

Report 15.424
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Committee Sustainable Transport Committee
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General Managers' report to the Sustainable Transport Committee, 9 September 2015

1. Purpose

To inform the Committee of Greater Wellington Regional Council's (GWRC's) activities relating to the Committee's areas of responsibility.

2. Public Transport

2.1 Public Transport Transformation Programme

The Programme is going well, and recently met some significant milestones with the Steering and Governance Groups signing off key foundation documents for the Programme. In addition, work on a Communications and Engagement Strategy is underway, with a focus on working with WCC and NZTA to position the Programme and GWRC well in the coming year. The team is moving to new offices in the nearby Statistics NZ building in order to accommodate the growing team and service the rail tender evaluation.

2.1.1 Integrated fares and ticketing

Staff continue to work on issues of fare consolidation and transition. Council will receive information in coming months about proposed changes to fares and resulting impacts on revenue and customers. GWRC has joined a steering group with other regional councils to appraise options for the national integrated ticketing approach, with a position hoped to be reached by October.

2.1.2 Wellington bus network and Bus Rapid Transit

The team continues to work on introducing the new network. The BRT project has moved into the Detailed Business Case stage, with GWRC staff involved in each work-stream – particularly Modelling, and Communications and Stakeholder Engagement.

2.1.3 Rail contract

The process to award a 15 year Partnering Contract to operate the rail service and maintain GWRL's rolling stock is proceeding well. A series of interactive

sessions has been held with short listed parties, and the closing date for submission of full information is 30 September. Since the tender documentation was released in late April, GWRC has provided written answers to over 300 questions submitted by the tenderers. It is currently envisaged that GWRC will present its recommendation for the preferred and reserve tenders to Council and the GWRL Board in December 2015. Special meetings may be required in the week beginning 14 December to avoid significant slippage that will occur if Council and Board endorsement is not obtained until mid/ late January. The focus for the coming period is to prepare for the evaluation process. The planned commencement date for the new contract is 1 July 2016.

2.1.4 Bus contract

Work to agree a Procurement Framework and Strategy with NZTA is progressing well; and formed the basis of the Industry Briefing on 26 August. Operators then had the opportunity for one-on-one meetings with GWRC to discuss the information provided in more detail. Feedback from industry will inform the ongoing development of the procurement framework and Procurement Strategy. Work has been initiated on development of the evaluation approach and a Transition and Participation Agreement with incumbent operators. The planned commencement dates for new bus contracts are from October 2017 to January 2018.

2.1.5 Bus fleet

We are continuing to work with NZTA and WCC to understand the implications of vehicle weights for different fleet options and the choices that are available to GWRC in relation to higher capacity vehicles, hybrids and electric vehicles. We are continuing to research the considerations for the introduction of hybrid vehicles (in the context of the longer term ambition to transition to fully electric vehicles). Rhona Hewitt, Manager, Bus and Ferry Operations, recently visited Hong Kong and China, with Auckland Transport representatives, as part of our research into hybrid and double decker vehicle options. We have commissioned a bus technical expert to prepare a paper on fleet considerations, potential transition options for the introduction of hybrid buses and the status of fully electric technologies.

2.1.6 Business readiness

Current focus is on identifying all areas of impact on 'current state' GWRC operations and assessing scale of change needed to achieve the aspirations for transforming public transport in coming years. Priority is on changes arising from the new rail contract model going live in July 2016. A high-level impact assessment identifying areas of priority is targeted for the end of August and subsequent executive discussion.

2.2 Electric bus trial

At a recent meeting between the Council Chair and the Mayor of Wellington City it was agreed to explore a possible trial of an electric bus as a visible demonstration of our longer term intent to move to a full electric bus fleet as soon as the technology is proven and buses become affordable. There are a number of issues that would need to be considered before such a trial could proceed. Officers will bring further advice back to Council over the next month or so.

