

As it now requires more than one bus to complete journeys previously served by a single route, I can only surmise the routes are now owned by different companies and this ensures they all get a piece of the fare. Maintaining the same colour scheme helps to disguise this.

Bus Routes

386 & 387: Bondi Junction to South Head Cemetery: Safety Issue

I lived in Vaucluse for 20 years. Every time a new Minister for Transport was appointed, I'd try to get a very simple change made to the 387 and when it was introduced, the 386 routes.

That's because I didn't understand that he was being rewarded for years of party service, and his new status would improve his retirement benefits. **Keep in mind, this is a blue ribbon Liberal seat, a party which claims a dedication to business.**

The theft of these routes didn't improve them.

These routes travel over Old South Head Road and New South Head Road. Much of both routes involves passengers having to cross roads without any pedestrian crossings AND poor visibility because of lots of bends in the roads.

In some places, such as Old South Head Road between Captain Pipers Road & the cemetery, the traffic also picks up speed.

I'm not the only resident who suggested that both routes should become loop services:

387: running up Old South Head Road from the Dover Road intersection, on the 'inner' path to the Cemetery, **turning left** and returning to Bondi Junction via New South Head Road.

386: running up New South Head Road from the Old South & Dover Road intersection, on the 'outer' path to the Cemetery, **turning right** and returning to Bondi Junction via Old South Head Road.

This would enable:

1. Passengers to ride the loop and join/leave the bus on the side closest to their destination without having to cross either road.
2. Residents on Old South Head Road would have easy access to shops and services at on New South Head Road at Rose Bay and beyond.

Poor Arrangement of Stops at Bondi Junction Station

Routes which share part of their journey aren't grouped together. Passengers are forced to wait for one specific bus or run all over trying to get to another.

392X: Reducing Customers to Belmore Road

No bus from Bondi Junction stops at Royal Randwick Shopping Centre

Once upon a time one could catch a bus from outside Westfield and alight at Royal Randwick or Coles.

Anyone living along Frenchman's Road could easily shop in Belmore Road.

Now 392X passengers must alight near Alison Road and hike the length of Belmore to reach Royal Randwick and then Coles. Even worse, they have to carry their shopping all the way back. Of course they could walk around the block to the creepy, deserted little stops in Clara Street which is down/up hill from Belmore.

Please visit Clara Street and let me know if you'd like to wait there at night after you finished your shift of P.O.W.

Bunnings Randwick

If you live in Coogee, it now requires two buses to get to/from Bunnings in Frenchman's Road.

Speaking personally, I can walk there (about 12 minutes) but would catch the bus back with my shopping, to the stop at the top of my street. This is no longer possible.

Eastgardens

It was once possible to go from Bondi Junction to Eastgardens via Randwick on the 400. This journey is now only possible via a Grand Tour of South Coogee.

People living around Malabar must catch two buses to reach Eastgardens, their closest centre, but can get to Bondi Junction on one bus. Did Westfield bribe the relevant ministers to create these routes? Or perhaps, this being NSW, I should just ask “How much?”

Loss of stops

There is no longer a bus stop outside Waverley Public School, which also served the nearby Waverley Court and War Memorial Hospital.

While stops on the 392X route between Maroubra and Little Bay are often within line of sight, these landmark destinations are not served.

Coogee Beach & Randwick Ritz Cinema

If you live on the 392X route, it now requires 2 buses to go to Coogee Beach and Randwick Ritz cinema and the businesses near these destinations.

356

My choices in returning from Bondi Junction are:

392X: A long walk from Belmore Road with shopping

356: Long walk to Bondi Junction station with shopping so I can alight at the top of my street.

Inner West

370

This now terminates in Glebe instead of Leichhardt

372

This bus used to travel from Coogee Beach to Lee Street at Railway Square. I could catch it and alight in either Eddy Avenue for the trains or in Lee and cross over to George Street for the Inner West buses.

On the return journey, I'd catch any bus from Lee around to Eddy Avenue then a 374 which is closest to my home.

Visiting family is now difficult.

The Eastern Suburbs Light Rail: Randwick to Circular Quay

Yes, I do realise this isn't a bus! But it was a key element to the theft of the buses.

If the goal was to move people using electricity instead of diesel, then it would have begun at Coogee Beach. The tram used to do this.

Instead people living in Coogee must now wait for a bus, spend 5 minutes getting to Randwick, then wait again for the light rail.

Or they can catch a 373 from Coogee and terminate at the south end of Hyde Park, and change to a 333.

If you're on the 374 bus route, you get dumped in Eddy Avenue. But the Light Rail doesn't stop there, even though that's where the tracks are! It stops around the corner & up a hill.

Journeys to and from work have now almost doubled in length. This could explain why Coogee is now a Labor seat.

Covid has meant working from home a viable alternative. I sincerely hope the bus thieves bleed.

And of course, trams overseas are solar powered. This throwback to the 1930s has unsightly cabled power. One can only guess at the scam that powered that decision.

Loss of Routes: Metro Buses

The big bendy Metro buses were a Labor initiative.

The Metro bus routes would fill and empty many times but I never travelled on one that was empty. With the theft of the buses, parts of these routes are now owned by different companies so single routes are impossible.

I used to catch

- M50 to Birkenhead Point

- M20 to Chatswood

Even without Covid, it's just too much trouble to be bothered

Art Gallery of NSW

I need to keep all my walking for the destination.

I'd catch the M50 to Park Street and cross the road for the Art Gallery Bus.

If I was tired on the way home, I'd change in Park for a Bondi Junction bus, and catch another to the top of my street from the station.

Now I must either catch a bus to the tram or walk twice as far, then the tram to QVB, and finally walk through it to the bus.

On the return journey I have a long walk home.

Even if Covid abates, almost everything I used to do had been spoiled.