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Chief Executive Officer

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BusNSW Submission on Draft Central Sydney On-Street Parking Policy

BusNSW is the peak body for the NSW private bus and coach industry whose members provide essential services on a daily basis and provide a key interface with the travelling public. The BusNSW mission is to foster the efficient and sustainable growth of public transport in NSW, and to promote the benefits of bus and coach travel.

Buses and coaches play a vital role in delivering public transport in NSW and in conjunction with other public transport modes have a positive impact on congestion, the economy, reducing social exclusion, improving health and safety, reducing pollution, and improving energy security.

BusNSW understands there is increasing demands on the City's available kerbside space and the importance of a policy for the consistent management and allocation of this kerbside space. Consideration for coach parking and layover should be a priority for all new developments and some of these are discussed below.

The provision of on-street and off-street parking for coaches within the Sydney CBD, is critical for the promotion of tourism and having a positive impact on congestion, the environment and the economy. BusNSW appreciates the opportunity to provide this submission as the coach sector is often forgotten

Kerbside Use Service Objective

In general BusNSW supports the proposed service objectives as follows:

1. To provide short term coach parking for group pick up and drop off near to major destinations or accommodation.
2. To encourage turnover of on-street coach parking and use of off-street facilities for long-stay coach layover.

With regard to service objective number one there is a need to consider the hierarchy and priority given for certain major destinations or accommodation on a case by case basis. This is discussed in more detail below.

For service objective number two the turnover of on-street coach parking needs to be appropriate for the destination and consider the movements required to relocate coaches to long-stay layover facilities between drop off and pick up. This is also discussed in more detail below.

Proposed Hierarchy

The proposed hierarchy for the allocation of kerbside space in central Sydney is of concern to the bus and coach industry. The hierarchy makes taxis the highest priority for space that is available (whether full time or part time – for the set down or pick up of goods or passengers) and coach parking for group pick up and drop off near to major destinations or accommodation is the fifth highest priority behind taxis, Delivery and service vehicles, Mobility parking, and Authorised Vehicles Zones - essential services.

As discussed below BusNSW has previously raised concerns to City of Sydney regarding changes to short term coach parking for group pick up and drop off at Macquarie Street south of the Sydney Opera House roundabout. This is an example of where coaches should be given a higher priority than taxis and other vehicles.

BusNSW recommends that *City of Sydney* reconsider the hierarchy to ensure that for major destinations or accommodation that coaches are given a higher priority.

Macquarie Street south of the Sydney Opera House roundabout

Recent changes to traffic arrangements along the eastern kerb of Macquarie Street south of the Sydney Opera House roundabout where the coach set down and pick up area has been removed and made into a 24 hour designated taxi zone, have had a negative impact on the coach sector.

The Opera House is one of the major tourist attractions in Sydney and somewhere in the order of 1 million coach passengers visits the site each year. The majority of these tourists are elderly and require assistance. Consequently, the changes to the coach set down and pick up area has created a range of safety and accessibility issues for visitors travelling by coach.

Long-stay coach layover

Most coaches are required use the King Street Wharf facility when they require long stay layover. Relocating to the King Street Wharf facility from short term coach parking for group pick up and drop off in certain areas of the CBD can be time consuming and costly for coach operators, and increasing driving hours can create potential driver fatigue issues.

BusNSW recommends that *City of Sydney* and the NSW Government consider another layover facility on the eastern side of the Sydney CBD which would reduce the need for coaches to travel across the CBD in order to locate a layover area. The impact of such a move on CBD congestion, the environment and tourism is obvious. The introduction of the CBD Light Rail system and pedestrian access in George Street will ultimately cause greater congestion in other parts of the Sydney CBD road network, and the creation of an eastern CBD layover would go a long way to helping to ease such congestion.

Central Station Coach Terminal

BusNSW has expressed concern to the NSW Government regarding the introduction of light rail along Eddy Avenue and Pitt Street at Central Station. BusNSW understands

that coach parking will be cut down from 17 to 7 coach bays, which will impact on the parking facility for coaches in this area.

The current coach facilities at Central Station is important for tourism and caters to regional tourists arriving in Sydney by train and to those embarking on tours from Central Station. If, as proposed, 10 coach bays are to be removed due to the CBD Light Rail network, the City of Sydney must consider alternative solutions that cater for the large number of coaches that move on a daily basis through Eddy Avenue and Pitt Street. This should be achieved by allocating other alternatives for coach on-street or off-street parking within the area. With an increase in the number of domestic and international tourists visiting Sydney, a world class coach terminus facility is urgently needed.

Sydney International Convention, Exhibition and Entertainment Precinct

BusNSW has raise concerns regarding the development application for the Sydney International Convention, Exhibition and Entertainment Precinct.

Based on the information available, it appears that this application grossly underestimates the role of buses and coaches in transporting people to and from venues in the Precinct. Indeed, the application has provision for only two drop off and pick up bays in Darling Drive for buses and coaches to service the Convention Centre.

With the increase in the capacity of the development BusNSW estimates that up to 80 bus and coaches could be required to service the Convention Centre at any one time. With only two bays and no planned layover along Darling Drive there is likely to be major traffic delays for people exiting the venue via buses and coaches, and significant traffic impacts associated with large volumes of vehicles and passengers attempting to utilise two bays.

There has been some discussion regarding the possible utilisation of service roads for the Exhibition facility by buses and coaches (when not used for event bump in and bump out) and potential use of these roads as a set down/pick up location for bus and coach passengers using the Convention Centre and Theatre.

Whilst BusNSW will continue to liaise with the developer regarding bus and coach arrangements in the precinct and surrounding areas, further representations from the

City of Sydney and TfNSW regarding transport and traffic arrangements in the precinct and the provision of adequate bus and coach infrastructure would be beneficial.

Conclusion

BusNSW thanks the City of Sydney for the opportunity to comment on the draft Central Sydney On-Street Parking Policy and hopes that issues and suggestions above will be considered.

BusNSW would welcome involvement in future planning and development for bus and coach on-street and off-street parking initiatives in the CBD.

Please do not hesitate to contact me on (02) 9939 9500 if you require any further information.

Regards



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