2.3 Concession fares for students and weekend discounts

At its meeting of 26 June 2014, Council agreed to consider applying a 25% student discount on peak fares provided that there is substantial financial support from Wellington City Council and the tertiary education institutions in the region.

The Council Chair wrote to all tertiary institutions and councils in February this year asking if they had an appetite to pursue and discuss the option of a further student discount. The response was limited, with Victoria University, Wellington City Council, Kapiti Coast District Council and Upper Hutt City Council expressing interest in having further discussions. South Wairarapa District Council declined any further involvement, noting that students are not the only group in society that could do with assistance.

At a recent meeting of the Council Chair and the Mayor of Wellington City, they agreed to follow-up which parties might be prepared to contribute to the cost of a tertiary student discount on the basis that it may help to attract students to the capital, and therefore is an investment in economic development as well as a public transport initiative. The Chair and Mayor will be approaching third parties to discuss potential contributions.

2.4 Bus Infrastructure

2.4.1 Porirua Station Road renewal

The project to upgrade the access road to Porirua Station was successfully completed in mid-July, and positive feedback has been received from bus users and the bus operator. The project addressed sinking and structural damage through complete reconstruction of approximately 300m of road over a 3-month period. It also provided a new road surface to address severe potholing, and new channel and kerbing to improve drainage and accessibility for bus users.

The kerbs at the bus stops are an established product known as ‘Kassel’ kerbs. The profiled kerb face allows the bus to pull up close and parallel to the kerb, significantly reducing any gap. They also more closely match the step height of a bus, making boarding considerably easier.

The next stage of improvements at Porirua station will involve the renewal of the bus waiting area, and is scheduled to take place during this financial year.



Porirua Station Road reconstruction, showing Kassel kerb installation (left), and work completed (right)

2.4.2 Bus Shelter renewal programme

Recent bus shelter renewals include shelters on Aotea Drive close to the Summerset retirement home, and a new shelter on Lyttelton Avenue opposite Countdown which includes graphics on the glass acknowledging rugby greats from Norths Rugby Club including the late Jerry Collins



New bus shelter installed on Aotea Drive (close to the Summerset retirement village)



New bus shelter installed on Lyttelton Avenue (opposite Countdown Supermarket)

