

(DEPARTMENTAL)

Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramways Board.

(Manager)

MEMO TO MANAGER

At last Board Meeting-

Motor Buses, Sydney.

Yours of 23rd inst., M/32/2, was noted.

I was directed to forward copies of Mr. Young's report
to each Member of the Board.



Secretary.

26.6.24.

sent

Secretary
Assistant Manager

Please quote M/32/2.

23rd June,

4.

MANAGER

CHAIRMAN.

MOTOR BUSES - SYDNEY.

Mr. Young is now back from Sydney, and has submitted a report in connection with motor buses in Sydney.

I attach this hereto for your consideration.



MANAGER.

ADM/EH

Enc.1

BOURNE AND METROPOLITAN TRAMWAYS BOARD.

MOTOR 'BUSES - SYDNEY.

Motor Buses started running in Sydney about 13 years ago, but at first did not meet with much success. They ran principally in the Eastern suburbs only, up to the end of 1915, at which time there were 15 operating, with a seating capacity of 14 passengers per bus.

During the latter years of the war, and the years following, they increased in number, and by the end of 1919, there were 90 in service, which increased to 131 by the end of 1922. At present there are 447 operating in the Metropolitan area between the suburbs and the City, and inter-suburban.

The following statement shows the number of 'buses running to the various centres : -

Auburn - Sidcombe	..	..	..	15
Abbotsford	..	..	..	9
Bondi	..	..	..	20
Bronte - Waverly	..	..	..	14
Balmain - Ryde	..	..	..	19
Burwood - Ashfield - Enfield	..	..	..	37
Cronulla	..	..	..	21
Canterbury	..	..	..	60
Illawarra	..	..	..	55
Leichhardt	..	..	..	7
Manly	..	..	..	18
Newtown	..	..	..	12
North Sydney	..	..	..	38
Paddington - Woollahra	..	..	..	15
Parramatta	..	..	..	31
Randwick & Coogee	..	..	..	18
Rose Bay	..	..	..	12
Rushcutters Bay	..	..	..	5
Strathfield	..	..	..	15
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	25
Total				<u>447</u>

These operate partly along tram lines, but continue their journeys beyond the tram area, and at places, they divert into side streets, where roads are good, and population dense, the longest distance run being from the Central Railway Station to Parramatta, a distance of 15 miles.

The City terminus of all buses, other than a few that run on inter-suburban routes, is the Central Railway Station. They are not allowed in the centre of the City, that is, North of Oxford St., from which Street they branch South, East and West only. I am informed that that Proprietors have endeavoured to obtain permission to run through the City to Circular Quay, but up to the present have been refused on account of the narrowness of the streets.

Motor Buses - Sydney, Contd.

TYPES.

There are all types of buses in operation, with a carrying seating capacity of from 15 to 40 passengers, and a general average of about 22. From what I can gather there is no large Proprietary running any great number of buses; one person runs from 14 to 16, and the remainder are operated by about 150 different proprietors - quite a number of persons running 1 bus only.

There are some good types in operation, somewhat similar to the Melbourne Trak and Kintrak type. I observed a good type of 40 passenger buses, with entrances at each side-end - no double deckers running at present, and all have solid tyres.

PASSENGERS CARRIED.

It is difficult to obtain any data giving number of passengers carried per annum. One proprietor gave figures showing that with a bus fleet of 14 buses, he carried 1,750,000 passengers per annum on an average, over 3 years up to 1923. Taking these figures as a guide, the whole of the buses in operation would carry approximately 42,000,000 passengers per annum, earning, at an average fare of 3d, about £525,000.

It is estimated that of this number, 26,000,000 were carried on buses running on tram routes, and in competition with trams; of this number it is considered, on a review of various returns of 'Bus passengers that about 18 to 20 millions are carried by the 'Buses at a time when the trams were capable of fully meeting requirements, that is, outside "peak loading" periods.

Where fares are the same, the only reason I can see for passengers taking a 'bus in preference to a tram, when both running on the same route, is the speed. No doubt the Bus does go faster, especially on a good road. From personal observation, when travelling on a tramcar in Parramatta Road, quite a number of buses passed the tram; they have also formed the habit - same as in Melbourne - of, when there is room in the bus running immediately ahead of trams, and when seeing passengers waiting at a tram stop, pulling in and collecting a fair proportion of waiting

Motor Buses - Sydney, Contd.

passengers. I have seen people standing up in a 'bus, and tram cars going along same route only half full.

Coming into the City in the morning during "peak" periods, a number of 'Buses get their loads beyond, and from side Streets, adjacent to tram termini; these buses run non-stop to the City Terminus, doing the journey in considerably less time than the tramcar. This probably would not be the case on the outward journey, at "peak" periods, as the short distance travellers would have the same opportunity of getting on the buses as the long distance passengers, consequently the buses would have to stop more frequently, and so take longer to do the run

If motor buses can successfully compete with an Electric Tram, both running on the one route, and under similar fare conditions, as they are to a certain extent doing here, it would lead one to conclude that before electric tram lines are constructed on a good road, leading to or through populous localities, the position should be carefully considered, and if lines constructed, arrangements should be made for a maximum speed.

