



Non Statutory Public Consultation on 2014 Bus Public Service Contracts

Public Consultation Submissions

Submission 22 to 35

National Transport Authority
Dun Scéine
Iveagh Court
Dublin 2

Amended October 2012

SUBMISSION 22

Non-statutory public consultation on 2014 Public Bus Service Contracts

Questionnaire

Q1. How can the new public service contracts best ensure a good quality of service is provided to passengers?

Create a quality competitive tendering environment in addition to more accountable service delivery at more economic cost to State and passenger alike. Customer enquiries can be better dealt with and incidence of service break-down can be improved through comprehensive service delivery contracts.

Vehicle maintenance will be more open to public scrutiny through the PSV testing regime currently not applicable to BE or DB but applied strigently to the Private Sector. Independent DOE testing will also ensure better practice and should lead to improved maintenance delivery.

Better and more efficient control on maintenance costs will enable savings to be passed on through better fare and subsidy management.

More buses at lesser capital and revenue cost to the State.

Q2. How can the new public bus contracts best ensure the integration of the public bus services and the integration of these services with the wider public transport network?

Better and more customer focussed route planning by the NTA. At present BE and DB design the network which has many anomalies and needs to be independently assessed and routes re-structured with deficits identified and taken into consideration.

Common vehicle livery requirements should be a pre-requisite.

Integrated ticketing and real-time information participation by successful tenderers and national extension of both systems should be included in any Service Contract.

Marketing initiatives by both NTA and participants to minimise any transition confusion for bus-users.

Q3. How can the new contracts best ensure value for taxpayer money?

Competitive tendering will lead to substantial reductions in Subsidy. It will reduce or obviate the need to provide free buses and coaches for PSO routes.

Comparative metrics will become available to the NTA.

Commercial routes within the PSO system will be more easily identifiable.

Accounting anomalies which facilitate over-subsidy and referred to in 2011

Mazars Report for CTTC can be addressed.

Overstaffing and unsustainable wage levels at BE and DB can be identified and addressed to improve competitiveness in both.

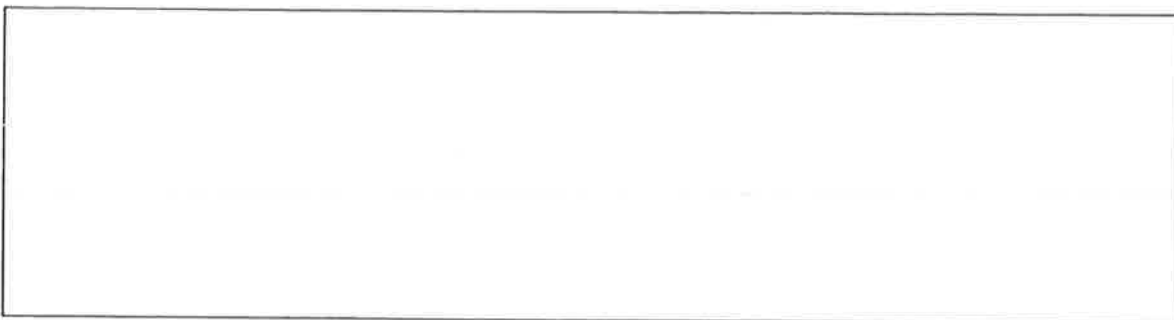
Transfer of Undertaking should not be a requirement in the tendering process.

Routes should not be tendered out to potential private monopolies.

Q4. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments within the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

Yes.

Dublin market could be identified under orbital, radial, route, garage, high usage, peak or off-peak routes. The tendering process could start with orbital routes and peak-time in 2014 with some radial routes becoming available on a rolling basis initially and over the following years.



Q5. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments outside the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

Yes.

The markets should be segmented and identified e.g. commuter into Dublin, commuter into various provincial cities, provincial city services and rural by region.

Commuter PSO services into Dublin and provincial cities should be a priority as savings and efficiencies will be readily available from tendering these out to interested private sector operators subject to Service Level Contracts designed to produce uniformity of livery and best possible service delivery. Some of these services are probably commercial or close thereto.

