



The Transperth system

Transperth is the brand and operating name of the public transport system in metropolitan Perth, comprising of bus, train and ferry services.

The Transperth system consists of:

- a bus network providing services over 305 standard routes and 482 school service routes, operating a total fleet of 1,015 buses;
- a suburban train network of 56 stations on four railway lines, 95 kilometres of track and a fleet of 48 two-car sets; and,
- a ferry service using two vessels operating between the city (Barrack Street) and South Perth.

Transperth bus and ferry services are provided under commercial contract arrangements, while Transperth train services are provided “in-house” by Transperth Train Operations.

Currently three contractors provide bus services under eleven contracts:

- Path Transit (Marmion-Wanneroo and Morley contracts);
- Swan Transit (Canning, Kalamunda, Midland and Southern River contracts);
- Swan Transit Riverside (Claremont-Belmont contract); and,
- Southern Coast Transit (Rockingham-Mandurah, Fremantle-Cockburn, Perth Central Area Transit and Fremantle Central Area Transit contracts).

Transperth ferry services are contracted to, and operated by, Captain Cook Cruises.

The Transperth passenger information service is provided through information offices and a call centre, operated by a contracted service provider, Serco.

Patronage

Patronage on the Transperth system increased for the fifth year in succession. Total boardings, including free travel and transfers, increased by 2.8% from 88.1 million in 2002/03 to 90.6 million, while fare-paying initial boardings increased by 2.1% from 54.3 million to 55.5 million. The total capacity provided on the Transperth system, expressed in terms of passenger place kilometres, increased by 2.0% due mainly to the increase in the number of four-car train sets.

On a per-capita basis, public transport usage (initial boardings plus free travel) within the Perth metropolitan area increased by 1.8% from 44.4% in 2002/03 to 45.2% in 2003/04. This compares with a 1.4% increase in population in this time.

Accessibility

During the year, Transperth continued a program to make services more accessible to all sections of the community.

Train services

The key issue for train accessibility is whether access to train stations meets accessibility standards. Of the 56 stations on the suburban network, 11 stations complied with the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport and guidelines under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992, during the year under review, and provided independent access to people in wheelchairs. This compares with eight stations meeting the requirements in the previous year.

In 2003/04, of the remaining 45 stations, 33 provided partial access while 12 provided limited access. At these stations, people in wheelchairs are assisted to access the station and trains.

Bus services

Transperth is continuing its long-term program of replacing the Transperth bus fleet with new accessible buses. At 30 June 2004, there were 422 accessible buses in the Transperth fleet out of a total fleet number of 1,015. Preference is given to operating accessible buses wherever possible. On bus services during 2003/04, accessible buses completed more than 51.0% of total service kilometres.

Ferry services

Transperth's newer ferry, the Shelley Taylor-Smith, is an accessible vessel and is used for the bulk of Transperth ferry services. New construction at the Barrack Street Jetty and Mends Street Jetty over recent years has made both jetties fully accessible. Efforts to make the second Transperth ferry and Coode Street Jetty accessible will be given priority in future capital works programs.

Customer satisfaction

In the 2004 Passenger Satisfaction Monitor, 82.0% of users expressed overall satisfaction with Transperth bus services, compared with 84.0% in 2003. On trains, 90.0% expressed overall satisfaction, compared with 92.0% in 2003. On ferries, the proportions were 95.0% in 2004 and 97.0% in 2003.

The proportion of users who were satisfied with the way Transperth communicated service changes increased from 58.0% in 2003 to 62.0%.

The proportion of users who were aware of the Transperth website increased from 53.0% to 66.0%. Satisfaction with the site increased from 77.0% to 81.0% and usage from 27.0% to 34.0%.

The organisation's commitment to service means that staff value and respect feedback from its customers. All customer feedback is recorded in a centralised management information system and disseminated for action.

Service information

Continuing public awareness and interest in TravelEasy, Transperth's database that provides passengers with relevant and timely service information, resulted in a significant increase in registrations from 2,000 in 2002/03 to 15,000.

SmartRider project

This project involves the replacement of the MultiRider magnetic stripe ticketing system with a contactless SmartRider smartcard ticketing system across the existing bus, rail and ferry network as well as the future Southern Suburbs Railway. Delairco Bartrol was awarded the contract for the system in October 2003. Completion is expected in July 2005.

Components of this system include:

- provision of 400,000 standard and concession smartcards;
- provision of fare gates at Perth, Bassendean, Midland, Gosnells, Armadale, Fremantle, Stirling, Warwick, Whitfords and Joondalup train stations to reduce fare evasion and enhance security;
- implementation of a portable smartcard hand-held unit, to enable quick and reliable card enquiries and/or peak period card validation;
- replacement and upgrading of the existing ticket-issuing machines on buses; and,
- commissioning of more than 50 point-of-sale terminals at various agencies across the metropolitan area.

