



**Legislative Assembly** for the  
**Australian Capital Territory**

Standing Committee on Environment,  
Planning, Transport and City Services

# Submission Cover Sheet

## Inquiry into the procurement and delivery of MyWay+

Submission number: 065

Submitter: Name withheld

Date authorised for publication: 13 March 2025

Inquiry into the procurement and delivery of MyWay+

I submit the input to this inquiry below, in particular in relation to Terms of Reference f, g, and h, and some other related matters (ToR j).

This submission offers and highlights a series of questions too.

Please note that when the submission is uploaded to the Inquiry site, I do not wish to have my name shown, ie 'Name withheld'.

Thank you

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28 February 2025

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# Submission to the Inquiry into the procurement and delivery of MyWay+

This submission mainly addresses aspects of Terms of Reference f, g, and h, and some other matters (j) that link directly to relevant public transport servicing and support priorities, planning and budgeting .

It also offers and highlights a series of questions too.

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## 1. Introduction - public awareness about this Inquiry

This input was prompted initially by the sense at end of January that perhaps hardly anyone had responded to the Inquiry by then, despite the large number of Canberrans who became anxious, stressed, felt uninformed and 'left in the lurch' in both the lead up to the start of MyWay+ and from the time it started at the end of last November.

Webform input option: I was lucky enough to receive from a local organisation at end of January a copy of an Assembly secretariat note about the availability of a webform option for making a submission. As far as I could tell the distribution of this news by the organisation may have been quite limited at that time and I did not receive any other such information from other similar volunteer organisations.

I have not seen any other public call-outs for inputs; I don't recall seeing any weekly Transport Canberra (TC) news mailouts mentioning or encouraging bus and rail users to make input to the Assembly (7 below also refers).

Given so many were badly affected by the ticketing system rollout I wonder how the Assembly made the webform and the Inquiry more generally and widely known across all sectors of the travelling public ie besides contacting (a few ? many?) community groups in the summer holiday period.

There still seem to be relatively few inputs to the Inquiry, given the large numbers who adopted MyWay + in late November. Perhaps this should not be surprising . Many may have just felt they had passed on enough feedback informally in November and December in various ways and that it would be noticed and considered – 2a below also refers. Others may have felt fed up and tired from dealing with travelling confusion and chaos at an increasingly busy time of year, which also saw a small tsunami of other 'one off' government 'consultation' activities, eg intensive workshops , pop ups etc, suddenly being offered for input and intensive participation in the three weeks from the end November into December.

Among those who knew about the Inquiry many probably would not feel confident about making a formal submission or have the time to spend on it . Doing submissions over Christmas and the summer break would have been "the last straw" for many. Hopefully, information about the webform went out to a large number of Canberrans in some other ways, and more will make input before the deadline, to help the Inquiry assess the issues.

Q How were individuals and organisations directly advised of the Inquiry and the webform option?

Q How many were advised?

Other ways of eliciting travelling public input during the Inquiry period perhaps could have been explored and budgeted for eg to obtain by independently run Q and A methods, a broader range of spread of views, experiences, other insights and a feel for issues still arising , or of continuing concern to the travelling public. (7c below also refers to other possible sources of input, eg from bus drivers)

Regardless of whether this was pursued (and perhaps for legal or resource reasons), some suggestions about collating and using informal inputs made by many travellers, parents et al, from end November on, are discussed at 2 below.

Hundreds of ad hoc comments and suggestions that were passed on in various ways publicly should be used, if possible, by the Inquiry to help assess the issues and complexities embedded in, and then arising, in the ticketing system's implementation.

Information and insights about MyWay+'s design, planning, and implementation are needed since the new system is funded initially via a 10-year contract and presumably many additional costs are also involved (capital items, installation and updating of infrastructure etc).

## 2. Information and insights needed by the Inquiry and the public

### a. Analysing public experiences, comments, and experiences in November – February

A large number of reader comments appeared over many weeks in response to daily or multiple daily articles in the Canberra Times, RiotACT and City News from the day of implementation and into the new year.

Many of these appeared to offer good insights into practical needs and deficiencies, plus technical suggestions. Queries were raised about aspects that did not seem to be addressed and supported in the rollout from Day 1, or seemed to be dropped all together from the new system. Poor connectivity with new ticketing apparatus as well as insufficient information provision in public transport vehicles and at platforms, interchanges etc, were also highlighted.

It seemed that quite a few comments and suggestions also were made on TC's Facebook page and on other social media pages.

It would be desirable that these valuable sources of responses and input are very transparently, neutrally, and independently collated and reviewed, with issues tabulated and summarised for the Inquiry, including current status, to help identify main issues and needs that were, and were not, addressed adequately before and after the ticketing system started operations.

This would also provide a good record for future ACT government reference and use as the system is reviewed/updated/amended over time.

### b. Comparing public experience input in the pre-rollout trial phase with inputs made after implementation

Such public input at a. above might also be able to be compared to public input and the scope allowed for gathering it in the trial exercises that apparently were run with a relatively small number of travellers before implementation.

Q How did the experiences of the trial group compare with the reality?

Q What wasn't picked up prior to implementation and why?

Q Was this trial phase of aspects of the rollout budgeted for adequately, with sufficient skilled resources on tap, to ensure that adequate 'fixes' were achievable in a timely way including prior to the launch date?

Q Overall, how was a wide range of issues – new, revised, and old - identified, risk assessed, and addressed for Day 1 workability purposes ?