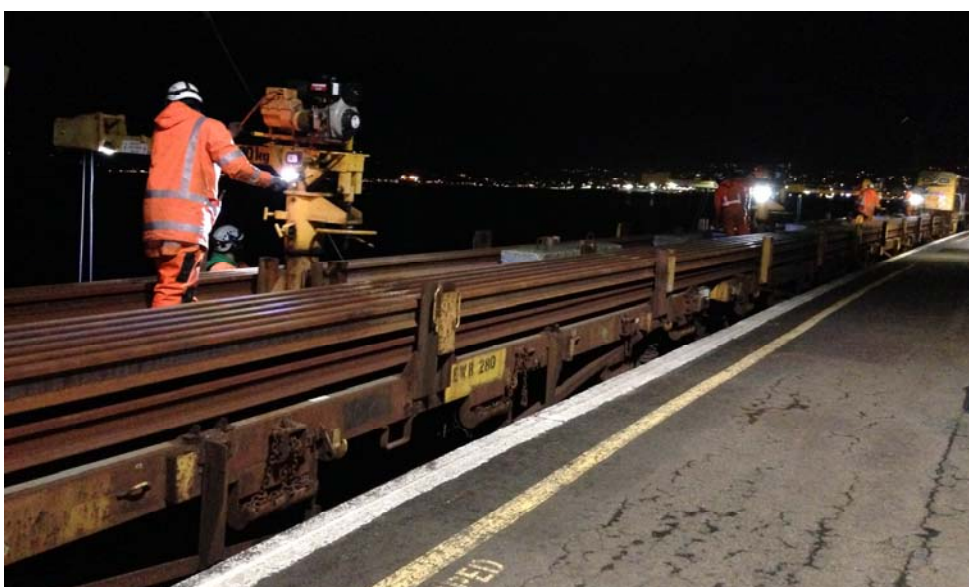
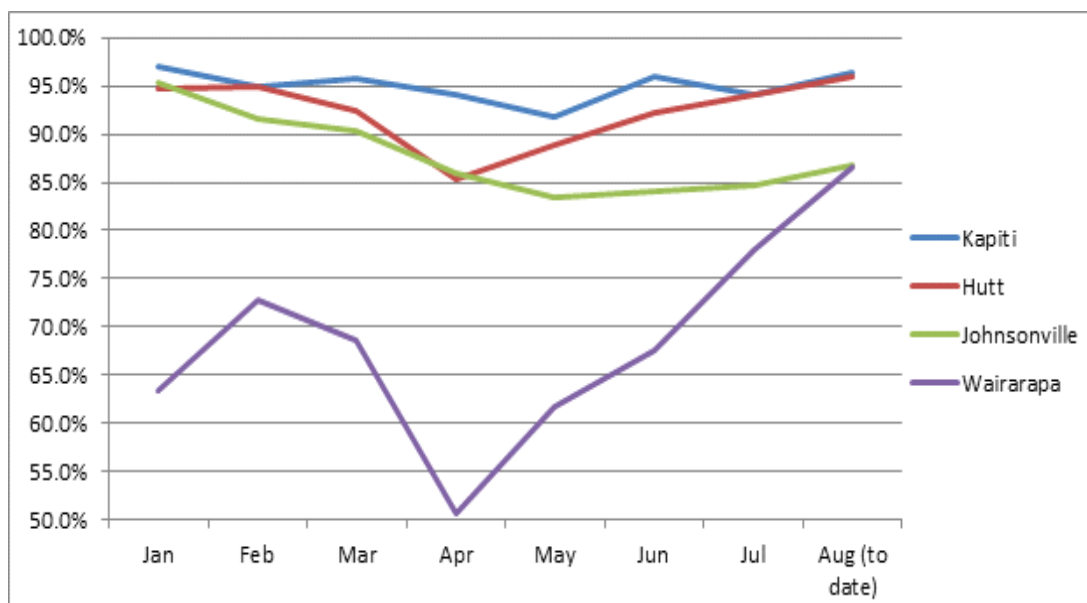
2.5 Rail

2.5.1 Services

Patronage grew by 4.2% for the 2014/15 year, reaching 12.1 million trips with strong peak growth. Growth was strong across all lines with Wairarapa services leading the way.

PAX JOURNEYS - YTD						
Line	YTD Peak			YTD Total		
	2015	2014	Vari	2015	2014	Vari
Kapiti	3,191,078	3,100,879	3%	5,091,368	4,947,718	3%
Hutt Valley	3,237,684	3,100,028	4%	5,081,331	4,828,129	5%
Johnsonville	765,434	736,096	4%	1,246,202	1,200,273	4%
Wairarapa	548,699	512,658	7%	710,094	667,172	6%
Total	7,742,896	7,449,661	4%	12,128,995	11,643,292	4%

Punctuality is improving: The first few months of the year were impacted by various speed restrictions on the Hutt/Wairarapa line, which had a detrimental effect on performance between March and June. By the end of June a large amount of work had taken place on the Hutt Line which reduced many of the speed restrictions, meaning that performance over the first 7 weeks has improved significantly as shown below:



In June KiwiRail replaced lengths of corroded rail near Ngauranga

2.5.2 Wairarapa improvements

Work on the Wairarapa Line is continuing and the speed restrictions will continue to drop. In April speed restrictions on the Wairarapa Line reached 14 minutes per journey, they are currently 7 minutes. An extra \$2.3million has been focussed on the Wairarapa line over the next year to make further long lasting improvements to the line and to ensure that speed restrictions remain low.

