



STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANNING TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES  
Jo Clay MLA (Chair), Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy Chair), Mark Parton MLA

**Inquiry into ACT Budget 2021–22**  
**ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE**

Asked by Mark Parton MLA:

Ref: Transport Canberra, Budget Statement H, pages 6 – 12 generally.

Budget Statement H, pages 6 – 12 discusses bus services in some detail and in this regard:

1. Are any further reductions in school bus services expected in the next few years?
2. What additional vehicle numbers will be required for school services in new areas such as Whitlam, Kenny, Ginninderry and other localities?
3. For the 2021-22 Budget and each year of the Forward Estimates, how many new vehicles will be assigned to each new area of service for:
  - a. School bus requirements; and
  - b. Other general public transport needs?
4. In relation to weekend bus services:
  - a. What are weekend service rates and timetables as a proportion of weekday rates (e.g. 70% or 80%);
  - b. When does the government expect to make services and timetables more frequent compared with bus routes currently running every two hours or so; and
  - c. Assuming there is a COVID recovery plan, what will happen to weekend service rates under the COVID recovery plan?
5. With respect to the Light Rail Stage 2 Project traffic disruptions, does the Minister have a plan to run more buses to the City to encourage people onto public transport; and if so
  - a. How many buses will be purchased to cope with the disruptions; and
  - b. What additional depot accommodation requirements would arise from the purchase of new buses either for;
    - (i) Vehicles added to the fleet for managing traffic disruption; and
    - (ii) Vehicles required for services to new suburbs, new schools and other new services?
6. What are the government's plans for actually constructing new or expanded bus depot facilities?

Mr Chris Steel MLA: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:—

1. There are no planned reductions to school services. Transport Canberra currently provides over 230 dedicated school services each day.
2. The ACT Transport Strategy 2020 outlines the desire to implement bus services into a new suburb as soon as practical, aimed at influencing travel mode choices. The exact bus requirements for the future development of these suburbs are yet to be finalised.
3. Additional buses purchased will be determined as required by growth of suburbs but also in relation to the delivery of light rail stage 2.
  - a. No funding has been allocated in this Budget for additional school buses.
  - b. Funding for three additional route buses has been provided in the Budget. These will be used to facilitate a new bus service for the suburb of Whitlam.
4.
  - a. Prior to the recent implementation of the 'interim' weekday bus network, Transport Canberra was providing 4,593 regular bus services each weekday. This reduced to 4,290 services as part of the 'interim' weekday bus network. Weekend services have remained constant during this period, with 1,753 services provided each Saturday and 1,205 each Sunday. This corresponds to the following weekend proportions.
    - Saturday proportion of weekday rate = 38% (pre-COVID-19 lockdown) and is 41% of the current 'interim' network.
    - Sunday proportion of weekday rate = 26% (pre-COVID-19 lockdown) and is 28% of the current 'interim' network.
  - b. Transport Canberra is currently developing the next tranche of network improvements which includes consideration of options for increased weekend frequency.
  - c. In April 2021, Transport Canberra released the ACT Transport Recovery Plan. The plan outlines a number of key objectives, including to 'restore community confidence in public transport as a safe and healthy way to move around Canberra'. A copy of the plan is available at [https://www.transport.act.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0004/1749199/Transport-Recovery-Plan-Combined-30-Apr.pdf](https://www.transport.act.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1749199/Transport-Recovery-Plan-Combined-30-Apr.pdf).
5.
  - a. The ACT Government has in place a Disruption Taskforce that will assess any fleet requirements. No decisions have yet been determined as this work is still underway.
  - b.
    - (i) There has been no decision made at this stage regarding the purchase of additional fleet to cope with 'disruption'. As such, the impacts on depot accommodation cannot be quantified.

- (ii) A new bus depot in Woden will allow for Transport Canberra to accommodate additional buses in its fleet.

6. This is outlined in the *Zero Emission Transition Plan for Transport Canberra*  
<https://www.transport.act.gov.au/about-us/planning-for-the-future/zero-emission-transition-plan-for-transport>

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

Signature:



Date:

2/11/21

By the Minister for Transport and City Services, Mr Chris Steel MLA