Questions at 6 below also refer to preparation matters

c. What was new, revised , dropped, or reinstated?

The public and the Inquiry should also be provided with a good summary of all the features of the new set up that were introduced on Day 1, together with all those that were either dropped or minimised or deferred, along with those that have now been reinstated and reformed in some way, and with reasons for these decisions.

For some time the TC updates were giving some good clues about the status of a range of features, but it is now impossible to discern where the continuing implementation actions are actually at, what is brand-new in the system, what is - or has been - reformed, and what is still to be included in the ticketing system, and when.

The last TC update on the system's implementation components (22 January - see copy at Attachment A), suggests there is still ongoing work with indeterminate time frames. It also suggests that not enough attention was paid from the outset to some basic public transport user needs and convenience.

- Q Who made the decisions to drop, or not attend to, certain features and passenger needs that were later reinstated, or revised and reinstated, into the new system?
- Q And why?
- Q How often was the minister informed about the inclusion, exclusion, or deferral of features, and risks associated with introducing MyWay + in late November?
- Q Was there a rush to get this going before, and because of, the Christmas 'slowdown'?
- Q How much more catching up is required?
- Q Are all the contractor's unexpected 'response' costs being met within the funding they have received?
- Q What extra costs were incurred, or funds moved around for, or imposed on TC and other parts of the ACTPS in order to respond to what emerged on and after Day 1?
- Q Was all the known and potential follow up adequately budgeted for within the contractor's funding and in the TC and other budgets without affecting or delaying other public transport responses that are needed, particularly in relation to providing more frequent local bus services this financial year and beyond?
- Q If not, what are the estimated impacts?
- Q How well was the contractor able to respond when instructed by the government to refund individual public travel charges made in error because of various aspects of the ticketing system not working well for some time?
- Q How well was that exercise conducted and how long did it take?
- Q How will the ACT government review and report to public for the remainder of the

current 10 year ticketing system contract about the operations and effectiveness of the new ticketing system and changes that might need to be made, the timeframes involved, and impacts expected on the travelling public during any 'down' time of system features etc? Or will it be left to the Auditor-General to conduct sporadic reviews and assessments?

Q What data collection options were dropped, and why?

### 3. MyWay+ data collection issues and future decision making concerns about local bus services

The government and TC are very keen for all public transport users to also tap on and off on Fare Free Fridays now, because they want to collect data which will inform (presumably), at least changes to the bus system in the future. These have occurred at very regular intervals over the past 5 to 6 years, and so far with deleterious impacts on local bus services and their users (see also 5 below and Attachment B ). In view of that, it is critical that data being collected now is not used or skewed in ways that would disadvantage even more the travelling public who live in the suburbs and don't have access to more frequent Rapid bus services or much more frequent rail services.

100 or so older buses have not been collecting any MyWay+ data since its inception because they have not been fitted out with the new technology, etc. In the not too distant past the transport minister justified loss of services on local routes (again) because more 'popular ' routes (ie Rapids and rail), justified being boosted instead. It is likely that many of the older buses without ticketing equipment will be operating on local suburban bus routes rather than on the Rapid routes, thus creating spurious data differences that could be misused to excuse and make even more cuts to local services.

Of course the more cuts that are made, the more likely it is that the downward spiral of the shrinking frequency and spread of services over the full week for local bus services will worsen because their poor convenience and connectivity and longer wait times will force more people into their cars if they have one- and services will again be too narrowly viewed as not wanted or not 'popular'.

Also those who don't have access to private transport or deep pockets will become more socially and economically disadvantaged and isolated and/or find themselves wasting too much time trying to get to A, the B, then C, during the day or night and on weekends: even if timetables allowed this to happen from out in the suburbs .

Most cannot afford large regular taxi or Uber fares across town either, so participation in a whole range of activities (as well as socialisation generally), is out of the question for those on the receiving end of the already reduced local bus timetables. Blithely talking up taking up walking, cycling, and e-scooter use is not helpful for the majority who need to move around the city a lot during the day or over quite a long distance involving more broken trips now. Nor is it helpful to those who want to visit others, attend major free public events and festivals, other cultural or sporting events at night or support hospitality businesses who rely on patronage in the evenings and on weekends.

#### 4. Clarification about role of a TC review

A 3 December Canberra Times article about the start of MyWay+ ("Beyond teething issues..."), mentioned that TC was undertaking a review of the launch of the new ticketing system. The transport minister and TC do not appear to have provided further information and clarity about this review to the public before the deadline for inputs to this Inquiry.

More transparency is needed about what is happening on, and to, this review.

Q Does it have the status of TC's formal input to the Inquiry now, or is it something being done in parallel to the Inquiry?

Q If the latter, for what reason?

Either way it would have been useful for the public to have access to any findings and conclusions linked to this TC 'review'; even preliminary ones would've been helpful to give some insights into what has been going on about the new ticketing system before and after its launch.

Hopefully, the Inquiry can clarify the role and purpose of the TC review and ensure that it becomes a public document in a timely way, if it is not offered as an input to the Inquiry.

#### 5. Communications and public servicing before and after: general comment

Restoring faith and trust in public transport planning, processes and delivery, particularly in relation to bus service needs has been compromised by the MyWay+ implementation.

