

NSW Bus Industry Taskforce



1. Background

Bus services play an integral role in the mobility of people in our cities and regions. They connect people to jobs, education, family and essential services. People rely on bus services to get to their destination in a safe and reliable way. This includes some of the most disadvantaged people of our community with limited alternative transport options. Buses also play a crucial role in supporting the broader transport network, connecting passengers into larger transport hubs and as replacement and emergency services when other transport modes need support.

In recent years, the quality of bus services has not met community expectations. Given the significant community concerns, it is timely to review existing arrangements and services.

Transport for NSW is responsible for regulating bus services across the state. For timetabled passenger services it works with bus operators to provide consistent fares, concessions, timetables, and service standards for passengers. It also utilises passenger information data and systems such as Opal card to analyse the quality and timeliness of services. It is noted that the current performance of some operators is sub optimal and there is room for improvement in a number of areas.

The Bus Industry Taskforce will bring together bus operators, industry experts, the workforce, and community representatives. It will help determine the priorities that will deliver more efficient and reliable services, that puts passengers at the centre of service delivery and makes operators more responsive to the needs of local communities.

2. Membership

Taskforce Chair: John Lee
Former CEO of State Transit Authority
& multiple private bus companies

Panel Members: Matt Threlkeld
(Executive Director of BusNSW)

Joanna Quilty
(CEO of NSW Council of Social Service)

Darriea Turley
(Local Government NSW)

David Babineau
(Rail Tram and Bus Union)

Mick Pieri
(Transport Workers Union)

The Taskforce will be supported by TfNSW and specialised external expertise where required.

3. Scope of the Taskforce

The focus of the Taskforce will be the quality and reliability of bus services across NSW, and the effectiveness of the current networks in meeting the range of community needs. Arrangements relating to bus services for special events, emergency and planned replacement services will also be considered.

The initial focus of the Taskforce will include consideration of operators' performance including on time running, cancelled or incomplete trips, complaints management and other relevant performance indicators, customer satisfaction results and service quality measures under the existing service contracts.

The Taskforce will investigate key factors relevant to bus operators' performance and make recommendations to the Minister on options to address these performance issues. Areas of focus will include:

- the service delivery and asset management models, including the contract and performance management framework, transparency in activities and the related capabilities required;
- service planning, including equity of services across the community, and related community engagement;
- infrastructure and technology that supports the effective delivery of bus services, including the transition to clean energy;
- arrangements relating to the employment of drivers, mechanics, and other key personnel;
- other steps to improve performance including legislative amendments, regulatory changes, contractual or other related actions.

The Taskforce will also give consideration to the Report of the Parliamentary Inquiry into the Privatisation of Bus Services in formulating its advice to the Minister.

4. Community engagement

The Taskforce will engage directly with affected stakeholders, including through community meetings and accepting submissions on passenger, driver and operator experience. A Passenger Reference Group will also be established to assist the Taskforce in its engagement with, and ensure it hears directly from, local communities.

5. Key Stakeholders

The Taskforce will engage with key stakeholders, seeking their views and input, including:

- Bus Operators
- TfNSW, and associated entities
- Rail Tram and Bus Union, Transport Workers Union and Unions NSW
- BusNSW
- Bus Industry Confederation
- Bus industry suppliers
- The Office of Transport Safety Investigations
- National Heavy Vehicle Regulator
- Department of Premier and Cabinet and NSW Treasury
- Local Government
- Education authorities
- NSW Council of Social Service

6. Reporting

The Taskforce will provide a series of updates and reports to the Minister for Transport to take forward for consideration by Cabinet.

10 July 2023 - first update reporting on the progress of the issues identified and immediate steps for consideration.

10 October 2023 – It is envisaged that the initial areas identified will be examined and recommendations made for action.

1 May 2024 – Final Report consolidating the findings of the Taskforce and making a series of recommendations.

The Taskforce can bring forward interim or urgent findings and recommendations throughout its tenure. Depending on its findings, the Taskforce may request additional time to undertake further work and related recommendations.



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