



Inquiry into annual and financial reports 2024–25

Answer to question on notice

Asked by: Mr Andrew Braddock MLA

Addressed to: Minister for City and Government Services

Reference: Bus lane design for bridge works

Hearing: 13 November 2025

In relation to: Bus lane design for bridge works

Question received: 13 November 2025

Answer Due: **28 November 2025**

For the traffic management along Commonwealth Avenue Bridge during NCA works, what consideration and modelling was done around implementing a bus lane with tidal flow design, and why has this option not been adopted?

Ms Tara Cheyne MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

The City and Environment Directorate (CED) and Infrastructure Canberra (iCBR) have been working closely with NCA to understand the likely cumulative construction impacts on the transport network. A number of configurations for the remaining three lanes were developed and tested using the Territory's 'Canberra Strategic Transport Model' (CSTM).

The lane configuration proposed to be implemented will provide two-way flow for general traffic with a single general traffic lane in each direction and a single lane for bus only use heading northbound.

An option to use the bus lane as a tidal bus lane was also tested.

Notably, tidal flow arrangements are normally only installed in circumstances when there is a dominant flow of traffic in the one direction and additional capacity is required. For example, the Sydney Harbour Bridge has 8 lanes, 3 of which are reversible. Those 3 lanes are dedicated to northbound traffic in the morning and switched to southbound traffic in the afternoon to account for the dominant flow of traffic in each peak period.

In our case, Commonwealth Avenue has very balanced traffic volumes (vehicles and buses) in the peak periods – therefore would not normally be considered for tidal flow arrangements.

Nonetheless, CED and iCBR undertook investigations to determine the practicality of a tidal bus lane within the three-lane contraflow. A number of issues and constraints were identified, including:

- The lane widths required for 'tidal' lanes could not be achieved.
- The 'transition zones' for the tidal lane could potentially impact the LRS2A construction zone
- The installation requirements for the 'switch' is likely to require human intervention without highly specialised equipment. This is a high-risk activity, especially at night and in inclement weather.
- A tidal arrangement will create time-tabling constraints for public transport that would prevent operation of a legible and reliable network for both bus drivers and passengers.

Noting the issues and constraints above and the balanced traffic volumes on the bridge, the option of a tidal bus lane was not recommended. However, both the ACT Government and NCA will continue to monitor the operation of the corridor throughout the life of the project and undertake further investigations into possible tidal flow arrangements, if required.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Transport and City Services

Signature: 

By the Minister for City and Government Services, Ms Tara Cheyne MLA

Date: 2/12/25