



## Chris Steel MLA

Minister for Community Services and Facilities  
Minister for Multicultural Affairs  
Minister for Transport and City Services  
Member for Murrumbidgee

Mr Tom Duncan  
Clerk  
ACT Legislative Assembly  
London Circuit  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear Mr Duncan

Thank you for your letter of 15 May 2019 regarding petitions No 9-19 and 12-19 lodged by Mrs Kikkert MLA regarding Belconnen bus network changes.

Through community consultation in 2017 and 2018, Canberrans told us that they want their public transport network to provide more frequent and reliable services, and increased services across on and off-peak times.

While the Government appreciates that the previous network may have provided a suitable travel option for some Canberrans, to provide a more frequent and reliable network for our growing city all routes and services were reviewed and redesigned to encourage more Canberrans to use public transport.

On this measure, the new network has been a success. Overall, around 10% more journeys were made on public transport during the first ten weeks of the new network, compared with the same period in 2018.

I am pleased to advise that since the introduction of the new public transport network at the beginning of Term 2 2019. More than 223 dedicated school bus services and many thousands of other bus and light rail services are used by school students.

During Term 2 2019, the number of journeys made by school students on Transport Canberra services increased by 3.25%, equivalent to more than 25,000 extra journeys in just ten weeks.

While some students are changing buses more, this has been offset by other students who are now able to make a direct trip to or from school.

During Term 2 2019, about 74% of school students using public transport caught a single bus or light rail vehicle as part of their journey. In comparison, during the same period in 2018, this figure was 81%.

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Of those students who do transfer, almost all change between buses or light rail vehicles just once, with less than 2.6% of school students journeys during the first ten weeks of the new network involving two or more transfers.

However, the ACT Government recognises that there have been significant changes for many families, and that there are further improvements which could be made to services. That is why Transport Canberra is working closely with schools, parent representatives, the Education Directorate and other key stakeholders to address specific concerns with services, infrastructure around schools or other issues relating to school travel.

To date, there have been more than 100 adjustments to bus services made since the commencement of the new network, and I have asked my directorate to focus in particular on services used by school students.

In relation to Route 40 (now 32) Transport Canberra is continuing to monitor loadings and demand across the network, including on the Route 32 and will make changes where operationally possible to improve the service capacity and frequency.

From 22 May 2019, Transport Canberra has changed the bus allocated to the 7:54am city bound Route 32 (which arrives at Aranda Primary at 8:26am) from a standard to an articulated vehicle. This will increase the carrying capacity of the service by approx. 35 passengers and will mean that the 7:34am, 7:54am and 8:16am services City bound through Aranda are all serviced by high capacity vehicles.

The ACT Government recognises that there are further improvements which could be made to services. The Government is committed to continuing to invest in our public transport network and your feedback has been forwarded to the Transport Canberra's scheduling and planning area for consideration as part of the development of future changes to services and timetables.

Thank you for raising these matters. I hope the information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



Chris Steel MLA  
Minister for Transport and City Services