In April performance on the Wairarapa line dipped below 50% which is not acceptable. Along with the focus on network improvement, operational changes have been made to improve performance, including the introduction of the more powerful DFB locomotives. This has significantly improved performance on the line. The most recent week's performance (Week 7 of this financial year) on the Wairarapa line was 90% and included 4 days of 100% punctuality.



Five DFB locomotives are now being used to haul Wairarapa services

2.5.3 New Matangi trains on Johnsonville

Nine of the second tranche of Matangi trains have been shipped and four are in service on the Johnsonville line. It is expected that by end of October all services will be run by the new Matangi Units. The new units have different wheels which are designed to reduce noise. GWRC and KiwiRail are currently working to make changes to the timetable on the Johnsonville line. The changes are the first phase of the planned network wide service enhancements known as RS1, the changes are designed to provide for future capacity and improve performance on the line.

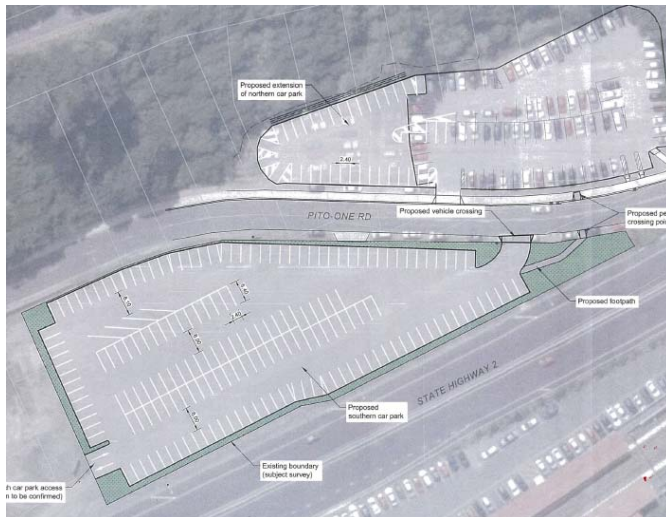
2.5.4 Park n ride

Design and development of the new park n ride capacity in Paraparaumu and Waikanae is progress well. Houses have been removed from the Paraparaumu sites and work will soon commence. In Waikanae final land arrangements and design considerations are still being concluded; however, no delays are expected to the programme. The work is being delivered in partnership with, and using the resources of the M2PP Alliance.



Indicative concept designs for Paraparaumu and Waikanae indicate over 350 additional Kapiti PnR spaces

Work to develop the Petone park n ride (between Pito-One Road and SH2) will soon commence. Unfortunately, access to the carpark will be restricted for a few months while the work is carried out. A communications plan is being developed. With over 200 additional parks being created Petone rail commuters will soon have access to over 500 park n ride spaces near the station.



2.6 Service Design

2.6.1 Wellington City

Bus service planning and design activity has been dominated by the detail required for the preparation for re-tendering of bus services under the new 'Public Transport Operating Model' (PTOM) process. The new service contracts will be tendered from next year, and will begin to be implemented from mid-2017.

Detailed work has begun planning the infrastructure required for the new Wellington network. This includes a number of new bus stops as well as rationalisation of current stops. This bus stop rationalisation will improve travel times and reliability on services.

2.6.2 Hutt Valley Bus Review

Work is also continuing with the bus operator to implement the recommendations from the Hutt Public Transport Review. These

recommendations were primarily concerned with increasing service reliability, and are expected to be implemented later this year.

2.6.3 Kapiti and Wairarapa Reviews

To ensure timely completion of these reviews for the new PTOM contracts a consultant(s) will be engaged to assist in delivering these two projects. These reviews will be aimed at operational fine tuning of services, especially in the Kapiti area where the current roading projects are taking place.

2.6.4 Bus Services

Wastewater renewal works on Wadestown Road has required a traffic diversion to be put in place until mid-September. We have arranged for shuttle buses to operate on a portion of the route and, following some initial customer feedback, we made some further changes to improve the service which seems to be working well.

