

From: Sharon Moore [<mailto:smoore@intas.net.au>]
Sent: Friday, 17 August 2012 12:59 PM
Subject: Re: Inquiry into sustainable public transport

Hello Stuart

since I sent this submission, I have found out, through personal experience, that one of our bus services between Cygnet and Hobart, operated by Metro, has been cut: the Thursday one referred to in my submission.

Would it be possible for you to add to my submission the following information, or at least forward this message to the Committee members?

The extra Metro Thursday service from Hobart to Cygnet and return - leaving Cygnet at 10.00 am, leaving Hobart at 4.00, has recently been cut. This is despite the Premier's and Sustainable Transport Minister Nick McKim's recent media release proudly asserting their commitment to improved public transport by adding services to the Metro Channel route, from Woodbridge. There are now 13 weekday daily services from Woodbridge to Hobart (including one on schooldays only), compared with 3 for Cygnet. Clearly Cygnet residents, despite the fact that our town has a much higher population than Woodbridge, are expendable when it comes to public transport.

This decision severely disadvantages some of the most vulnerable people in our community: the elderly and infirm, who relied on this service for regular trips to Hobart for shopping, medical appointments, and a social day out. It will result in increased isolation among this group. Cygnet has a high population of people on pensions and benefits, who rely on public transport. Other services are inadequate for the purpose of a daytrip to Hobart, because the timetabling requires either a very early departure and a late return home, if there are appointments in both morning and afternoon, or a truncated trip. Leaving very early in the morning, when it is dark and very cold in winter, and returning at 6.30 or later, is just not an option for the aged, infirm and children. The Tassielink service is also more expensive than Metro, making it a less viable alternative for people on low incomes.

There are also those in the community, like myself, who simply prefer to use public transport for environmental or other reasons (I have a bad back, which makes driving difficult).

The Thursday service must also have been a godsend for parents during school holidays; a not too long day out for older children, and also it was the only option for people living along the Nichols Rivulet road.

Now there is also no return service from Hobart to Cygnet, unless you count the Tassielink roundtrip leaving at 11.00 am and returning at 12.10, ie not much use at all. This is very poor from a tourism point of view, and supporting businesses in Cygnet, and just for people who live in Hobart and want to visit Cygnet, or friends there, without driving.

With inadequate public transport options, car use will only increase.

Regards

Sharon Moore
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----- Original Message -----

Sent: Thursday, 9 August 2012 9:02 AM
To: Stuart Wright
Subject: Inquiry into sustainable public transport

Dear Mr Wright

I have heard that the Legislative Council has an inquiry into sustainable public transport in southern Tasmania, but can find nothing on the website of the Tasmanian Parliament. Anyway, as it's due tomorrow, here are a few general points I would like to make:

-- the government should not close off the option of reopening the rail link from Hobart to the north. This could be a light rail system to the northern suburbs, or a full-scale passenger and freight train link to the north of the state. I cannot fathom the decision to have Brighton as the so-called 'hub' for freight transport. It simply means more trucks thundering between Hobart and Brighton. Also, while there is not a lot of sea transport happening at the moment, who knows what will happen in the future? The option of reinstating rail between Hobart and the north of state simply should not be closed off. The Committee should look at how the rail corridor could be kept as a viable option for the future, especially given the redevelopment of the railyards.

- more use should be made of our waterways for public transport, provided that a greenhouse friendly form of fuel can be found and used. Once this happens, ferries should ply the Derwent, and further south. There should be integrated ticketing between ferries and buses, and trains/light rail if that ever happens.

- I live south of Cygnet and use both the Metro and Tassielink bus services. However the timetable is not particularly user-friendly for those who do not need to commute to work. Apart from Thursdays, if I wanted to go to Hobart for the day I would have to leave home before 7.00 am; then the only option for returning is 11.00 on Tassielink, or I have to wait until 5.10 pm. A very long day, not usually necessary to spend that much time hanging around in Hobart. Changing the 11.00 am Tassielink service until say 1.00 or 2.00 pm would be good, but even better would be an extra Metro service in and out, even a service like the Thursday one on one extra weekday would be good. I note that extra services have been provided for the Channel; why not Cygnet (the Oyster Cove route)? There are no Metro services on this route on weekends. More people would use the service if the timetable was better.

- while the bus lane on the southern outlet is good, it needs to go much further; people who drive up from the Huon and Channel need to have a disincentive to continue doing so. Instead, the governments have spent millions on the Kingston by-pass to make it easier for them! There should be bus lanes on all major routes, such as the Brooker and Tasman Highways; why this hasn't already happens is beyond my comprehension (or maybe not, given the car culture in Tasmania).

- The committee should consider the issue of the amount of government money spent on roads versus public transport, which is consistently under-funded. Also, I really object to the amount that adults have to pay versus school students. On Tassielink students get on for \$1.00 - a massive government subsidy - whereas a full adult fare from Hobart to Cygnet is over \$11.00! I don't know about the difference on Metro; I imagine it is similar. I realise the government needs to encourage parents to send their kids to school on the bus, but really, that is ridiculous. I support the comment I heard Nick McKim make the other day about looking into government subsidising school students' travel to schools outside their designated area. That simply should not happen.

- Finally, the most important overall issue that should guide all of the Committee's consideration is the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions due to climate change, and to reduce fossil fuel use due to peak oil. The best way to do this is to develop the capacity for public transport to use alternative fuels, and to come up with better timetables and fare structures, and, very importantly, disincentives to discourage people from using their cars. Car transport is simply too easy, and too cheap at the moment so most people will continue to travel that way.

yours sincerely

(signed) Sharon Moore
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