Many Canberrans are still dealing with negative impacts from the implementation of the 'new improved public transport system' in April 2019 and its cuts to many bus service routes, frequencies and connectivity and poorer interchange arrangements (the latter especially in Civic and Dickson). Many more cuts to local bus services have followed in the years since (Attachment B provides examples).

More people are becoming more isolated or risk of being so across the whole week if they don't have access to private transport (Attachment B also refers).

Visitors are treated badly when they come to the national capital too: for example, for years no one has been able to visit the National Botanic Gardens by public transport: "the nearest bus stop is located on Barry Drive off Clunies Ross St. This is a 1.3 km walk"<sup>1</sup> including quite hilly and, at the end, steep terrain. Yet the Gardens have much to offer and is investing a considerable amount of public funding in new upgraded facilities and experiences which all should be able to more easily access and enjoy. (And all this is embarrassing – see Attachment B, point 3.)

The ACT government has a lot of ground to make up on restoring faith and trust in not just the public transport system in Australia's national capital, but also the decision-making that is made at government level about prioritising and providing this essential public service – especially bus services. Frequent claims made about moving forward on Stage 2a rail and

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<sup>1</sup> <https://visit.anbg.gov.au/visit/visit-gardens/getting-here/>

bedding down MyWay+ are not sufficient reassurances or evidence of commitment to plug the glaring public transport gaps and meet the needs that exist at the moment.

More transparency and honesty are needed about public bus service provision and changes, in particular about its planning and timeframes for delivery.

For the above reason, the Inquiry's findings and recommendations need to be very comprehensive, insightful and helpful in showing a way forward beyond the improved functioning of MyWay+ which is but one component of what needs to be a well-integrated, more efficient, and more convenient, public transport delivery system.

## 6. Communications – specific aspects of design, research, preparation, public education, and liaison

The whole public communications exercise before and on Day 1 seem to be a little too 'lean and mean', certainly overly optimistic and also reticent about sharing with the public what the realities of going live with such a territory-wide, multipronged technical system might mean from the start and for some time.

- Q Why was the public not better informed before Day 1 about risks etc that were mentioned later, and the expected consequences for travel journeys and connections?
- Q How well was this budgeted for by TC, Treasury, and the contracted body?(Questions at 2c also refer)
- Q Who had oversight and responsibility for signing off on the information and advice support plan?
- Q Who judged it to be adequate well before launch day, and how was its 'reception' in the public domain monitored before launch day?

Overall, general information appeared poor for all age groups out in the community at large. These deficiencies proved to be huge from the time of commencement. Roving and rather time-pressed TC staff who responded to community requests for information at meetings e.g. one held in an inner north suburb very close to commencement day, turned out to be far too optimistic and promotional in their approach to reassure the public about how everything was going to work well two days later. Clear clues about public interaction with the ticketing system on line were given to the officer when trying to answer questions from frustrated and not unintelligent individuals of all ages from the floor. They were trying to describe their difficulties already encountered in getting QR codes/set-ups etc on to phones, and their concerns about messages that they were getting during these attempts to use processes already advertised on-line.

The audience was assured all was working well within the system, and that the system would work on the Wednesday, and they should ring a number to sort IT problems in the interim.

There was no messaging about the realities of going live that week, even to willing early adopters, other current public transport users, or potential users.

Q Why was there not more honesty and transparency about 'issues arising' then, or did the government just decide to 'wing' it with what had been managed to be 'developed' by the set launch date?

Given residents' questions and responses at that meeting, it was clear then that much more needed to be done to help people understand and prepare adequately for the system. I had seen a few glossy A4 handouts in the unattended TC Centre in Alinga St the week before commencement (when I could not buy a new pass in the solitary new ticket outlet in the Civic Interchange then because they had run out of what seemed like a pretty small supply). But who knew about such 'glossies'? If the minister was shown them and 'ticked' them off, did he ask how well distributed they would be across Canberra well before the launch date e.g. via interchanges, on public transport vehicles, and in libraries, newsagents etc?

None of these informative documents have been seen anywhere since either - and when I held them up at the meeting, to commend TC for them (especially since the ones for older age groups and visitors were much clearer and easier to follow than what was on the website), no one else in the well-attended meeting had seen them anywhere: and this was at the beginning of the launch week! Moreover, the TC officer had not referred to them in his short and rushed presentation (he had to fit in another meeting that night across town), or brought even a few examples that could have been pinned up on the outside public noticeboard.

It was clear that this more targeted set of educational materials for specific groups was not being distributed well, if at all.

Q Why?

Too much appears to have been done in less than transparent, inadequate, and minimalist ways, and 'on the cheap' too. Having the solitary MyWay+ outlet in the middle of Civic bus Interchange receive 200 cards/passes that ran out by the Sunday before the system started on the Wednesday, then apparently receiving only another 50 or so the Tuesday morning, the day before the system started, raises more questions about preparations for a wide range of user groups .

Q What happened to estimates of needs that addressed the concerns and needs of a wide variety of sub-groups within the travelling public ?

These included students, older people, and those who don't wish to rush and use the new QR codes on smart phones (if at all and if they have such a phone), for payment on a new system that they know little about. What happened may have put many off ever using the system and associated account arrangements with ACT government websites etc via a QR code. (Questions at 7c also refer to take-up.)

Q Why were there so few ticket outlets and insufficient supplies provided before launch day?

Q Why weren't wait times and supply issues for tickets/cards that had to come from interstate addressed high up on the risk management 'urgent-to-do' list?

