

A Bill for an Act relating to Increasing the Efficiency of Public Bus Systems in Ballarat Bill 2021.

To be enacted by the YMCA Victoria Youth Parliament;

## **Increasing the Efficiency of Public Bus Systems in Ballarat Bill 2021**

A Bill for an Act to increase the efficiency of the public bus system in Ballarat.

The Ballarat public bus system has a number of issues. Owing to COVID-19, the population in the area is expected to continue to rise at a rapid pace, so a solution needs to be found and put into place. With the rise in population comes an overcrowded and stretched public transport network. This, coupled with the fact that buses are often too late or too early and routes have too many stops, means that something needs to change.

These issues can easily and efficiently be solved by implementing things such as adding buses with a higher capacity to the roads and adding a GPS tracking system to each bus. By creating priority routes that only pick up passengers from the most used stops there will be less congestion on the road and buses will not be backed up at bus stops.

## **PART I—Preliminary**

### **Clause 1 Purpose**

The main purposes of this Act are—

- (a) to increase the capacity of bus services by implementing articulated buses and doubling the frequency of buses on major Ballarat routes during peak times;
- (b) to increase the efficiency of bus services in Ballarat by establishing express routes;
- (c) to implement GPS tracking on these routes so passengers can easily access the estimated time of arrival of buses.

### **Clause 2 Commencement**

This Bill shall commence upon receiving assent from the Youth Governor of Victoria.

### **Clause 3 Definitions**

In this Bill, we define the following to mean—

- (a) **articulated buses** mean buses that comprise two or more rigid sections connected by a flexible joint, and can accommodate for a greater capacity of passengers;
- (b) **OIBBS** means the Office for Improving Ballarat Bus Services within the most relevant Department;
- (c) **express route** means an express bus service intended to run faster than normal bus services between the same two commuting or destination points;
- (d) **GPS or Global Positioning System** means a radio navigation system that allows land, sea, and airborne users to determine their exact location;
- (e) **ingress protection rating of 55** means complete protection from particles such as dirt, dust and oil;
- (f) **major bus stop** means most frequently used bus stops that shall be determined by the OIBBS;
- (g) **major routes** means some of the most popular, and frequently used routes that shall be determined by the OIBBS;
- (h) **peak times** means the time of day that measures the volume of traffic and use of transport, not the flow (Speed). Peak times in Ballarat are the periods between 6am-10am in the morning and 3pm-7pm in the afternoon;
- (i) **route** means a series of bus stops that go from point A to point B then repeat.

## **Part II—Establishment**

### **Clause 4      Establishment of the Office for Improving Ballarat Bus Services (OIBBS)**

- 4.1      The Office for Improving Ballarat Bus Services (OIBBS) shall be established under Department of Transport Victoria.
- 4.2      The OIBBS will be responsible for—
- (a)      implementing GPS tracking of buses;
  - (b)      implementing articulated buses on major routes;
  - (c)      implementing express routes.
- 4.3      The OIBBS shall employ several teams with the following responsibilities—
- (a)      an accessibility team who is responsible for the accessibility changes made to the public transport system outlined in this Bill including but not limited to—
    - (i)      use of GPS apps;
    - (ii)     disability access on articulated buses and bus stops;
  - (b)      a maintenance team who is responsible for maintaining the electronics including screens at major bus stops, and for maintaining buses and fixing damage to both bus stops and buses;
  - (c)      a technical support team who is responsible for monitoring the online systems and managing customer support and enquiries;
  - (d)      a development team who is responsible for the development and installation of GPS software, in consultation with PTV, and all system updates.

### **Clause 5      Increasing the capacity of public buses**

- 5.1      During peak times, OIBBS shall implement articulated buses on major routes.
- 5.2      During peak times, one additional bus shall be scheduled per major route as determined by **DIBBS**.

### **Clause 6      Implementing express routes during peak times**

- 6.1      Express routes shall be created by OIBBS and scheduled during peak times by removing less popular stops on major routes.
- 6.2      OIBBS shall determine whether an express route is necessary on any major route.
- 6.3      Express routes shall halve the time it takes for a major route to be completed during peak times.

**Clause 7 Adding a GPS tracking system for buses to the established Public Transport Victoria (PTV) app**

- 7.1 GPS tracking will be installed in all PTV Ballarat buses.
- 7.2 This GPS tracking will be available to view on the PTV website and app—
  - (a) this shall display a real-time map of bus progress in and around Ballarat.
- 7.3 The app shall include accessibility functions including but not limited to audio functionality, visual aids, magnification, and simplified view options.
- 7.4 Development and maintenance of electronic equipment, including but not limited to the online portal and app, will be provided by PTV employees, and overseen by OIBBS.

**Clause 8 Implementing real time GPS tracking & bus timetables on screens at bus stops**

- 8.1 Screens located in all major bus stops across Ballarat shall display the estimated time of arrival of buses using data from the GPS system—
  - (a) These screens will be protected by a sealed tv case with the following—
    - (i) ingress protection rating of 55;
    - (ii) weatherproofing, impact proofing and theft proofing.
- 8.2 OIBBS will be responsible for the installation of the screens and their protective cases.
- 8.3 OIBBS shall be responsible for their repair or replacement in the case of damaged screens.
- 8.4 OIBBS shall be responsible for the inspection, maintenance and replacement of the protective case should damage occur.
  - (a) Where possible the screens shall be installed under bus stop shelters. In the case of no shelter being available, a dedicated shelter shall be erected for their protection.
- 8.5 OIBBS shall ensure ongoing monitoring of online GPS tracking systems by employing technical support to oversee any necessary repairs or updates to these systems.