

**Submission  
No 145**

## **INQUIRY INTO PRIVATISATION OF BUS SERVICES**

**Name:** Mr David Clarence

**Date Received:** 1 March 2022

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Dear members of the legislative council,

I am writing to voice my opposition to the proposed privatisation of the State Transit bus services in the eastern suburbs.

As NSW faces the challenges of rebuilding after covid and dealing with the impacts of climate change, the necessity of a well-run, timely and comprehensive public transport system should be self-evident.

Whilst the depredations of the pandemic have clearly altered the working landscape (at least in the short to medium term) the way the current government has dealt with public transport in the eastern suburbs leaves a great deal to be desired.

The alterations to existing bus timetables have either been badly planned or are being poorly implemented. With no apparent improvement after nearly three months it is still impossible to make plans based upon issued timetables; real-time data from mobile apps is either non-existent or wildly inaccurate and there seems to have been no attempt made to coordinate services to align with other modes of transport such as the light rail.

There also seems to be significant inequity in the way these changes have been made. While the Bondi and Maroubra areas still enjoy bus services into the heart of the CBD (including in the case of the latter the option of light rail from Kingsford), the Randwick, Clovelly and Coogee areas have no direct bus service to the heart of the CBD. Customers from these suburbs are instead railroaded onto a light rail service that is unreliable, uncomfortable and has no decent interchange at any point in its uptake area.

If the old adage "service drives demand" still holds true then public transport in the eastern suburbs is a cadaver looking for a grave. Those of us who forwent car ownership in the hope of minimising our imprint on the landscape are left wondering whether we have done the right thing.

How this is supposed to make the bus service an attractive buy for a prospective owner is difficult to comprehend. To return the service to anything remotely useful they would have to spend significant time, energy and money of their own. Will they be willing to do this? Or will they expect the NSW taxpayer to foot the bill, (at a premium, no doubt?)

Other instances of privatised public transport in NSW do not inspire confidence. There are significant numbers of elderly and infirm folk in this area who have no other options for getting around. Will a private operator take this into consideration?

It greatly concerns me that governments seem to be tiring of governing and are constantly seeking to offload essential services to the private sector whose commitment to the greater good of the community may not always be paramount. I hope you will look very closely at this proposed privatisation and reject it.

Yours sincerely,

David Clarence