Q Why had the designers and developers of the new system seem not to look at how the size of different smart phones might not interact easily, quickly, and cleanly with the QR code reader on the new machinery placed on platforms and buses?

- Q How well was phone use able to be tested in the trial period? Why were the tap on/ off delays not picked up on earlier, or how users would want an improved sense of tap on/off 'feedback, as occurred post launch?
- Q What specific information was sought, learned , heeded, or ignored from the experiences of other state jurisdictions that have brought in revised or new public transport ticketing systems, or are in the process of doing this in a major way? (eg Qld's Go-Card/Smart Ticketing - 2018 to date; NSW's Opal – 2022 to date; WA's Smartrider; and Victoria's MyKi - both 2023 to date).
- Q Was enough homework done and how well was it done?

Hopefully, the Inquiry can dig into this and provide answers about why the launch ended up like it did, and provide guidance on what needs to be done to prevent such stressful impositions on the public in the future.

## 7. Supporting the travelling public; capturing interest and input: using other government communications channels

### a. TC updates – sudden improvements appreciated; TC and ministerial communications from now on

As mentioned at 2c above , what became very regular updates from Transport Canberra soon after the launch date showed sudden noticeable improvement in clarity, issues descriptions and plain English advice about various operational aspects that were suffering from design and implementation problems or had to be delayed.

This was much appreciated as it helped to understand and get a better picture about the work being done to fix and bed down at least the main components of the whole system.

Some ministers and other parts of ACT administration could learn a lot from this more honest and down-to-earth approach to public communications.

The TC updates should also be a good source of issues and response insights for the Inquiry.

### b. Future MyWay+ updates

But as noted at 2c above, the last of these communications arrived in January. More are needed on the system specifically, for the reasons provided at 2c. Perhaps regular review and update explanatory MyWay+ system-related emails could be sent out on a fairly regular basis while more work is being done, and, over time, to inform the public about any new matters arising, to provide evidence about how the system is still working, or still not working, as well as planned for, and the reasons for this.

Certainly, mentions of some improved aspects etc can be included in the weekly TC emails but they should not replace specific updates that contain more context and a specific system information overview.

Some more 'neutral', and factual insights are needed by the travelling public, and by all MLAs who would be alert to constituent views on this major investment in service delivery.

Formal, factual, and transparent updates would also provide a useful reference trail for the public on 'identification', 'action', and 'responsiveness' matters over the next nine or so years, and also for the Auditor General.

Having the minister or TC focus on addressing the status of MyWay+ via the issuing of 'big' passenger numbers, or MyWay+ card take-up figures in the future is not meaningful or sufficiently helpful given what went on in November and December in particular.

The minister should also be forthcoming on a regular basis about how this contract is proceeding, whether the objectives/performance goals have had to be reviewed and revised - or are even adequate; also whether the budget funding provided for this system is still sufficient, and if it has been rearranged in any way to ensure the system remains on track and 'upright'. Similarly, whether other parts of the transport budget or commitments made to improve bus services have to be delayed or have been affected in other ways.

Q What TC direct and indirect budget inputs occurred as a result of the 'mop-up' in November-December-January, including new capital expenditure on infrastructure installation? (Other questions at 2 above on budget and funding matters also refer.)

Getting information of the types mentioned above into the public domain should be the result of ministerial and TC 'public interest' initiatives; the public should not be required to write to the minister or to their MLAs or wait until MLAs may ask questions in the Assembly at a much later date, eg at Annual Report, budget, and other hearings. Not communicating openly and honestly from the outset and on a consistent basis might suggest that it is hoped that certain matters that the government is responsible for will just die down or go away.

And hopefully, now that TCCS has been merged with the transport minister's other main 'line' directorate - planning - it will be easier for him to be more fully across what is happening, what needs to be done, and the implications of this for public transport user convenience and also the take up of more public transport use which is a major ACT government priority.

There should also be less temptation now, in the public eyes at least, for the minister to be prepared to quickly throw TC 'under a bus' when something major goes awry, that both the minister and his staff should have been more across and asking hard or penetrating questions about much earlier on.

More 'frank and fearless' advice from TC to the minister may also be needed.

#### c. ACT Libraries – a role in informing and providing drop off points for inputs on public service delivery reforms

ACT libraries should be supported and enabled to hold and show information about government project consultations (eg CRA's), Assembly and other inquiries and also assist with feedback processes e.g. via drop off boxes.

'Passive' provision of information and engagement via the library system should be a great opportunity to reach more people in a jurisdiction the size of the ACT, as long as the availability of such material in these locations is well advertised by the responsible government entity. For

example, including in regular non-online ways eg in the OurCBR newsletter, Canberra Times and in the free hardcopy weekly news media here. Many of all ages have mobile phones that are not connected to the internet for news and emails etc, for a variety of reasons, especially cost. (This also has implications recognising and meeting their other basic public transport travel needs in equitable and efficient ways).

Libraries ACT notes that it has about two million visitations per year across 10 libraries or 3000+ per library per week. The system attracts a large range of people and not just for book borrowing purposes. Even allowing for multiple individual return visits this is a significant opportunity for interaction with the public.

Dickson Library, for example, generally has a table in the front foyer area that holds ACT government information-related material and flyers etc. And its two very large notice boards on the left- and right- hand sides a bit further in also contain a wide range of posters, promotional and program information about ACT government activities and opportunities.

But there has been no sign of any MyWay+ Inquiry 'alerts' or information since December.

