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

Other Matters of Interest – September 2002

1. Purpose

To bring to the attention of the Committee other matters of interest not mentioned elsewhere on the order paper.

2. Tranz Rail Issues

2.1 CPP

Cr Margaret Shields and Howard Stone met the Chairman of Transfund New Zealand, Michael Gross and one of the Board, Mr David Stubbs on 10 September to talk about the urban rail situation and how best to achieve the desired outcome and what this might mean for the CPP.

2.2 Current contract

A deduction of just under \$30,000 is being made to the contract payment for services not operated during the wild cat strike on 22 and 23 August 2002.

Tranz Metro have advised that the Wairarapa third commuter service will start on 13 October. There will be a 5:50, 6:30 and 6:53 train out of Masterton each weekday morning with a 16:32, 17:29, and 18:18 return service from Wellington.

2.3 Other

Committee members have been kept informed of urban rail operation issues as they arise. A presentation from the LTSA on the rail safety regime will be made at this meeting of the Committee.

3. Wheelchair Access to Stagecoach (Wgtn) Buses

Stagecoach (Wgtn) management has completed an investigation of the use of the wheelchair ramps on the wheelchair accessible buses in their fleet (see reference in last month's Committee report).

There are currently 64 wheelchair accessible buses in the Wellington fleet, with more being introduced annually. Of that group of buses, 7 have a mechanical ramp, 23 a flip out ramp and 34 a slide out ramp. The flip out ramp have proved the more reliable and the more convenient for the operator and user. All new vehicle orders are specifying the flip out ramp. The other ramps have had a series of problems over the years. The irregular nature of their use means that when they are required some of the ramps were found to be seized up. Regular maintenance and inspection has reduced this problem. It is interesting to note that over an average three month period the total number of wheelchair user trips is less than 50.

Back in 1996 Stagecoach hired a consultant to produce a training programme for drivers on the wheelchair accessible bus routes. This programme was developed in discussion with all stakeholders.

4. Bus Lanes

Cr Ian Hutchings of WCC has publicly stated that the three current bus only lanes in Wellington, after three months, have proved their worth. The City Council has now approved the introduction of the Hunter Street bus lane. This lane (**attachment 1** illustrates the proposed layout) will improve traffic flows for buses coming from Lambton Quay and other vehicles coming from Featherston Street. It provides a win win win for buses, cars and pedestrians.

5. Service Monitoring

The presentation being made at the Committee by Mr Ian Sharp will cover the future tendering and service monitoring proposals that will be first used with the Hutt Valley bus contracts.

The table below shows the level of missed or delayed bus trips for the August month by operator.

In Service Failures Resulting in 11 Minute+ Delays August 2002		
<i>Operator</i>	<i>Number of services</i>	<i>% of total services</i>
Runciman Motors	Nil	
Community Coach Services	Nil	
Mana/Newlands	8	0.03%
Cityline	6	0.06%
Stagecoach	93	0.19%

6. MOT – Dr Jeff Kenworthy Lecture

There was a good attendance of Committee members at the Thursday 12 September MOT sponsored series of “lectures”. This one introduced Dr Jeff Kenworthy and his sustainable urban communities theme centred on rail travel (heavy and light). His views have been the subject of presentations at transport related conferences for a number of years. He has his supporters and his detractors, as do all who stand on a single platform. But this is the essence of the transport topic. It is interesting to reflect on the Dr Morgan Williams presentation on Curitiba with its bus based passenger transport system and the strong light rail bias of Kenworthy. Both however stress the need for political leadership, for a vision. I take great comfort in the fact that members of this Committee take the opportunities that arise to learn from the experiences of others.

7. QPA

A meeting of the Wellington Quality Partnership group was held on 18 September 2002. The key issues raised were:

- The slow delivery of new buses (including the prototype trolley bus) from manufacturers nationwide. (*Action:* advising the Ministers of Transport and Regional Development of these concerns, as well as Designline in Ashburton who are constructing the trolley bus prototype).
- Closure of Lambton Quay, the key CBD bus route, for city events, to the detriment of passenger transport. (*Action:* to seek the introduction of a City Policy identifying when it is or is not appropriate to close off CBD streets).
- Ongoing support for bus priority measures through the CBD, particularly northbound in the evening peak.

The current QP document expires this year. A draft covering the next five years was tabled. After consultation with all parties it will be presented to both the Regional and City Councils for adoption.

8. Communications

There is nothing additional to be communicated.

9. Recommendation

That the report be received.

DAVE WATSON
Divisional Manager, Transport

Attachments

- 1: Plan of proposed new bus lane in Hunter Street