The Mount Victoria traffic tunnel is undergoing a significant upgrade resulting in the tunnel being closed most nights until mid-2016, with a shuttle service for pedestrians and cyclists operating between both ends of the tunnel. Following consultation with the Mt Victoria Residents Association, GWRC has now agreed to a proposal for the service to operate through the Hataitai bus tunnel. This shorter shuttle service route has made the shuttle service journey considerably quicker for passengers.

2.7 Bike racks on buses

Work has begun on looking at which type of rack would be suitable for Wellington and gathering information on lessons learnt from other locations in New Zealand where the racks are being used. Due to the recent resignation of the staff member allocated to the project and the transition to a new resource the project is progressing slower than expected, but it will still be delivered in this financial year as budgeted for.

2.8 Bus Operations

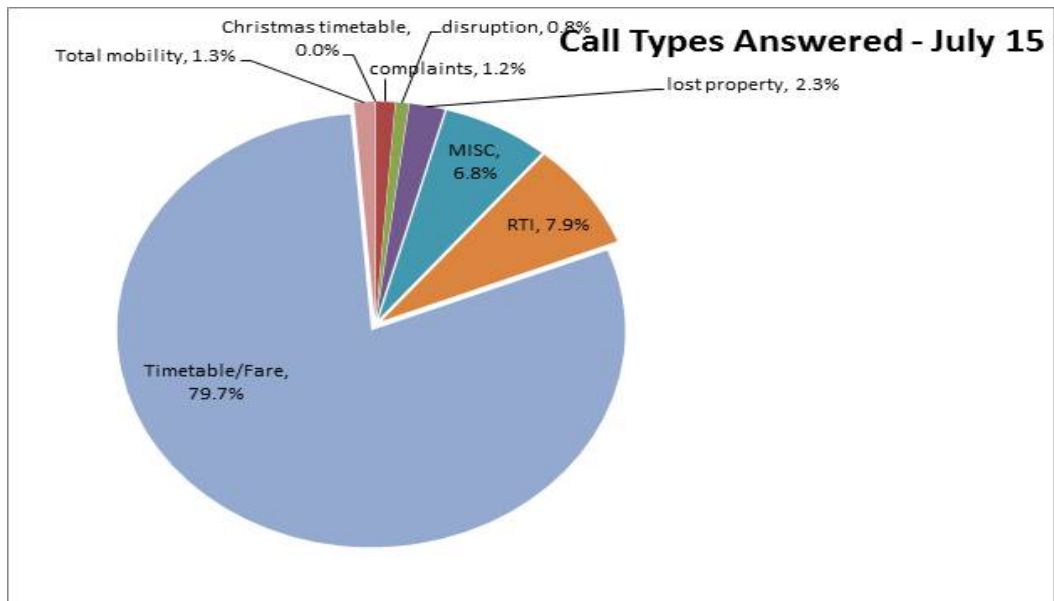
The new Vulnerable Children Act requires Safety Checks to be performed on Children's Workers – school bus drivers have been identified as being 'Children's Workers'. In preparation for the phased implementation of this Act, we have been working with bus operators to ensure they have processes in place to meet the various requirements for Safety Checks under the Act.