#### One-off MyWay+ pop up information sessions now being held in libraries

Given the comment above it was heartening to read somewhere very recently (but fleetingly) that over four weeks from the end of February, TC and COTA are now collaborating to provide an information and help sessions at each of the five main ACT libraries. Also, that TC is holding sessions at a student welcome event in Parkes and at an ACU welcome back fair.

Reference to these sessions was also later found buried in TC's 'News' section on its website . The drop-in sessions aim to encourage people to come and chat and obtain help with public transport generally or setting up their MyWay+ account :

<https://www.transport.act.gov.au/news/news-and-events-items/february-2025/visit-a-myway-pop-up-information-session>

Other ACT services and program for seniors can also be advised at the library sessions.

Such 1:1 opportunities should probably be made available more often across the year to encourage more to use the new ticketing system more confidently, and maybe upgrade the ways in which they use it, especially for those who are not in the habit - or not able - to delve into TC's website and check out their news on a regular basis.

Regular sessions for all users would also enable TC to obtain useful feedback from public transport users and other members of the public (as long as sessions are well advertised, and notified well ahead of time).

It might be useful for the Inquiry to look into:

- Q Why these library sessions are being offered now and what data or level of concern about usage of public transport by certain sectors of the travelling population since late November have been picked up on, or communicated in various ways, to both TC and COTA and other community organisations?
- Q How well have these one-off sessions been advertised across the ACT , including with ample warning, to a wide range of community and social groups, and especially to existing or potential public transport users who may be hard to reach? (Older Canberrans, new students, those students returning but who had left the ACT by the time the new system started, are obvious subgroups - but who are the others?)

- Q What are data showing about public transport use by older residents since end November? (Bearing in mind the lack of data from a hundred or so older buses that may be used a lot more by ACT seniors and others - 3 above refers).
- Q Have the knowledge and observations of bus drivers been used by TC to inform any change in patterns of use, or concerns/queries expressed by particular groups, since November 2024? (If not, they should be).
- Q Have ACT public bus drivers been approached by the Inquiry for feedback - if necessary on a confidential input basis?
- Q What is planned to improve the take up of public transport usage by all user groups , and particularly those who may have reduced their use since November 2024? Attachment B and 3 above also refer to remedial actions that would greatly improve the appeal and use of public transport in the ACT.
- Q How many public transport users receive the regular TC weekly news emails and the MyWay+ updates?
- Q How might much of this information be distributed or made available in other ways?
- Q What proportion of QR code users and MyWay+ card users (by category) are estimated to receive such TC updates, and has the number increased significantly for any subgroups since the end of November 2024?
- Q Which user subgroups appear to have low take up of TC's emails?

8. Conclusion

This Inquiry provides all parties with the opportunity to come together and provide necessary insights, learnings, and recommended actions in a collaborative and positive way.

The travelling needs of the public should be the priority.

Given what people experienced late last year, and what some are still experiencing, political ‘argy-bargy’ and point-scoring among the three main parties would not be helpful to understanding what went on, and preventing another similar launch rollout of reforms to an essential ACT- wide public service.

‘Lessons that should be learned’ need to be clarified for all.

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28 February 2025

## Transport Canberra News: MyWay+ update (22/1/25)

From: Transport Canberra <[TCCS.TCMarketing@act.gov.au](mailto:TCCS.TCMarketing@act.gov.au)>

Sent: Wednesday, 22 January 2025 6:32 PM

To: XXXXXX

Subject: MyWay+ update - Wednesday 22 January 2025



We would like to thank our community for the continued increase in people using [MyWay+](#).

As more Canberrans return to work for the year and parents/guardians get their children ready for the upcoming school year, we wanted to give you an update on the new system.

More than 89,900 people have now set up MyWay+ accounts and there are over 63,500 MyWay+ cards in circulation.

We are committed to providing comprehensive updates on what we are

doing to continue to improve MyWay+.

### **Back to school**

While we have ensured a good supply of MyWay+ cards currently available across an expanded range of [retail agents](#), we encourage parents and guardians to avoid the last minute rush before school returns and get their child/children a MyWay+ card.

The concession status will be applied at time of purchase.

Student MyWay+ cards can also be ordered [online](#). Typical delivery times are between 2 and 8 working days dependent on Australia Post delivery timelines.

We know there has been some delays with MyWay+ cards ordered online in December. We have been working with our contractor NEC to resolve this.

If you have been waiting longer than 3 weeks for your card, please contact our customer experience team on 13 17 10.

We will shortly commence testing with the view of introducing the new 'group account'. This will allow parents/guardians as well as organisations to link secondary accounts to their main account.

This means that parents/guardians will be able to set up and control accounts for their children through their main account. This testing is expected to take place in February and will inform an introduction of this feature afterwards.

In the interim students can use a MyWay+ travel card to pay for public transport or set up a MyWay+ account with the assistance of parents and

carers.

MyWay+ concession travel cards can be obtained and topped up from a [retail agent](#). Alternatively an individual account can be created on the MyWay+ portal where it can be topped up and concessions applied. Then MyWay+ travel card or bank cards can be linked to the account.

While we encourage students and families to do the right thing and pay for public transport, we want to assure parents and guardians that no child will be left behind if they are unable to pay for their trip, should they have any difficulties with the MyWay+ system.

### **Validators on buses**

While we have recently increased the volume of the audio confirmation noise for successful tapping on and off, we know people also want to see the validators display account balances on the screen. This functionality will be added in 2025.