A successful trial of SmartRider was carried out during May 2004. The four-week trial involved 454 patrons who travelled between Stirling and the city using feeder buses and trains, and 20 bus drivers from the Karrinyup depot.

Accessible pathways to public transport facilities

A grant scheme was delivered to assist local councils with the provision of improved accessible pathways in Western Australia. This will result in the installation of 19 new accessible pathways throughout WA during 2004/05.

Bus Shelter Grant Scheme 2003/04

This Scheme provides funding to local councils to assist in the installation of bus stop shelters throughout Western Australia.

In the 2003/04 year, the Scheme provided 87 shelters in metropolitan and regional centres.



SmartRider fare gates at Stirling Station.



Transperth train drivers Elvis Yarran (left) and Brad Lewis.

Review of performance

Train services

Performance

There were more than 4,600 individual services each week on the urban passenger rail system. These services achieved a punctuality (arriving within three minutes of schedule) averaging 89.3%. This result is lower than the PTA achieved in previous years when average punctuality of 97.4% was consistently achieved. The deterioration in performance was mainly a result of train drivers' actions during the Enterprise Bargaining Agreement negotiation process.

Engineering works during the year also exacerbated the difficulties with on-time running.

The Claisebrook railcar depot again retained certification to ISO 9001/2000 for its preventative maintenance, modification and cleaning of electric railcars.

During the year, implementation continued in the initiative to have in-house Transit Guards providing customer service and security on the urban passenger railway network.

Key outcomes

Total boardings on trains fell marginally (0.8%) in 2003/04 to 31.115 million. This followed significant increases recorded between 1998/99 and 2000/01. The decline in 2003/04 was due largely to industrial action by train drivers.

Total boardings per service kilometre fell by 4.9% from 4.88 in 2002/03 to 4.64 in 2003/04 as a result of the decline in total boardings combined with an increase in train service kilometres. The increasing use of four-car sets led to a 4.3% increase in train service kilometres in 2003/04.

Customer satisfaction

An annual survey is conducted by independent marketing consultants to measure performance and passengers' overall satisfaction with the service. Some highlights from this year's survey of train passengers include:

- overall customer satisfaction was 90.0% (92.0% in 2002/03);
- perceptions of cost of the fares as being good value for money was 70.0% (65.0%);
- satisfaction with InfoLine staff knowledge was 88.0% (89.0%);
- satisfaction with InfoLine staff manner was 89.0% (91.0%);
- safety rating on stations during the day was 95.0% (90.0%);
- safety rating on board trains during the day was 95.0% (96.0%); and,
- safety rating on board trains at night increased to 79.0% (73.0%). This measure has shown a steady increase since 1997 when satisfaction was 58.0%.

Passenger security

The development of a centrally-monitored, closed-circuit television (CCTV) video surveillance system, providing images of entry and exit points at all 56 metropolitan stations and improved station lighting, is nearing completion.

Works carried out on the project this year included:

- centralised CCTV monitoring room and digital storage of recorded video images. This work is expected to be completed in early-2005;
- station equipment cubicles were installed at 24 train stations – these units combine passenger information, public address and emergency contact functions such as “help” telephones which ring through to the central monitoring room where staff are in direct contact with the WA Police Service;
- fibre-optic cable route from Midland-Perth-Fremantle was completed. High-speed communication, transmitting video images from station security monitoring cameras back to the central monitoring room is a vital part of the security initiatives project. Fibre-optics work continues on the Armadale line and is expected to be complete in late-2004; and,
- improved lighting at all stations on the Fremantle and Armadale lines. This work began during the year and lighting was completed on the Midland line in early-2004.

Other security initiatives

Planning for the provision of barriers at selected stations was well advanced at year end. Work is expected to be completed to coincide with the introduction of the SmartRider ticketing system in 2005.

Secure car park facilities were introduced at 17 train stations in December 2003. Six of these facilities are patrolled while the remainder are compounds which are locked between 9am and 3.30pm on weekdays.

Building Better Train Stations

The program is intended to create more attractive and safer railway stations, with better access and integration with town centres. Key features of this program in 2003/04 were:

Armadale Station

This station, to be completed in November 2004, will be relocated to create a new focal point for the Armadale town centre, as part of the Department for Planning and Infrastructure's *Vision for the Armadale Station Precinct* report.

Gosnells Station

This station, to be completed in February 2005, will be relocated in accordance with the City of Gosnells' *Town Centre Revitalisation Scheme* to create a new focal point for the town centre.