2.9 Metlink Contact Centre

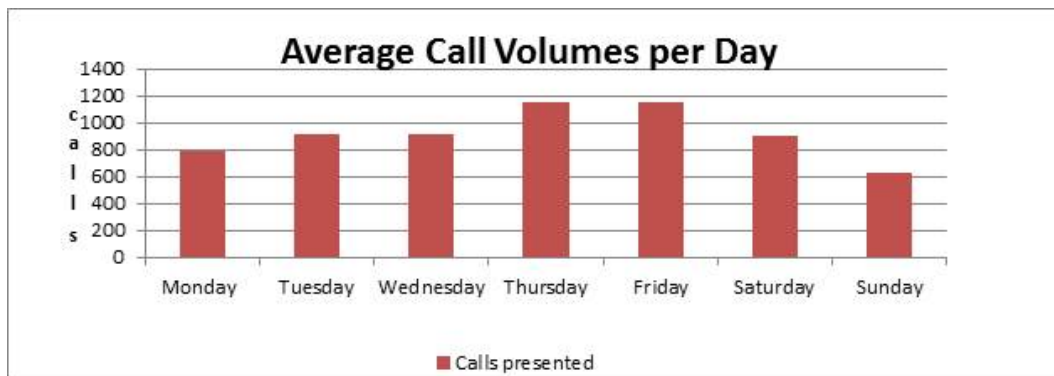
It is intended that the Metlink Contact Centre (MSC) will shortly be managing customer enquiries which relate to all of GWRC's functions as well as public transport related enquiries. In preparation for this expanded scope of work a new telephone software system will be rolled out to the MSC in the next month. This new system provides updated technology and increases the call, email, and social media management options available to the contact centre.

The overall volume of calls received by the MSC during July 2015 decreased slightly compared to the same time last year by 9%.

Likewise, timetable/fare-related calls also decreased compared to the same time last year. This may be due to customers choosing to use other channels such as the recently released smartphone widget and app instead.



Split of call types taken in July 2015



Average calls taken per day during July 2015

Thursday and Friday continue to be the busiest days of the week in terms of call volumes received by the MCS and are almost double the volume of calls received on a Sunday.

2.10 Total Mobility

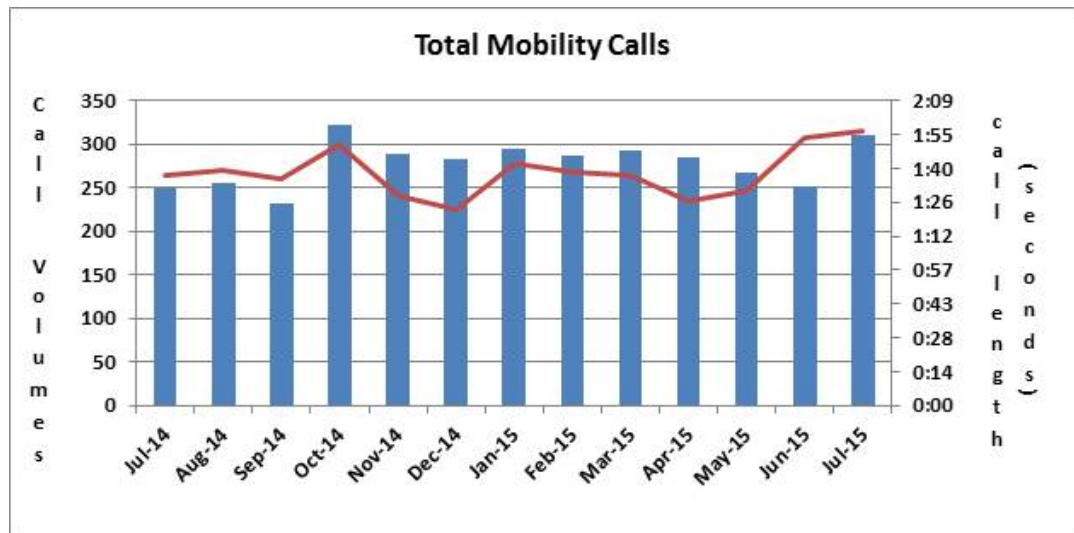
An upgraded Total Mobility electronic system (Ridewise) went live in July. The new system has improved reporting functionality, fraud detection capability and strengthened compliance with health information privacy obligations.

Installation has been completed for the replacement wheelchair hoist into the Rideshop taxi-fleet in the Wairarapa.

