



Inquiry into the procurement and delivery of MyWay+

Answer to question taken on notice

Asked by: Ms Caitlin Tough MLA

Addressed to: Chris Steel MLA, Minister for Transport

In relation to: Modelling of bus patronage including underlying assumptions.

Hearing: **01/05/2025**

Uncorrected Proof Transcript: **UPT 1/5/2025, pp 40-41.**

Transcript provided: **06/05/2025**

Answer Due: **13/05/2025**

Chris Steel MLA, Minister for Transport took on notice the following question:

Mr Steel: So the comment that was made earlier around patronage, the raw patronage numbers, that I think we have provided on notice, up until the end of March, that is affected by the fact that some buses are not actually equipped with the MyWay+ validators. And so they cannot record trips taken on those buses. So when we have more buses fitted out, we expect that the patronage will actually jump up.

And so we have – Transport Canberra have been doing some, sort of some back of the envelope type modelling, looking at what it would be potentially if we had all of the buses sort of fitted out. And we expect patronage to be much higher than the level that we had provided to the committee, which was just the raw numbers based on the MyWay+ - the buses that are fitted out with MyWay+

So it will get better over time. And actually what we are experiencing at the moment is an uptick in patronage, compared to months previous - in the previous year, noting that bus patronage is seasonal.

Mr McHugh: Yes.

MS TOUGH: Yes. Wonderful. On that, if you are doing some modelling, is that something we are able to get an indication on how much higher it is looking?

Mr McHugh: Yes. I would be more than happy to share that, noting some caveats that the data sets that we use to do the modelling have, I guess, some weaknesses. So we use door count data from light rail vehicles, for example, they are not an exact tap-on tap-off, but we use them to compare to other door count data. And then you get a feel for ratios. And if we use that data and some other data sets similar, indications are that we would continue to see growth of patronage and even post the go-live date. And we would be happy to share how we have done that analysis, along with the caveats, why we are not publishing it.

MS CARRICK: Yes, they are underpinning assumptions.

Mr McHugh: Assumptions, absolutely.

MS TOUGH: Yes. That would be great.

Chris Steel MLA, Minister for Transport: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

Further to the response provided to QTON 009 from the hearing on 27 March 2025, there were 975,141 passenger journeys recorded for April 2025 (raw NEC MyWay+ tap on and off data).

Transport Canberra initially sought to use this data to model an assumption for patronage following MyWay+ go-live, by taking light rail door count data and extrapolating a bus portion to indicate a total transport figure (on average, the ratio between light rail and bus patronage is 20:80).

Whilst this was initially considered a plausible model, further consideration determined this to be an unreliable model of actual patronage. Door count data collected by light rail vehicles has been used as an indicative, rather than validated figure, given counts each individual entering a vehicle, meaning drivers and CMET Customer Service Officers would represent a percentage of the total figure. Furthermore, this model would be less reliable during school holiday periods, due to less bus services operating, as the percentage attributed to light rail patronage would be higher; this percentage has not been validated.

Transport Canberra also considered quantifying the impact of several factors as an alternative model of actual patronage. These factors which are considered to contribute to an under-representation of true patronage in the recorded passenger journeys post go-live are outlined in the response to QTON 008 from the hearings on 27 March 2025. Daily changes in the number of buses in service which were intentionally not fitted with MyWay+ (i.e., compressed natural gas vehicles) has also been identified as an additional, contributing factor. Transport Canberra has determined the impact of these factors on patronage cannot be reliably quantified, therefore are unsuitable for incorporation into a model of actual patronage.

Notwithstanding this, the statement that *"high level analysis indicates patronage has continued to recover towards pre-COVID-19 levels at a rate comparable to the previous reporting period"*, provided in the response to aforementioned QTON is still considered to be true. An indicator supporting this statement is an increased demand on services during the peak periods.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Environment, Planning, Transport and City Services.

Signature:



By Chris Steel MLA, Minister for Transport

Date:

13/5/25