

Report 17.271
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Committee Wairarapa
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Public Transport overview and update

1. Purpose

This report provides an overview and update of the Public Transport Group's activities with a focus on those activities in the Wairarapa.

2. Strategic Framework

2.1 Regional Land Transport Plan

The mid-term review of the Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) is well underway. This involves checking that the strategic direction is still fit for purpose, and updating the projects and activities in the second three years of the programme.

Phase 1 of the review is complete and Phases 2 and 3 are underway. Phase 2 involves checking the current strategic context affecting the region's transport network for any significant changes over the past two years that would indicate a need to change the RLTP strategic direction. Phase 3 involves checking the progress made so far, primarily through project implementation, towards the strategic objectives in the RLTP.

Workshops are scheduled to be held in August with the regional officers' Transport Advisory Group, and the Regional Transport Committee will focus on these phases of the review.

The mid-term review must be complete by the end of April 2018 to feed into the next National Land Transport Programme 2018-21.

2.2 Regional Public Transport Plan

The Regional Public Transport Plan (PT Plan) sets out the vision, policies and actions for Wellington's public transport system. Apart from minor variations in response to specific issues, the PT Plan has remained largely unchanged since it was endorsed by Council in 2014.

The current focus of activity in public transport is on implementation of the major initiatives in section 4 of the PT Plan, in particular:

- Preparation for the Wellington City bus network changes and introduction of the new bus operating model and fleet
- Public transport fares review
- Developing the implementation approach for integrated ticketing
- On-going improvements to rail services and infrastructure.

2.3 PTOM bus contracts

Contracts with preferred tenderers, Tranzit and Uzabus, were executed on 16 June 2017, with transition activities now underway. The contract with Tranzit includes the introduction of 32 electric buses over three years, commencing with an initial 10 electric buses in July 2018.

Early start dates for the new bus contracts outside Wellington City are being investigated. The purpose of starting these contracts earlier than July 2018 would be to mitigate risks from the scale of change in July when Wellington City contracts and the new bus network will go live. The early starts are dependent on operator readiness, together with GWRC's readiness from a business, systems and equipment perspective. Recommendations to programme governance will be made during August.

2.4 Park and ride strategy development

Provision of park and ride car parks has been a key strategic response to attracting customers to the Metlink rail network with over 4000 parking spaces available. We are in the process of developing a comprehensive park and ride strategy to clarify the role of park and ride, guide future investment decisions, and formulate core management principles for management of existing park and ride car parks.

2.5 Customer Experience

Our annual Customer Satisfaction Survey was conducted in March this year. A report on the high-level findings will be presented to the Sustainable Transport Committee meeting on 8 August.

3. Activities in the Wairarapa

3.1 Wairarapa Rail Service

The Wairarapa was the first part of the region to benefit from the investment in the Metlink rail service that commenced in 2006. The new SW carriages commenced services in 2007 alongside platform and station improvements. Subsequent improvements have included:

- timetable changes
- the introduction of the 6 car SE train
- the introduction of dedicated and more powerful locomotives in 2015
- seating reconfigurations

