

INQUIRY INTO PRIVATISATION OF BUS SERVICES

Name: Name suppressed

Date Received: 31 March 2022

Partially
Confidential

Privatisation of Bus Services Submission

I live in Randwick on the border of Coogee. The changes to the Eastern Suburbs bus routes on 5 December 2021 have desecrated the previously excellent bus services.

I have used the buses from either Coogee or Randwick for more than 30 years for work in the City and for leisure purposes in the evenings and weekends. I also used them regularly for Bondi, Pagewood and the airport.

A previous x74 bus to Circular Quay that took 20 to 30 minutes in the early morning, now stops at Central and then a forced change to a **packed** light rail service, taking more time and money.

- The direct light rail from Randwick to Circular Quay now take up to 40 mins which for me, now includes a walk up a steep hill to get to it.
- After an outcry by residents, the cancelled 373 was reinstated, but with a ridiculous route that stops near Museum – all access to the upper part of the city – Macquarie Steet for instance, is now harder for people needing to visit the health services located there.
- The buses to Bondi Junction via Randwick have been removed which is outrageous, the light rail does not go to Bondi where people can connect to the trains to take them to Edge cliff, Kings Cross etc
- When the light rail experiences technical failures and crashes, passengers have no other form of transport as it has all been taken away. When a bus broke down other buses would be available quickly, so appointments and work commitments were not affected.
- The light rail should have been introduced as an additional form of transport to cater for the rising population of Randwick and Coogee and not made it the only form of travelling. Surely with all the major unit developments occurring in Randwick, and the hospital, the university expansions one would think that town planners would have highlighted the need for more transport infrastructure.
- Randwick is gridlocked in rush hour as parents are increasingly driving their children to school because their bus routes have been removed.
- The apparent introduction in April of private buses is an insult to taxpayers who have a right to public transport. I have travelled all over the world to major cities and have never experienced private buses. I have experienced them outside of cities and they are not regular, do not turn up when scheduled and are expensive. We have all heard how it works in Newcastle, yet the Government is too arrogant to change its direction.
- The 374 was a great bus route taking you to the heart of Surry Hills – Crown Street where all the restaurants and bars are, cutting this route will only lead to businesses suffering on top of their losses from the pandemic.
- Bus stops for the very few routes left have disappeared which has made it very difficult for my elderly neighbours and people with disabilities.
- Before the pandemic, buses were packed most of the time. I used to walk further towards Coogee to get a seat, yet Andrew Constance stated, during the pandemic that the bus services were running below capacity. Well, that was obvious, we were in lockdown, it must have been a bonus for him to use this as an excuse for the already signed off plan.
- I do contract work and am now only taking roles where I can work from home because I cannot be bothered with the tedious and lengthy new way I am forced to commute.

The government has certainly gone the wrong way about getting us get back into the CBD and around the local area and spending money, this is not the way to encourage it let alone the fact that most people need the previous bus routes to access their medical services and specialists. We cannot afford to use taxis regularly.

The government has treated us with contempt, not wanting any consultation with the paying public. Thank goodness for Marjorie O'Neill MP for fighting to reinstate our rights for a public transport system that is affordable, fair and efficient.