### **Audio messaging on board buses**

Shortly we will be introducing audio messaging on board buses which reads out the next stop. This will help improve the customer experience. Field testing is underway, and we hope to introduce this feature in February.

### **Installation of MyWay+ on buses**

Given the ongoing delivery of new electric buses through this year we made a decision not to install MyWay+ ticketing system on old buses due to be replaced by these new buses.

Transport Canberra has fitted out 95 per cent of existing buses which are

due to have MyWay+ equipment installed and we plan to have the remainder of those fitted out by the start of the school year.

The school term network is when more buses are required to be on the road than during our current school holiday network.

If you do catch a bus without equipment installed, please enjoy the free ride.

### **Ticket vending machines**

Installation work is underway on ticket vending machines at light rail stops, major bus interchanges and the Canberra Airport.

More information on ticket vending machines is on our [website](#).

### **Ongoing monitoring**

As with the introduction of all new technology we need to continue to undertake testing and listen to feedback.

NEC and ourselves have staff testing the MyWay+ technology every day. We also listen to feedback from the community and from our drivers. This helps us target improvements.

If you do have feedback please feel free to use our [online feedback form](#) or contact our customer experience team on 13 17 10.

### **Tips for using MyWay+**

The easiest way to pay with MyWay+ is by simply tapping on/off with your physical debit or credit card, MyWay+ card or a bank card in your digital wallet on your smartphone device.

Please make sure you've got the latest version of the MyWay+ app installed on your iOS or Android device. This ensures system updates are applied which improve your public transport experience.

While we are still not charging any penalty fares, we still want to obtain the most accurate data possible and encourage best practice for all commuters. Please remember to tap on and off with the same device when your trip starts and ends.

We will provide information to all public transport users on the re-introduction of penalty fares at a later date. This will be communicated early and in a broad manner to our community.

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We acknowledge the Ngunnawal people as traditional custodians of the ACT and recognise any other people or families with connection to the lands of the ACT and region. We acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this region.



Produced by Transport Canberra and City Services

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**Our mailing address is:**

[TCCS.TCMarketing@act.gov.au](mailto:TCCS.TCMarketing@act.gov.au)

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Extract from input June 2024 to Age Friendly City Plan 2025-2035

Much of the comment and suggestions made below about the need to improve many aspects of public transport availability for, and use by, older Canberrans would also apply to and benefit public transport users of all ages, and surely would attract more public transport users across the board, which is a key government objective.

This requires both serious and honest acknowledgement by government of the public transport service imbalances and deficiencies that have been allowed to mound up in recent years, and a commitment to more investment in the system, outside of Stage 2a and 2b rail, and especially in relation to improving local bus services across the whole week.

In addition, attending to basic travel comfort and other outstanding passenger support infrastructure needs still deserves much attention and funding too, at least to the extent that has occurred on the development and delivery of the new ticketing system.

The needs detailed in point 3 below are still current.

Extract :

B. Public transport and active travel efficiencies need addressing

1. General comment about needing a more age friendly bus system
  - a key Plan/Discussion theme or focus is 'Access and Connectivity'. This is directly relevant to 'socialisation and inclusion' and also the need for greater respect and recognition of older Canberrans' need for efficient and convenient mobility and travel opportunities in relation to these foci
  - since the implementation in April 2019 of the 'new improved public transport network' which covers the life of the current Plan, the traditional print and also social media in the ACT have regularly exposed Canberrans' strong views about further cuts, inconvenient tweaks, more cuts, and the ignoring of public transport deficiencies that are causing more and more older Canberrans - especially older women - to face a more isolated and poorer quality of life
    - o not all are able to afford a car, or want to own a car, or are able to drive confidently anymore - especially at night: others are prevented from driving due to worsening health and other incapacitating conditions

- taxis etc are expensive, especially out of hours, for travelling across Canberra, to and from events or appointments, for social meet-ups etc, because many do not have access to others who can transport them (eg through some limited formalised home care help, or friends, or relatives - and especially when the latter two groups are in the same age range)
- government has turned a blind eye to the needs of older Canberrans, expecting them to be content with the loss of previously more direct and frequent local bus routes – such as from the inner north to Civic - and to endure the vagaries of additional broken journeys, connectivity gaps for return rail/bus journeys and wait times if travelling to other parts of the city, for example, which require linking 2-3 individual one-way trip journeys
  - for many the prospect of the latter is best ignored as too hard, too inefficient, and timewasting, to the detriment of their well-being, socialisation, potential contributions to community life, attendance at cultural and sporting activities etc.

2. In short, the current public transport provision and its selective promotion underwhelms older existing and potential users

- the needs of many older Canberrans are not met, and they hold largely negative views about the future - unless they are lucky enough to live very close (ie less than 300 metres) to a light rail stop or a Rapid bus stop
- some comment seen earlier in 2024 touches on the current myriad of issues afflicting public transport users, especially the majority of the population reliant on local bus services whose routing and frequency have worsened incrementally since about 2017-18:

.....

“ ..... ”

.....  
 The ACT government and its spokespeople might squirm a little but they continue to issue vague, selective spin about public transport provision, especially in relation to Sundays and public holiday evenings.

They fail to admit to the social, safety and mobility impacts of still having the last local bus services heading homewards from main interchanges into the suburbs around 7.30pm to 8.30pm on those nights and the dangers of hanging around for a bus home that runs only once every two hours on Saturday nights.