The annual Total Mobility customer satisfaction survey was completed in March this year. This was conducted across a larger group of customers this year, all of whom were current active users. The customer satisfaction survey showed that satisfaction with the Total Mobility scheme overall is high, with

95% of all customers giving a positive rating (between 6 and 10), and more than half (59%) stating that they are extremely satisfied with the service overall. Customers using taxis for shopping trips were particularly likely to be extremely satisfied (64%). The mean rating is 9.1 out of 10 (where 10 denotes all respondents giving a rating of extremely satisfied), which compares positively with a mean rating of 8.6 achieved in 2014.

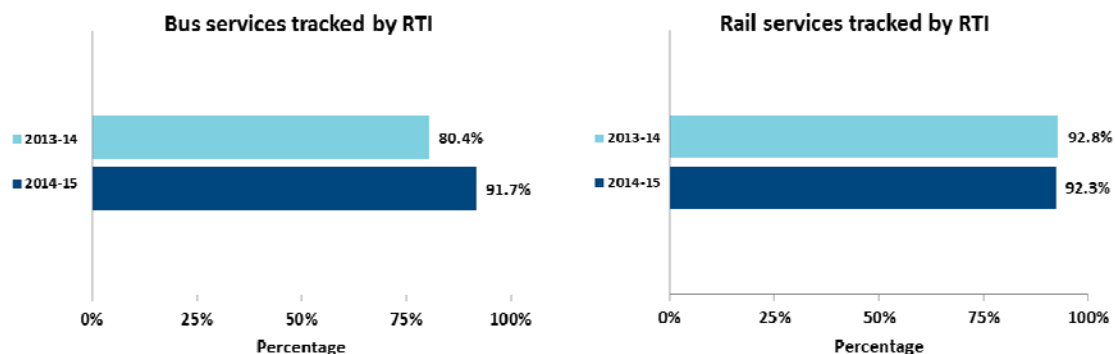
The volume of Total Mobility-related calls received by the MSC during July increased by 24% compared to the same time last year. This may have been due to an improved level of knowledge within the MSC centre resulting in fewer calls transferred out to other staff.



No. of Total Mobility Calls taken over a twelve month period and the average length of the call

2.11 Real Time Information (RTI)

In the 2014/15 year 91.7% of bus services and 92.3% of rail services were tracked by the RTI system. Rail service statistics are affected whenever trains are replaced by buses, as replacement buses are not tracked in the system.



The tracking of services graphs (above) are indicative of the quality of RTI predictions to customers. They show that around 92% of services were tracked and information provided to customers via the electronic signs, website and mobile Apps. The RTI signs and Apps are another method of getting service disruption information out to customers.

While in the main the RTI system is performing well there are still some issues with the system including:

- Buses that disappear from the RTI screens or do not track correctly. The main causes of these failures are:
 - the quality of the 'run board' information that is used to link buses with scheduled trips
 - Some incorrect data within the RTI system for intermediate stops and bus stop locations
 - Not recording school trips
 - Operators not logging onto trips correctly (too soon, too late, in wrong location, or not at all)
 - On-bus and street signage equipment issues
- RTI unavailable because of RTI technical issues and website issues. Recently there has been poor operational performance by the current website managers and their hosting company particularly when the system is under load

We have been taking the following actions to mitigate these problems:

- Updating the RTI system information from our new INIT timetable system so that we can fix run board and bus stops information. We expect this update to happen in September
- Actively working with the Operators to ensure that drivers log on correctly at the start of trips
- Monitoring trips each day to identify recurring problems – this monitoring will recommence once the initial load of corrected data from INIT has occurred
- Working with the operators to correct issues with some run-board information
- Improving the availability of the RTI system by working closely with the RTI supplier to ensure technical issues are resolved
- Improving the availability of the website information by increasing the capacity of the servers to deal with the volume of requests and working on new hosting arrangements for the new website (expected second quarter of the financial year)

3. Regional Transport Planning

3.1 Regional Transport Committee Reports

The Regional Transport Committee (RTC) met on 8 September and considered four papers, as follows:

- Comparison between the Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan Programme 2015-21 and National Land Transport Programme 2015-18
- Managing Travel Demand in the Wellington Region
- The Regional Road Safety Programme
- Wellington Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Business Case Progress Update

3.1.1 Comparison between Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan Programme 2015-21 and National Land Transport Programme 2015-18

This report informed RTC about differences between the Wellington Regional Land Transport Plan programme (RLTP programme) and the New Zealand Transport Agency's National Land Transport Programme 2015-18 (NLTP).