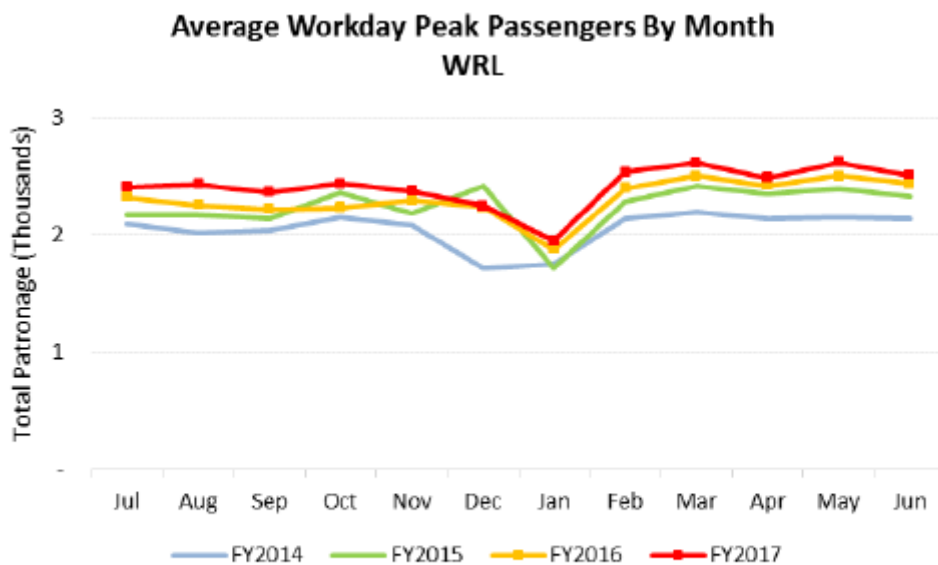
- reorganisation of train consists to better align the number of carriages with demand.

The current performance of the rail service does not meet customer expectations in terms of on-time performance (punctuality), capacity (number of carriages/seats), and the number of services available.

Key performance metrics for 2016/17 are:

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Patronage | 747 000 |
| Patronage change | +2% |
| Reliability | 93.8% |
| Punctuality | 48.8% |
| Punctuality operator only | 85.2% |
| Peak vs off peak | 73% peak 27% off peak |

The graph below shows the consistent growth of patronage since 2014.



The Wairarapa line is 92 km long and punctuality is measured at four stations during the trip. The significantly higher performance of the “operator only” punctuality reflects the current situation where the state of the track north of Upper Hutt is the key factor impacting on the line. Significant investment is required to bring the track up to standard and GWRC is working with KiwiRail (owner of the network) on the development of a business case seeking the

estimated \$60 million of investment needed to bring the track back up to standard and eliminate speed restrictions.

GWRC has appointed an experienced rail consultant, Dr Murray King, to help identify short, medium and long term solutions to improve services. Such changes include adjustments to timetables, review of stopping patterns, re-configuration of carriages etc. that might bring immediate improvements to the service.

A workshop of key players including representation for the Wairarapa councils is planned for the coming weeks.

3.2 Special event trains

Since July 2016, GWRC has run special services from the Wairarapa for major stadium events such as the recent Lions tour matches at the Westpac Stadium.

3.3 Park and ride

At the request of Masterton District Council, GWRC has invested in expanding the park and ride car park at Solway, which will add an additional 37 parking spaces. Work is largely complete but is waiting for a suitable period of fine weather to allow the laying of asphalt.

4. Communication

No communications are necessary as a result of this report.

5. Consideration of Climate Change

The matters outlined in this report have been considered by officers in accordance with the process set out in the GWRC Climate Change Consideration Guide.

5.1 Mitigation assessment

Mitigation assessments are concerned with the effect of the matter on the climate (i.e. the greenhouse gas emissions generated or removed from the atmosphere as a consequence of the matter) and the actions taken to reduce, neutralise or enhance that effect.

The emissions associated with transport in the Wellington region and in the Wairarapa specifically are set out in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Inventory which is available on the GWRC website. As noted in the inventory, public transport plays a key role in reducing transport related greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the number of trips made by private vehicles.

5.2 Adaptation assessment

Adaptation assessments relate to the impacts of climate change (e.g. sea level rise or an increase in extreme weather events), and the actions taken to address or avoid those impacts.

Officers will be reviewing the impacts climate change could have on public transport services across the region as part of ongoing program of work designed to understand the effects climate change will have on GWRC's activities over the long term.

6. The decision-making process and significance

No decision is being sought in this report.

6.1 Engagement

In accordance with the significance and engagement policy, no engagement on the matters for decision is required.

7. Recommendations

That the Committee:

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

Report prepared by:

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