

1 March 2023

Cody C

By email: fyi-request-21732-eacbea0c@requests.fyi.org.nz

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Dear Cody

**Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (“LGOIMA”):
Request for Information**

I refer to your email dated 5 February 2023 requesting information on funding from non-operated bus services. Your request has been referred to me to reply.

Your queries:

- **I understand that in the year from 6 December 2021, 21,548 bus trips were missed and 21,929 trips were removed from the bus schedule and that around 35% of Environment Canterbury rates contribute to bus operations.**
- **What has happened to the funding from rates towards these bus services that were not operated? Presumably, there was no cost to Environment Canterbury for these non-operated services.**

Canterbury is currently experiencing a public bus driver shortage which has affected our Greater Christchurch Metro network since late 2021. This is a national issue that has disrupted public transport services in all other major urban centres around New Zealand. The driver shortage is mainly the result of a competitive labour market and has been further exacerbated by Covid-related illness over the past year.

While our operators do their best to run every trip, sometimes driver availability means this is not possible. We understand the frustration customers face when services are unexpectedly cancelled, and we are working closely with our operators to minimise disruptions.

This includes prioritising school services and having our express services pick up passengers along regular routes. Operators also try to avoid the cancellation of consecutive trips on a single route where possible.

Our contracts with our bus operators are funded by a combination of fares, rates, and central government funding. We do not believe the ratepayer should pay for missed trips so our contracts with operators include contract value reductions and financial penalties we can recover. These savings are then reinvested into the service.

You will be aware that if you are not satisfied with this response you are able to refer this matter to the Office of the Ombudsman under s27 (3) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

Please be advised that we now put LGOIMA responses that are in the public interest onto our website. No personal details of the requester are given, but we do summarise the essence of the request alongside the response.

Should you require any further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to contact LGOIMA@ecan.govt.nz in the first instance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Giles Southwell', written in a cursive style.

Giles Southwell
Director, Corporate Services