Too many cuts and inconvenient route changes have been made to local bus services, both in the lead-up to and since the introduction of the "new improved" public transport system five years ago.

These public amenity losses have never been acknowledged or assessed as part of the Stage 1 light rail costs. Many who used buses a lot no longer do so.

This loss of patronage has been able to be used quite conveniently by the transport minister to only focus on improving services on the "popular" and fewer, yet far more frequently serviced, rapid routes and their peak travel time periods.

The plan to add a few more bus services on a Saturday afternoon come April won't deliver the many frequency improvements where and when they are needed. .... " "

.....

- further to this comment, the ministerial and TCCS promotion accompanying the 'improved weekend services' that were actioned in early April 2024, failed to acknowledge how little they improved the Saturday local services only – for example, the now meandering No 50 route through Watson – Downer – Lyneham – West O'Connor – West Turner – Civic service
  - o only had two extra services added to its schedule between morning and about 5:20pm heading into Civic
  - o thereafter the 2-hourly service remained intact both ways ,and
  - o the last evening 2 hourly service on Saturday night from Civic was brought forward by 90 minutes and now leaves Civic at 10:28pm ; the last hourly service on week nights was also brought forward to 10.01 pm and on Sundays and public holidays the last 2 hourly one leaves Civic at 8.28pm
- such cutbacks and limitations to evening services and long waits in between them, especially on weeknights, weekends, and public holidays (still hourly or 2-hourly) do not encourage older Canberrans to venture out and to enjoy paid and free public events day or night at such times; yet many formerly used public buses more often to attend sporting and cultural events and hospitality venues - discretionary spending needs more support
  - o such users of public transport are discriminated against even if 'extra' transport provided to say the Civic interchange to support event attendance - if there is then no bus available to return home from the Interchanges at Civic or Dickson or Gungahlin when alighting there
  - o 'park and ride' promotion is irrelevant if private transport is not available to use
  - o the much touted e -scooter availability and user promotion is not helpful to older Canberrans either, as a form of travel or partial travel made in any journey - instead, the fast use of them and delivery e-bikes by others is a deterrent to spending time (and discretionary spending) in Civic especially at night
  - o e-scooter use across pavements and on public/plaza areas at shopping centres, or parked willy nilly in such places, are also concerns and require extra alertness by all pedestrians (do scooters need to be collected more frequently)?

3. A summary point list of suggestions for making public transport and other active travel use more user-friendly and appealing to older Canberrans:
- improve and promote local bus service frequency and coverage at night on weekends and public holidays
  - have last bus services from Civic to the inner north and from Dickson interchange and other interchanges better meet social and other needs of older Canberrans so they can get home conveniently to the suburbs after, for example, attending evening and night-time events in Civic and from opposite sides of town – also from daytime events on Saturdays and Sundays
  - increase connecting services from Dickson Interchange for return journeys home to reduce long, wasteful, wait times in Civic or at Dickson with very little protection or comfort at either place
  - provide a well maintained public toilet at the Dickson Interchange (this has been requested by individuals and community groups at frequent intervals over the past six to seven years)
  - provide a safer, more comfortable, and sheltered bus stop waiting area for the No 50 bus users in Civic: for the last five years patrons have had to endure the worst bus stop provisions in at least 40 years, enduring poor shelter, no sheltered seating, grubby and grimy surrounds and a not very appealing environment at night
    - o unlike many young people who wait there, older Canberrans are less able to sit on - or want to sit on - the grimy pavement tiling at the current stop: even leaning up against business' walls (often grimy) provides inadequate relief and comfort
    - o the many years old seat/bench in that area is inadequate for the numbers needing it and it receives the full blast of summer sun and heat in the mornings and offers no protection from rain or wind
  - light rail stops and platforms need to be longer especially in Alinga St in view of the crowding that already exists when passengers are disembarking and many others waiting to board
  - light rail stops require more sheltered seating: much of the wooden slatted seating is out in the open next to the planted borders at the Alinga platform
  - light rail platforms need more shade protection, especially those facing west on Northbourne Avenue used for southward journeys to Civic and beyond
    - o see IC point 5 above ( not included here )on the impact of the lack of adequate shade over a long summer afternoons in particular: poor platform design needs rectification already with climate change
    - o crowding on Stage 1 light rail is already off- putting for older Canberrans and a health hazard for all in the ongoing Covid environment
  - light rail carriages need improved ventilation and cooling: even short journeys can be very uncomfortable and unhealthy eg at 7:25 am on weekday mornings (lack of blinds on the eastern side, poor window