Bassendean Station

A major upgrade of the Bassendean Station will be completed this year¹ and incorporates the outcomes of the Enquiry-by-Design precinct study. A new pedestrian bridge with three lifts forms part of the new bus-rail interchange to provide universal access to all patrons.

Universal Access upgrades

During the year 10 rail/bus interchanges were audited to assess their compliance with relevant Australian Standards and the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport, 2002.

These upgrades also involve the upgrading of several stations in the urban network to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act including platform modifications to remove the gap between the platform and railcars, and ramp adjustments to meet the current standards for disability access. Tactile ground surface indicators (TSGIs) will also be installed as part of this project. There is a continuous program of station upgrade for accessibility. Upgrades at Mosman Park and McIver stations were completed while TSGIs were installed at Fremantle, Midland and Bayswater stations.

Bus services

Patronage

For the fifth year in succession, Transperth bus services recorded an increase in patronage. Total boardings rose by 4.8% to 58.998 million.

A new passenger count of boardings on Central Area Transit (CAT) and Free Transit Zone (FTZ) services in Perth was carried out in March 2004. This survey revealed that, since the last count in 2000, boardings on CAT services had increased by 50.6% and on FTZ services by 25.1%. The impact of these increases on bus total boardings in 2003/04 has been taken into account from March 2004.

Fare-paying boardings on buses continued to increase, rising by 3.1% to 36.284 million in 2003/04. This followed a 4.4% increase in the previous year.

The increase in bus total boardings, combined with a 0.3% increase in service kilometres, resulted in bus total boardings per service kilometre increasing by 4.5%, from 1.18 to 1.23 in 2003/04.

Reliability

Transperth bus services continued to maintain a high standard of service reliability. In 2003/04, 92.8% of services met the reliability target of arriving or departing from a terminus or timing point no later than four minutes from the scheduled time. This compares with 92.9% in 2002/03. The result was achieved despite disruptions caused by roadworks associated with the New MetroRail project.

Fee structure

In February 2004, the Transperth fares structure was introduced on a number of metropolitan regular public transport services operated by Mindarie Bus Charter and Kalamunda Bus Service.



¹ The Bassendean Station upgrade was completed in July 2004.



Mandurah Bus Station.

Bus station improvements

Mandurah Bus Station

Construction was completed on the new station which features all-weather shelters, a Park 'n' Ride facility containing 220 car bays, 19 passenger drop-off points, taxi bays, access-impaired bays, motorcycle bays, bicycle storage facilities and areas for regional coach services.

Mandurah bus depot

The new Mandurah Bus Station is the first stage of the Mandurah Transit Precinct, which will include the future rail station, a bus depot and train stowage facilities.

This year, the design and tendering of the Mandurah bus depot was completed. Construction is expected to be completed by the end of 2004. The depot will provide a workshop with service pits, wash-down bay, refuel facilities and parking for 72 buses and cars as well as staff accommodation.

Victoria Park bus transfer station

Disability access was improved following substantial consultation with disabled user groups by realigning the main pedestrian crosswalks, allowing widening of one of the platforms. Safety was also improved by installing crash barriers on the adjacent roadways.

Universal Access upgrades

During the year, 10 bus stations were audited to assess their compliance with relevant Australian Standards and the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002. Survey and design development was completed for all works required at the bus stations. Construction works will commence in the second half of 2004.

Gas-powered buses

Since 2001, Transperth has required all new buses to be powered by compressed natural gas engines. The composition of Transperth's bus fleet by fuel type will change significantly when the delivery of a further 451 new gas-powered buses is completed by 2011. To service these new buses, Transperth entered into a contract with Origin Energy in 2003/04 for the supply, installation and maintenance of gas bus refuelling equipment along with a 10-year supply of natural gas. Construction of new gas fuelling facilities has commenced at Morley and Bayswater depots. The facility at Morley will allow 25 buses per hour to be continuously fast-filled, replacing an existing 13-year-old slow-fill facility, while Bayswater will be provided with the capacity to refuel 15 buses per hour. Arrangements have been made for further gas refuelling facilities to be provided at other Transperth depots in coming years.

Ferry services

Patronage

The declining trend in ferry patronage that began in 2001/02 continued in 2003/04, when total boardings fell from 477,00 to 465,000, or 2.5%. This followed a 4.4% decline in 2002/03. Ferry patronage is affected by fluctuations in the tourism industry.

Declining patronage on the ferry service resulted in a 3.1% fall in ferry total boardings per service kilometre, from 13.59 to 13.16 in 2003/04.

Reliability

The ferry operation has maintained a high level of service reliability, consistently achieving the target of 98.0% of services arriving and departing within three minutes of the scheduled time.

