

**Submission
No 59**

INQUIRY INTO PRIVATISATION OF BUS SERVICES

Name: Ms Yasmin Catley MP, Member for Swansea

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Yasmin Catley MP



M E M B E R F O R S W A N S E A

29 March 2022

Ms Abigail Boyd MLC
Chair
Portfolio Committee No.6 – Transport

Privatisation of Bus Services

Dear Chair,

I write to express the frustrations of my community who know firsthand the dire impacts the privatisation of bus services has had on local transport services after the sale of the Newcastle Transport Network.

In 2016 the Liberals made the decision to privatise the Newcastle Transport Network and install Keolis Downer as the operator. The then Transport Minister – Andrew Constance promised “better and more frequent public transport options, giving Novocastrians the world-class transport they deserve”. The reality has been a transport system that is a long way from world class.

What the community has got instead is service cuts and travel times a far cry from the promised better deal for locals that the Liberal Government guaranteed. The cuts included the removal of all direct connections to Charlestown, Newcastle CBD and the Morisset Train Station.

Along with services to key destinations such as Charlestown, Newcastle and the John Hunter Hospital now take longer and require more changes. These changes have had a particularly harsh impact on the elderly and those living with a disability who rely on public transport. Instead these commuters now have to change to multiple buses to complete the same journey that was completed by a single direct bus.

Among the service cuts was the former 350 service which helped transport students to Saint Francis Xavier College, Mereweather High, and Hunter School of Performing Arts via one direct bus services, in its place was a service that required multiple bus changes.

Our community needs the former 350 route restored, an issue that has been raised consistently with the Government and operator but remains unaddressed, despite promises at the time the privatisation was announced that “for the first time, the operator will have to guarantee a better deal for locals”.

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the devastating impact privatisation has had upon on local transport network.

Yours sincerely,

Yasmin Catley MP
Member for Swansea



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