


Association of Independent Retirees (A.I.R) Limited

ACN 102 164 385

ACT DIVISION

PO Box 222
MAWSON ACT 2607

The Secretary
Planning and Environmental Committee
INQUIRY INTO ACTION BUS SERVICES
ACT Legislative Assembly
GPO Box 1020
Canberra ACT 2601

	A.C.T. LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE OFFICE
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ASSOCIATION OF INDEPENDENT RETIREES LTD

SUBMISSION TO THE

PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO ACTION BUS SERVICES




On behalf of the ACT Division of the Association of Independent Retirees Limited I am pleased to submit for your consideration a number of our members' concerns. These will hopefully lead to improvements that will contribute to changes that allow the public transport needs of retirees and other citizens of Canberra to be better served. At present we see ACTION being run as an experiment in "cost cutting" by way of service reductions, without first recognising that it is a public utility that has a responsibility to meet the requirements of the people of Canberra.

Matters for Your Consideration

1. The frequency of off-peak services has been reduced by almost doubling the time between services. On many routes buses are every hour, where previously they were every half hour. This is one of the main complaints expressed by our members. Services are too infrequent and users attempting to transfer from one service to another face many complications and long delays.
2. Because of reduced frequency buses are crowded, often to the extent that they are unable to pick up waiting passengers.
3. Although only one bus may be shown in the relevant timetable, as being scheduled to pick up at a stop in an inner area, it is not unusual for additional half-empty buses (usually from more outlying areas and not shown on the local timetable) to travel along the local route, frequently within a short time of each other. Often they sail by and do not pick up the waiting travelers, despite the fact that the next local bus may be half an hour away.

4. Too often feeder buses are not scheduled to arrive at interchanges to conveniently connect with express buses traveling to other interchanges. It is frustrating for travelers to arrive several minutes after the departure of the express bus. Conversely, all too frequently, an express bus is scheduled to arrive at the interchange shortly after the various feeder buses have departed from the interchange for the outer suburbs.
5. Bus drivers are obviously stressed by the many complaints received and sometimes drive too fast, in the given circumstances, in order to get angry passengers to their destinations.
6. Overcrowding on the first of the off-peak buses each weekday would be lessened if holders of Senior's Cards could use them at an earlier time each day.
7. Bus services catering for rail passengers at Kingston Station have been a cause for complaint for a long time. There is a need for better co-ordination with arriving and departing train services.
8. Lastly, the complete lack of Action services to cater for persons departing or arriving at the Canberra Airport has been a major cause for dissatisfaction for some time. An economical Action service between Civic and the Airport is desperately needed. Often our members are forced to use other forms of transport that are very expensive. Some are forced to avoid airline travel altogether.

Yours faithfully



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HUGH DAKIN
President, ACT Management Committee,
A.I.R.

23 April 2007