Overall these differences were not significant and mainly reflected different timeframes, different assessment of priority, or eligibility. In fact the region has been highly successful at achieving national funding for its transport programme over the next three year period.

Some 21 projects were highlighted by NZTA as being materially different from the RLTP programme. The majority of these (17 projects) simply reflected the fact that the RLTP programme is a six year programme compared to the three year NLTP and these projects are not expected to commence within a three year period. These projects will be considered for funding in the next NLTP from 2018. Three further projects in the RLTP programme were determined not to be of sufficient priority to be included in the NLTP and there was one project that was determined to not be eligible for funding. None of these projects have a significant impact on the overall RLTP programme and it is understood that further discussions on the form of these projects may still result in funding being made available during the next three years.

3.1.2 Managing Travel Demand in the Wellington region

This report presented an outline of the travel demand management programme in the Wellington region, progress to date in managing travel demand and the opportunities to further develop this approach in the region.

Some of the tools discussed were: behaviour change programmes; network management; new technology; land use and parking policies; network management; and economic pricing measures.

3.1.3 The Regional Road Safety Programme

This report informed RTC about the results of the 2014-15 regional road safety campaigns funded through NZTA's Highway and Network Operations Wellington office.

It describes the programme undertaken in 2014/15 and some of the results of this work. It also outlines the four high risk road safety areas in the region: intersections, young drivers, motorcyclists and cyclists.

3.1.3 Wellington Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Business Case Update

This report informed RTC about progress through the business case approach of the Wellington BRT proposal.

The results of the Indicative Business Case (IBC) stage were outlined along with the consideration of these by the three partner organisations. The next stage (a detailed business case) was outlined including the proposed detailed design and modelling of the two preferred options.

4. Sustainable Transport activities

The regional programme of behaviour change and road safety initiatives which is co-funded by NZTA is outlined in the paper on Managing Travel Demand Management in the Wellington Region (**RTC Report 15.408**). Aspects of the programme additional to this are outlined below:

- Additional promotion of active modes is to be undertaken through social media advertising. This will include a cycling infographic summarising the benefits of cycling to the wider community, and a walking infographic and video promoting the benefits of walking.
- Since the Ministry of Transport Household Travel Surveys began in 1989, active travel (walking and cycling) to school has continued to decline from 33% in 1989/1990 to 24% in 2009-2013. A new campaign focussing on identifying and overcoming the barriers parents have to allowing their children to walk or cycle to school is being developed. Focus groups will be used to test aspects of the campaign and a pilot is expected to be developed early next year.
- A new campaign working with tertiary students is in development. Whitireia Polytechnic has identified a group of students who regularly drive unlicensed and it would like to work with GWRC to develop a programme to firstly address these students and secondly to extend the programme of road safety learning, licensing and development to other Whitireia student programmes. This initiative will pilot a new programme to engage young people with road safety learning through their tertiary studies and environment.
- A comprehensive evaluation and monitoring framework has been developed in agreement with NZTA to provide a solid basis for on-going reporting of our programmes to this Committee, to the Regional Transport Committee and to NZTA.

5. The decision-making process and significance

No decision is being sought in this report.

5.1 Engagement

Engagement on this matter is unnecessary.

6. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. ***Receives the report.***
2. ***Notes the content of the report.***

Report approved by:

Wayne Hastie
General Manager
Public Transport

Report approved by:

Luke Troy
General Manager
Strategy