

24 February 2025

File Ref: OIAPR-1274023063-35081

By email: [REDACTED]

Tēnā koe [REDACTED]

## Request for information 2025-012

I refer to your request for information dated 24 January 2025, which was received by Greater Wellington Regional Council (Greater Wellington) on 24 January 2025. You have requested the following:

*"I have commented before because what used to be a fantastic service (the 30x) is no longer fantastic and anecdotally I can tell you that there is sufficient capacity on the non-express buses.*

*At other times – and this is far from a single isolated incident - I've seen people in Hataitai not getting on to non-express buses in front of the 30x and then wait to board the 30x. If we then pass the other non-express buses in Mt Vic (i.e. through the tunnel) there has always been space.*

*Similarly, returning to the eastern suburbs in the evening people will ignore the #2 going past them (with plenty of seats) to catch the 30x.*

*I would be interested in you providing me with the data which shows that there isn't sufficient other capacity."*

## Greater Wellington's response follows:

### Context

The decision to allow the Routes 30x and 31x to stop in Hataitai was made to ensure we could meet peak passenger demand and allow more timely boarding at the busy Hataitai stops (Waitoa Road near the bus tunnel and Hataitai Village) by using any spare capacity available on passing express buses, particularly in the morning peak. For consistency, services also drop passengers off at these stops in the afternoon peak.

The Route 2, 12e and 36 buses were experiencing demand that exceeded their capacity in the morning peak at these stops. This meant full buses were unable to pick passengers up, leaving them waiting for the next available service and at times significantly longer periods. The situation improved for a period as bus patronage dropped during COVID 19, but we have since returned to similar levels of demand on these routes experienced pre-COVID.

The most recent change for the express buses to stop at these stops started on 2 October 2022 and it has remained in place since then. This decision was made on the basis that Hataitai can continue to be provided with prompt boarding times and adequate capacity if other services are cancelled or delayed. The trade-off for this is a one-to-two-minute extra journey time in the mornings if 30x and 31x services stop to pick passengers up in Hataitai.

We acknowledge there are variable loadings on different bus services each morning. This is influenced by most people choosing to get on the first bus that arrives, the flow of buses to Hataitai, (influenced by a number of variables on any given day, including traffic conditions, and passenger demand) and the build-up of passengers at Hataitai stops.

Express services are designed to provide faster peak bus journeys than standard bus services and to provide targeted capacity to meet the peak passenger demand for bus services. There is no formal policy that dictates where an express service should stop on route. We acknowledge your feedback on the matter, however on balance, we believe that stopping express services in Hataitai remains our preference for servicing peak demand.

Therefore, for the reasons stated above, the information you requested for vehicle occupancy data, would not currently be considered a factor in our decision to have express buses stopping in Hataitai. In a show of transparency, we are releasing the information you have requested to you.

### **The vehicle capacity data**

Please refer to **Attachment 1** which contains a copy of the raw data we pulled for this request.

How we have approached this request was to pull data at a trip-by-trip level for trips which:

- Stopped at stops 7217: Hataitai - Stop A, and 7216: Waitoa Road at Bus Tunnel (near 73) (the stop immediately before the bus tunnel on the Hataitai side)
- Stopped at those stops between 7am and 10am (the time period when the morning 30x service operates)
- From 1 January 2019 through to 14 February 2025

And for each trip, showing:

- Passengers already onboard at that stop
- Passengers boarding/alighting at that stop
- Vehicle capacity (both seated and total capacity)

To allow for looking at the capacity between non-express and express services stopping at those stops, the data was filtered to only include the days where the 12e service operates. This is a weekday only service, but also does not run on weekday public holidays, so provided a better baseline for comparison.

Please note that there will be two entries for each trip, one for the stop at Waitoa Road at Bus Tunnel (near 73), and one for Hatatai Stop A. You can use the drop-down filters at the top of the columns to filter the data by stop or trip number. Additionally, where the vehicle type is listed as “unknown” on any given trip this means that the vehicle data for this trip is unavailable, and the occupancy data is not held by Greater Wellington.

If you have any concerns with the decision(s) referred to in this letter, you have the right to request an investigation and review by the Ombudsman under section 27(3) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where appropriate. Our response to your request will be published shortly on Greater Wellington’s website with your personal information removed.

Nāku iti noa, nā



**Samantha Gain**

Kaiwhakahaere Matua Waka-ā-atea | Group Manager Metlink