

Sub38 Beckett..txt

From: Kate Beckett [Becketts1@inet.net.au]
Sent: Thursday, 17 May 2007 6:51 PM
To: Committees
Subject: action buses

P & E. Committee Secretary,

Hanna Jaireith,

ACT Legislative Assembly.

Submission for the P and E. inquiry into ACTION buses

In order for Canberra to be a modern city it needs to have a good public transport system. This is not something that can be run at a profit. At the moment the public transport system is mainly patronised by schoolchildren, the elderly, disabled and the poor. High school kids and university students all either have their own car or aspire to having their own car and see the public transport system as being inadequate for their use. There are very few buses in the evening and at the weekends and late at night. They feel that they are much safer travelling by car. This is a city in which you meet many people who have never actually used the public transport system and I think that's quite unusual. So for the sake of the environment and from my own needs I really would like to see an improvement in Canberra's public transport system. This means more buses, well thought out timetables and synchronised timetables. The needs of patrons requires a little research with a view to attracting more patrons especially the next generation.

Fifteen years ago I acquired a work-related injury which stopped me from driving I now rely mainly on public transport to get around Canberra. The current reduction in the frequency of Action Buses has had a very negative effect on my life. I will illustrate this with one example since I know that very few ministers travel by public transport and have very little idea of the practicalities of getting around Canberra without a car.

Example: In order to maintain my health and reduce further deterioration in my condition I attend hydrotherapy once (although preferably twice) a week. I leave Watson at 8:10 a.m., getting a lift into Civic with my husband. I travel, via public transport to Hughes hydrotherapy pool. Getting there is reasonably easy. Getting home however is more difficult and the earliest I can manage to arrive back in Watson is 12:30 p.m. This is a 4hr 20min trip which could all be done about an hour and a half in a car.

I was attending a second hydro session at Black Mt Pool last year but the new timetable made it too difficult to continue.

I think that's the intertown services are great although I have very little experience of their efficiency during peak times in the (.

Principles and key priorities for future service planning

The key priorities for ACTION should be:

1) To have sensible well thought out timetables. Buses such as the 36 and 39 both running to and from Watson operate, at off-peak times particularly, about five minutes apart. The service would immediately improve if these buses were to run half an hour apart.

2) More buses on the road. Without this improvement it is not much of a public transport service.

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3) Adherence to the timetables, especially from the interchanges. I have recently witnessed buses leaving the interchange early on more than five separate occasions.

4) Synchronise the bus timetable with other modes of transport such as the Canberra to Sydney train.

Eg. 39 arrives at the railway station (presuming it is running on time) at 6.30am. The train leaves for Sydney at 6.37am. This is just not very well timed.

5) Run air-conditioning at a warmer temperature. It is usually far too cold. This might save a little on fuel.

6) Perhaps running mini buses at less busy off-peak times.

7) Numbers at the back of the buses would be very useful.

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