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Report 02.417

8 July 2002

File: E/6/19/3

[02.417_djw]

Report to the Passenger Transport Committee
From Dr D J Watson, Division Manager Transport

Other Matters of Interest – June/July 2002

1. Purpose

To keep the Committee informed of any matters of interest which are not raised elsewhere in the order paper.

2. Annual Plan Performance

As we have reached the end of the 2001/02 financial year staff are working on the end of year Divisional report and the Council's Annual Report. Committee members will be receiving both these documents through the Policy, Finance and Strategy Committee in due course.

3. Holding Package for the Transfund Patronage Funding Scheme

A letter setting out the decision of the Transfund Board on the holding package is attached (**attachment 1**). Committee members will note that Transfund recognise this Council's concern about the impact of the package on our expected income from Transfund over future years. A meeting was held with Transfund officials on 18 June 2002. The outcome of that meeting is that the Council is preparing a total picture of all income and expenditure on transport activities. This total picture will then be used by Transfund officials to inform their Board. The issue relates to the package favouring regions with strong patronage growth at the expense of these with minimum growth but existing high patronage levels.

4. National Land Transport Programme

The National Land Transport Programme for 2002/03 was launched on 27 June 2002. The programme was developed having regard to the Government's transport direction announced on 28 February 2002 and Transfund's new ministerial performance agreement. The pages of the programme relating to passenger transport in Wellington are attached (**attachment 2**).

5. Operator Monitoring

Following the presentation to the Committee by Elizabeth Sibbald and Jude Varcoe of NFO Market Research on the initial trends which had emerged from the Hutt Valley Transport review focus groups, the Ridewell Supervisor was interviewed as part of the same process and was able to expand on the perceived failings of the Ridewell Service Centre as reported to the Committee.

There were two incidents reported through the focus groups, the first was a misunderstanding by the caller who thought they were speaking with the operator and could not understand why they could not receive an instant answer. In order to overcome this problem Ridewell staff have been requested to ensure that there is no misunderstanding of their role and their relationship with the operators. The second incident arose when the caller did not receive any feedback after laying a complaint and therefore felt the complaint had not been taken seriously. All complaints are referred to the operator concerned for a written response. From time to time these responses get delayed due to drivers being off duty on sick or annual leave or administrative staff issues. In order to overcome this perception, staff working over the weekend are now to ring any complainants whose response has been delayed to advise them that their complaint is still being processed and has not been overlooked.

The Committee requested the officers to investigate how performance data for bus operations can be gathered for presentation to Council in the same manner as the reports submitted by Tranz Rail Ltd.

All bus operators have been requested to advise what performance data they are able to provide on an ongoing basis. They have also been requested to provide information of all "in service" failures where it was necessary to replace or repair a vehicle while operating a service. This information will be reported to the Committee on a monthly basis commencing July 2002. As an adjunct to this information, officers are investigating sampling timekeeping at popular nodes on a quarterly basis. All buses passing the node will be timechecked over a two hour period and the results calibrated. The same nodes will be checked each 12 months to enable changing trends to be identified. The whole issue of monitoring will be the subject of a paper to the Committee when these investigations are completed.

6. Hutt Valley Service Review

At the next Committee meeting you will be receiving information on the final findings from the NFO Market Research focus groups and user surveys, and as a consequence of that what is proposed in terms of changes to services to address these findings. These service proposals will be going out for public consultation prior to the tendering of them prior to Christmas so that new services can be introduced in March 2003. Cityline (Stagecoach) management have been provided with feedback from the focus groups where it relates to their customer service performance and have been asked to address the issues raised.

7. Passenger Survey 2002

Every year we undertake a passenger survey across all bus and rail services. In part the survey is used to provide a statistical return to Transfund New Zealand on a limited number of national transport performance indicators. We add additional

questions to the survey for our own purposes. The survey is undertaken by BRC Marketing and Social Research. A copy of their survey report is included with the Committee order paper as a separate document.

8. Presentations by Stagecoach and Mana/Newlands

The postponed presentation by Mr Ross Martin of Stagecoach will now take place at the 29 August 2002 meeting. Ms Kerry Waddell will also be making a presentation at that meeting.

9. Communications

There is nothing to be communicated.

10. Recommendation

That the report be received.

DAVE WATSON
Divisional Manager, Transport

Attachments

- 1: Letter from Transfund**
- 2: National Land Transport Programme 2002/03**