I have obtained some figures showing a comparison between the tram and 'Bus earnings in this city.

	Trains	'Buses (Approximate)	
Gross earnings per annum	£3,375,923	£ 525,000	15.9%
Passengers Carried	312,930,225	£42,000,000	13.4%
No. of Vehicles	1,424	447	31.3%
Capital invested	8,680,161	440,000	5.2%
Accommodation for (seats)	93,984	9,834	10.48%

These 'Bus passengers are not all lost to Tramways; quite a number were originally Railway Passengers, and intersuburban 'Bus routes have created a new traffic.

It is estimated that the Tram loss in passengers through Motor Bus competition is 6%.

FARES.

Where 'Buses are operating on a Tram route and in direct opposition, similar fares are charged, but invariably where the 'Buses have a clear field the fare is higher than an average tram fare.

Motor Buses - Sydney, Contd.

OPERATING COST.

I cannot obtain any data to enable me to give a correct estimate.

The A.E.C. people in Melbourne informed me that the cost per mile for a Trak 'Bus type was 1/8¹/₂d, over all. With all the different types operating in Sydney, and taking this amount as somewhere about correct, I should say the cost here would be about 1/7¹/₂d. This amount does not include any contribution to upkeep of roads.

Agitation has taken place here amongst the local governing bodies relative to the damage caused to the roadway by the 'Buses, towards which they pay no contribution. I am informed a Conference was held, but nothing was done.

The Sydney "Daily Telegraph" of 3/7/22 intimated that the manner in which the tram tracks were being cut up by Motor 'Buses, and the competition with the Tramways was engaging the attention of the Government and that consideration may be given to the question of regulating the competition in certain directions, especially where it is held that the Tram services can adequately handle the traffic.

The cost of running would also be governed by the wages paid to Drivers and Conductors. In Sydney they are under the Motor Drivers Union Awards, which provides the following: -

Drivers	£4	18	0	per wk.
Conductors (under 18 years of age)	2	1	6	" "
Conductresses " " " " "	1	17	6	" "
Conductors (19 to 21 years of age)	2	15	3	" "
Conductresses " " " " "	2	0	0	" "
Conductors (21 years of age or over)	4	5	0	" "
Conductresses " " " " "	2	5	0	" "

All Buses in Sydney have male Conductors, working 54 hours per week, with time and a quarter for all time worked in excess. Some Drivers informed me they got up to £5 ; 7 ; 6 per week, and Conductors (under age) up to £3.; others get a commission on the taking over a certain amount. This tends to make Conductors tout for passengers, which is done on some routes. Against this, some 'Bus Proprietors are appointing Inspectors to protect their revenue.

Motor Buses- Sydney, Contd.

Comparative utility of Electric Trams and
Motor Buses in Sydney Streets.

It appears to me that it would be impracticable to operate Motor 'Buses in Sydney Streets in addition to the trams; the narrow streets could not carry both in addition to the other ordinary vehicular and pedestrian traffic, and under present conditions, it would, I think, be impracticable for 'Buses alone to successfully carry the City passengers at "peak" periods - it is as much as the trams can manage and, as it is, congestion is bad in the 4 main City Streets. This is most noticeable in Elizabeth and George Streets, where a large number of cars are banked up at Street Intersections, and to a lesser degree in Castlereagh and Pitt Streets - these two streets having one way traffic only. The average Headway of trams in the Streets mentioned, is as follows:-

George St.	..	..	18 Seconds
Elizabeth St.	..	..	25 "
Pitt	}	..	26 "
Castlereagh St.)			

Of course, an average headway cannot be maintained. With these headways, it means trams all the time, as fast as they can pick up and set down, passengers, at the stops. Under present conditions, the only means of leaving the City (centre) is by tram, both going North & South, and the headway as shown above is necessary to carry passengers, and even then between 5.0 and 6.20 p.m. cars are consistently overloaded.

On as many Lines as possible, coupled cars are run at "peak" periods - bogies as well as single truck cars. Types O. O.P. & P. are all 80 passenger seating cars, consequently when these types are running coupled, seating accommodation is available for 160 passengers, ^{and} with a 50% overload, 240 passengers are carried as a unit. These units are running on an average headway of 18 seconds.

To carry the same number of passengers by Motor 'Buses, allowing 33 seated, with an overload of say 60, would take about 4 to 5 buses every 18 seconds. This, obviously, is impracticable.

Motor Buses - Sydney, Contd.

The situation will be greatly relieved when the under-ground Railway from Circular Quay to the Central Railway is completed, the first section of which it is anticipated will be ready about the middle of 1925.

The Tram service is at present up to its limit at "peak" periods, and for this reason, it is thought in some quarters here, that the advent of the 'Bus has been a boon in easing what looked like becoming a serious situation.

Personally I am of the opinion that the Motor Bus has come to stay, here, as in Melbourne, and I should say it would be advisable for the Tramway Authorities to obtain control of the industry before it gets out of hand.


ASSISTANT MANAGER.