- pane density, and poor ventilation) – going ‘up the back of carriage where its cooler’ as one frequent passenger was advised by Canberra Metro, is not the solution for all passengers
- increase space for bikes in light rail carriages: many older Canberrans will want to take e-bikes on board to use at the other end of the trip, or simply because no secure or covered bike racks are provided at the rail stops
  - provide large overhead shelters at major exposed intersections because the wait times that pedestrians and cyclists endure there, and will face at major new Stage 2 rail intersections north of Commonwealth Ave bridge (see IC point 5- not included here ) for illustrations of expanses to be negotiated with little or no shelter and too few trees included for shelter and cooling purposes
    - o it is understood that Wellington NZ has investigated and adopted architecturally designed shades at intersections: in Australia they would need to be larger but should also be adopted
  - improve pedestrian pathing eg from the ‘800 metre’ signs on Swinden St Downer, and the ‘850 metre’ sign on Phillip Ave Watson to the light rail stops at the far end of both streets
    - o the 1960s pathing and lighting is totally inadequate, especially for older Canberrans able to access such routes by foot, with walkers, on bikes etc: the streets are too busy now with traffic and cluttered with parked cars during the day, especially at informal park and ride locations on these roads
    - o the Swinden St 800 metres sign is now opposite a new, currently being built 4 by 4 storey large independent living complexes (Goodwin, Downer): purchasers were being told of the proximity to the rail stop but use of the path at night is especially risky, walking on the street is better for balance and sight purposes and lack of trip hazards, but unsafe during the day because of increased traffic and rat-running off Northbourne Avenue, and more long-stay cars parked on the street
  - planning of public spaces, ‘the public realm’, and pathways should include more and frequently spaced large shade trees between the kerb and long pathways running east west on the southern side of main street/thoroughfares and where more active travel is expected - also on the western side of eastern placed pathways on thoroughfares running north and south (the western end of Bradfield St Downer and Melba St Downer are good examples of shade needed in this way for all pedestrians and cyclists but especially for older, slower, path users
    - o reduced heat exposure on such heat trapping streets and pathways for active travellers is also discussed at IC points 5 and 6 above ( not included here )
  - improve prioritisation of pedestrians and other active travellers over vehicles at intersections - eg when leaving light rail stops in order to reduce wait times in very exposed locations

- create underground passage ways at the Civic and Dickson Interchange, ie under Northbourne Avenue to allow more efficient and faster movement from rail to connecting bus services which also too often leave just a bit too early from the Dickson Interchange, leaving passengers with new long wait times for local buses – this would ensure less stress for all active travellers and the more efficient flow of six lanes of road traffic and bus movements along Northbourne Avenue
- improve public bus prioritisation at lights and intersection in increasingly traffic clogged areas such as in and around the Dickson Group Centre for example (at Mouat, Cowper and Badham Streets) and so reduce stress on bus patrons needing connecting services
  - o also at the heavily congested, narrow, and time wasting Northbourne Avenue turn into Mouat St, Lyneham - all buses using this have already been slowed up by the use of the dogleg route from the Interchange to the south along Northbourne Avenue, then back northwards to Mouat St: the promised bus only lanes have not been delivered yet
  - o bus patrons want faster, more efficient routes, fewer time delays, less traffic queueing
- provide wider paths with tree shade along main thoroughfares to shops, business, professional service centres, to encourage the use of e-bikes and 3-wheeler e-bikes by older Canberrans - they do need more travel options that are safe to pursue and use
- to improve mobility and connectedness options for more in this cohort
  - o but again, more room on rail carriages, or an additional carriage is required as more adopt e-bike usage
- connect more proactively and widely with older Canberrans about public transport and active travel needs and areas for improvement
- enable anyone, but especially older Canberrans and visitors, to visit the National Botanic Gardens by public bus
  - o an efficient and convenient service needs to be reinstated after many years without one
  - o this is unfriendly, discriminatory, and non-inclusive for all who do not have a car (especially older persons) – National Botanic Gardens is a most pleasant place to move about in and socialise with others, but can't be reached without much expenditure on taxis or Ubers
  - o it is also a disgrace for the national capital's treatment of a prime tourist draw card and embarrassing - we have twice overheard the Garden's cafe staff trying to explain to phone callers that there is no bus – and that the nearest bus stop is on Barry Drive (an exposed kilometre away, uphill to the Gardens)
- public transport demand and supply assessments should be available and referred to in the 2025-2035 Age Friendly City Plan
  - o we know of population increases of 3000 or so new residents slated for the Yowani renewal site (near the Swinden Street rail stop), over the next 10 years; several thousand more at the

nearby Kamberra site (near the Phillip Avenue stop), and most likely several thousand more residents and workers and visitors at least on part of the current race course, plus much more densification and infill is slated for western Downer (in particular along the rail route) and behind the Dickson shops

- how will current and future thousands of residents and travellers towards Civic be able to catch light rail at either the Dickson Interchange or the stops between there and Alinga Street?
- how will older travellers also get a seat on these services?

4. Given the last point above, provide older Canberrans with data analysis
  - the Plan should also request regular public updates of demand and supply data for light rail Stage 1, looking into the future
  - to help reassure older Canberrans living, say between the Dickson Interchange and Civic, or who alight from buses at the former and want to know of their continued ability to use light rail without feeling squeezed in, or having to sway back and forth, standing and holding onto a seat (where one is available nearby)
  - encouraging more to use light rail is essential but must be matched by supply
    - how and when will this be done?
  - older Canberrans, whether staying in their homes or downsizing in other parts of the inner north, need to know how much increased passenger demand will be managed, and when
  - requests for insights into such data through inputs to development plans and DA consultations have revealed nothing from either developers, or government authorities
    - the new planning system should be more open, transparent, and upfront about changing estimates of demand and supply and impacts of residential densification along the current rail corridor
    - developers' traffic analyses should not just assume light rail services will resolve any traffic congestion, now or over time, that arise from the injection of large numbers of new residents (equivalent to the size of completely new suburb) into a relatively small sized location along a rail corridor next to existing suburbs
    - travel comfort, and the ability to catch the rail service you want and need, would not just be concerns of older Canberrans who live south of Flemington Road, Mitchell.

End of extract

