

**Submission
No 47**

INQUIRY INTO PRIVATISATION OF BUS SERVICES

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Until last year my partner and I lived in an area which was so well served by buses that we didn't consider owning a car. We were able to get frequent buses from a stop a couple of minutes away from our house to Randwick Junction, Bondi Junction, the city centre, Maroubra and more. Importantly, there were plenty of options for buses between my house and my work (at Bondi Beach). Now I have one bus that goes from where I live to where I work and vice versa, and this bus is often late and only goes every 20 minutes (when it arrives at all). My partner also used to have several options for buses into his work at Central. Now he is forced to use the light rail, because there are no other viable options. I've also noticed that since the bus routes have been cut the remaining routes have much fewer real time updates so we have to guess whether the bus will arrive or not.

We used to like going into the city for social and cultural reasons too, usually in the evenings and weekends. Now there is no bus that goes to Circular Quay at those times. We either have to walk to Randwick and get the light rail, which is cumbersome and a long unpleasant journey, or we have to get a 373 to Museum and walk/get other public transport from there. We really can't understand why you would remove access to Circular Quay, one of the most famous places in the world.

In summary, since the cuts to many bus services in our area, the buses we can catch are less frequent and more unreliable. There are far fewer routes that go from our local stop, so we are forced to walk to either Coogee or Randwick in order to go most places. Real time data, which was really a great service, is now a lot more patchy. We are still paying the same for our travel, but our experience of the service is much worse. For my part, I am currently physically able, but I live with a chronic health condition. It is conceivable that at some point in the future I may be unable to walk to or from a bus stop that is not close by my start or end point. I am now also spending a lot more of my time waiting at bus stops and in bus terminals. I estimate that I wait on average about 1.5-2 times as long as I did before the route cuts. Again, as a person with a chronic health condition, this has a significant impact on my ability to live and work well.

All in all, this has made us reconsider how we can live here longer term. Even if we had a car, there isn't enough parking around the area, and driving into the city is unpleasant and expensive. Plus we are extremely uncomfortable with the impact on the climate that lots more people owning cars would have. Perhaps that is inevitable anyway, but we don't really want to be a part of it. The difference that the cuts in the bus routes in this area has made for me and my partner is huge.

We are extremely disappointed in the current service, and believe that further privatisation would be even more detrimental. We come from the UK where public transport is privatised. It is expensive, unreliable and poorly maintained. We have always thought that Sydney's public transport system is excellent, until these changes came into effect. Please don't make it worse!