

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
Question Without Notice

Tuesday, 12 September 2023

Wrong date

C1548. Hon Tjorn Sibma to the Minister for Emergency Services representing the Transport

I refer to yesterday's question regarding your correspondence with People with Disabilities WA (PwDWA), and I ask:

1. Can you please table the written response which was provided to PwDWA on 20 October?

Answer

1. I table the correspondence.
-





**Deputy Premier
Treasurer; Minister for Transport; Tourism**

Our Ref: 72-45737

Ms Yhana Lucas
Chair
People with Disabilities WA
[REDACTED]

Dear Ms Lucas

PUBLIC TRANSPORT ACCESS DURING THE ARMADALE LINE SHUTDOWN

Thank you for your email and letter dated 21 August 2023 about public transport access for passengers with disabilities during the Armadale and Thornlie Line Shutdown starting on 20 November 2023. The Minister for Transport, the Hon Rita Saffioti MLA has asked me to respond and I apologise for the delay.

The Armadale/Thornlie Line Shutdown will enable a transformational upgrade of the 130-year-old train line, supporting three major METRONET projects: Victoria Park-Canning Level Crossing Removal, Byford Rail Extension and Thornlie-Cockburn Link.

During the closure, 13 level crossings will be removed, 5.5 kilometres of elevated rail and seven new stations will be built, and the Armadale Line will be extended to Byford.

Once completed, the upgrades will provide tremendous benefits for passengers and local communities, including modern, accessible stations, new services to Byford and new public spaces under the elevated rail for all to enjoy. This includes improved disability access at the new stations being built across the line in line with modern standards.

The State Government is aware of the important role that public transport plays in providing mobility for people with disabilities and this is a major consideration when planning train replacement services.

The METRONET Access and Inclusion Reference Group (AIRG), of which People with Disabilities WA is a member, is made up of people or organisations with an understanding of matters impacting people with disabilities or mobility issues and provides input into the planning, design and useability of the various projects delivered by METRONET.

I understand that METRONET and Transperth have directly engaged with People with Disabilities on the impact of the Armadale/Thornlie Line Shutdown and the strategies being put in place to assist all passengers. The passenger survey and subsequent opportunity to provide feedback via the Building for Tomorrow website was discussed in a meeting in April 2022, with a representative of People with Disabilities Western Australia in attendance.

Further information on travel options during the shutdown were presented by Transperth at the most recent AIRG meeting. An individual case of the vision impaired group member requiring the installation of an accessible pedestrian signal has been taken on notice to be investigated with the Town of Victoria Park/Main Roads.

Due to extensive construction activities to be undertaken at six existing Armadale Line stations that are being rebuilt in their entirety, it is not deemed safe for replacement buses to service these areas in the traditional sense. To ensure passengers are protected from construction activity, including heavy haulage traffic, the supporting bus network has been planned to provide sufficient coverage of all affected suburbs rather than individual stations. Where new routes are located at a distance to the stations, coverage will be provided through the existing local bus network, with a number of existing routes receiving upgrades.

Extensive engagement has been undertaken with the Harold Hawthorne Centre in Carlisle, with one of their residents also a member of the Victoria Park-Canning Level Crossing Removal Project's Community Reference Group (CRG). The Centre has expressed no concerns with the replacement services, noting that Route 284 is deviated several times a day on weekdays to specifically service residents. Bespoke training is being organised for residents to ensure they are confident in boarding a bus service using mobility equipment.

The Transperth fleet of 1500 buses is fully accessible, providing ramps, a 'kneeling' function and wheelchair accessible spaces. In addition, Transperth has ensured that all bus stops used by rail replacement bus services for the shutdown are accessible.

With a limited number of buses available to facilitate the shutdown, Transperth is unable to provide bespoke routes for a small number of affected passengers. While it is acknowledged that the shutdown will bring a level of inconvenience for a large number of people, including increased travel times, it is expected that passengers will make use of existing local bus routes to connect to the new temporary routes.

To encourage patrons to continue to use public transport during the shutdown, and as a gesture of goodwill to regular users of the Armadale/Thornlie Line, the State Government announced a free travel scheme on 17 September 2023. This scheme provides regular SmartRider users of the line with six months of free travel. This represents up to \$1,300 of value to regular patrons on the line and the extended timeframe gives them the opportunity to trial different public transport options. Full eligibility criteria is available on the Transperth website (transperth.wa.gov.au) (Armadale and Thornlie Line Shutdown (transperth.wa.gov.au)).

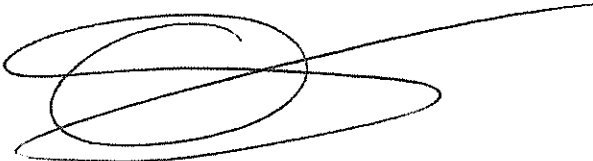
We will continue to work with impacted passengers on an individual basis to understand their travel requirements and provide assistance wherever possible. Transperth's 1800 800 022 special assistance helpline will continue to be available for anyone requiring assistance during the Armadale/Thornlie Line Shutdown, which includes the provision of Maxi Taxis where available for those that have exhausted all other public transport options.

Regarding the construction delivery program, all potential options have been assessed prior to deciding on an extended shutdown. The safe demolition and construction of Carlisle and Oats St station will take a minimum of 12 months. In addition, there are no facilities to turn back trains south of Oats St station until past Cannington Station.

Should you want to meet to discuss this issue further, representatives from the Ministers office, METRONET and the PTA will make themselves available to meet with you.

Thank you for raising these issues with the Minister.

Yours sincerely



OLIVIA CROWLEY
CHIEF OF STAFF

cc Minister for Disability Services

20 OCT 2023

Yhana,

I understand that Adelaide, our
Senior Policy Adviser has tried to call
you to discuss your concerns further,
please reach out to continue
discussions

Olivia