

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

WRITTEN QUESTION

Mr Higgins to the Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics:

Public Bus Services

- 1. In the 2017/18 Budget \$365,000 was set aside for the “incorporation of the Palmerston Regional Hospital into the Territory’s urban bus network”. In this year’s Budget (BP2, p92) the estimate for 17/18 is \$370,000 and the 18/19 Budget is for \$370,000. Is all this funding for operating the bus service or is it for infrastructure to allow for a bus service to the hospital?**

Funding is for services only. The Hospital bus stop has been constructed and funded from another source.

- 2. If it is funding for operating a bus service, does that mean that currently there is a public bus running out to the Palmerston Regional Hospital? If so, which route is it travelling?**

No, the service is not currently running as the Palmerston Regional Hospital has not opened yet.

- 3. If not, how soon will a bus services be set up at the PRH?**

The service will commence when the Palmerston Regional Hospital opens to the public.

4. **There is \$1.6M allocated for “bus network safety and security” – what will that cover? Given the increase in recent times of violent behavior on our buses, what other measures are in place to ensure the safety of drivers and passengers? Are there plans to increase those measures?**

The funding allocated for bus network safety and security provides for the personnel and operational costs for the Transit Safety Unit.

A variety of measures have been implemented to address anti-social behaviours on the bus network, including:

- all Darwin bus network buses are fitted with internal and external CCTV cameras;
- bus operators have installed driver protection barriers and all buses have protective film fitted to the windows to reduce the impact of rock throwing;
- CCTV cameras are installed at all three bus interchanges, Casuarina, Palmerston and Darwin. CCTV cameras are also installed at the Cavenagh Street bus stop outside Woolworths in the Darwin CBD. A link is provided to Police Communications to allow Police to view all interchange cameras in real time;
- contracted static security guards are stationed at Darwin, Casuarina and Palmerston interchanges from 2.30pm each day until network close. This has had a positive impact for passengers using the interchanges;
- a consultative committee, which was established to further examine safety and security issues on the Darwin bus network, continues to meet regularly. The committee comprises key stakeholders including Police, bus contractors, drivers, the Transport Workers Union and is chaired by the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics; and

- body worn cameras were introduced recently and are proving to be a very useful tool for the Transit Safety Unit and Police.

An additional two Transit Officers were approved to complement the Transit Safety Unit team, bringing the total numbers to 17 staff. The increase in staffing will also reduce response times to incidents on the network.

Transit Officers work closely with Police and Housing Safety Officers on a coordinated approach to addressing antisocial behaviour in public places.

A comprehensive *Respect Your Driver* communications strategy is also being prepared to raise awareness of appropriate behaviour when traveling on public transport and interacting with bus drivers.

5. How many public buses are there across the Northern Territory?

In total, 83 buses are used to service 43 routes across the Territory, being:

- Darwin: 78 buses and 38 routes; and
- Alice Springs: 5 buses and 5 routes.