



BusNSW Post Hearing Response

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE Inquiry into critical transport infrastructure supporting the WSIA and Aerotropolis

5 July 2024

Background

On Thursday 13 June 2024, BusNSW gave evidence to the Inquiry. BusNSW was represented during the hearing by BusNSW President, John King, and Executive Director, Matt Threlkeld.

Questions on Notice

During the Inquiry, BusNSW took the following questions on notice:

QUESTION 1: *“One of the other points that has come up in the submissions is the idea that these bus services need to be up and running prior to the airport opening so that people know that's how they get there on day one. If they're not ready and people drive there on day one, it's going to be very hard to get them out of that habit. Do you have any view on what's an appropriate time frame, where it's worked well or how long they should be up and running prior to the airport opening?”*

RESPONSE

BusNSW provides the following information in relation to the strategic planning required for the successful implementation of new bus services connecting the Western Sydney International Airport and Aerotropolis to key activity centres, prior to the airport opening in 2026. These services are vital for establishing sustainable travel behaviours among residents and workers in Western Sydney.

Timing and Preparations

While the commencement of services is largely a matter for Transport for NSW, launching bus services 3 to 6 months prior to the airport's opening would allow sufficient time to refine operations and ensure reliability. This period is also crucial for familiarising the community with the new routes and schedules.

Key Factors to Consider

To support environmental goals and reduce the carbon footprint of the transportation network, it is crucial to prioritise the procurement and integration of zero-emission buses. The procurement, manufacturing, timely delivery and thorough testing of these buses will need to be managed carefully to guarantee their operational readiness, allowing the network to function efficiently from the outset.

A successful launch of the new bus services will require a dedicated workforce. Initiating a recruitment drive to attract skilled drivers and offering competitive packages will secure a committed team. Additionally, implementing robust training programs that cover safety protocols and customer service excellence will ensure high-quality service delivery.

Developing and enhancing infrastructure at critical locations such as Liverpool, Penrith, and Campbelltown is essential. There is a need for modern bus interchanges and layover areas near the airport and Bradfield City. Furthermore, designing infrastructure to be accessible and user-friendly will cater to all passengers, including those with disabilities, ensuring a seamless travel experience for everyone.

It will be critical for Transport for NSW to consult with the relevant contracted bus operators in relation to the matters above. BusNSW understands this will involve the operators with Greater Sydney Bus Contracts for Regions 1 (Busways) and 2 (Transit Systems).

Promoting Sustainable Travel Behaviours

To incentivise public transport use, a fare-free period during the initial months of the new bus services is recommended. This approach will encourage people to try the new services, helping to establish long-term travel habits and easing the transition to the new routes and schedules.

A comprehensive awareness campaign is crucial to inform individuals and businesses about the new bus services. Engaging the community through social media, local media, and community events will maximise outreach and ensure that the message reaches a broad audience.

Providing clear and detailed information on routes, timetables, and benefits will encourage early adoption and consistent usage of the new bus services. By making this information easily accessible, people will be more likely to use the services regularly, contributing to the overall success and sustainability of the public transport network.

Benefits for Workers

Offering reliable bus services for workers involved in the airport's construction, commissioning and operations will reduce traffic congestion and parking challenges. This initiative will enhance worker efficiency and contribute to the timely completion of the airport project.

Conclusion

In conclusion, starting the new bus services 3 to 6 months before the opening of the Western Sydney International Airport and Aerotropolis is recommended for establishing a dependable and sustainable transportation network. Through consultation with the contracted bus operators, and a focus on zero-emission buses, workforce development, essential infrastructure, and promoting sustainable travel behaviours, the NSW Government can ensure the success of these services and their positive impact on the Western Sydney community.

Thank you for considering this response.