Rural PSO services should be tendered out as these are not being being operated efficiently at present. There could be integration with the school bus and rural transport systems in most instances with private sector consultation.

Provincial city services could be operated at a much lower cost through private sector route design and management, better vehicle maintenance and more responsive customer care.

Provision of free buses could be dispensed with.

Q6. What are the potential benefits or otherwise of competitively tendering for the award of new bus service contracts, compared to directly awarding contracts to Dublin Bus or Bus Éireann?

Better and more reliable service provision.

Transparency to facilitate identification of individual routes between PSO and commercial.

Substantial reduction in revenue and capital subsidies.

De-monopolisation of service provision leading to more accountable, efficient and ultimately more secure service delivery.

Q7. Are there any other considerations you wish to identify or comment on, that are relevant to the new contracts for bus passenger services?

The tendering process should be designed to encourage improved cost efficiency, quality service delivery, uniformity, integration and security for the State in the first instance. It should enable indigenous operators to participate thus leading to local employment stimulation and stabilisation at a lower cost and dispensing with the current monopoly environment.

Please complete the questionnaire and

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- submit by post to

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SUBMISSION 23

Non-statutory public consultation on 2014 Public Bus Service Contracts

Questionnaire

Q1. How can the new public service contracts best ensure a good quality of service is provided to passengers?

By promising to deliver a reliable, frequent, efficient, affordable and easy-to-use bus service. A bus service that puts customers first and does this through action and not some empty corporate platitudes. Information on bus services, prices routes etc. (and the displaying of such information to the public) should be a priority. The existing information on bus services at bus stops is completely inadequate and in most cases, not there.

Q2. How can the new public bus contracts best ensure the integration of the public bus services and the integration of these services with the wider public transport network?

By allowing smart card users to transfer easily between one mode of transport and another. To allow for easy transitions, there should be one fee to allow this transfer or to allow the passenger to travel from one destination to another by paying once (regardless of method of travel) and not for each mode of transport.

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Q3. How can the new contracts best ensure value for taxpayer money?

I believe by introducing a simpler fare structure, it will increase customer numbers. A flat fee is in operation on London buses and in many other cities. Presently, there are too many ways to pay and way too many fares in place. The system is overly complicated and much too difficult to understand- there is no clear logic to it.

Q4. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments within the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

One company should be overseeing all of the existing bus routes in Dublin. These routes should be contracted out to a suitable bus company that meets the strict guidelines in the operation of these routes. The overseeing company will ensure: standards are maintained, timetables are kept, prices are the same on all routes, passenger complaints or queries are actually dealt with and that all design elements (literature, vehicle livery, etc) are standardised. Less busy routes should be batched with high frequency routes

and offered as one contract, thus ensuring that all routes are maintained-
HOWEVER: Existing routes should be analysed for inefficiencies. Alternatives to all buses crossing at O'Connell bridge must be questioned. Some recently amended Dublin Bus routes have been made more inefficient with new routes adding many minutes to current journey times. An example of this is the 83 route heading to Harristown. It now takes a right onto Tolka Estate for the sake of one stop-adding several minutes to the journey.

Q5. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments outside the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

Q6. What are the potential benefits or otherwise of competitively tendering for the award

of new bus service contracts, compared to directly awarding contracts to Dublin Bus or Bus Éireann?

By having private bus companies contracted to run existing routes, you will increase efficiencies, keep costs down and increase passenger traffic and make it a more pleasant passenger experience than what presently exists (see the privately run Luas). The Aircoach route in Dublin is also a good example of this. Awarding the routes to Dublin Bus is acknowledging, and rewarding, a company that doesn't deliver the basics of a bus service to the people of Dublin and will always -most likely- fail to deliver.

As it stands, Dublin bus fails to provide: timetables at all bus stops, route maps or any information at most stops, a list of all destinations en route, automatic and clear stop announcements on all buses, well-maintained stops (currently dirty, shabby, broken for the most part), an easy to understand ticket fee structure.

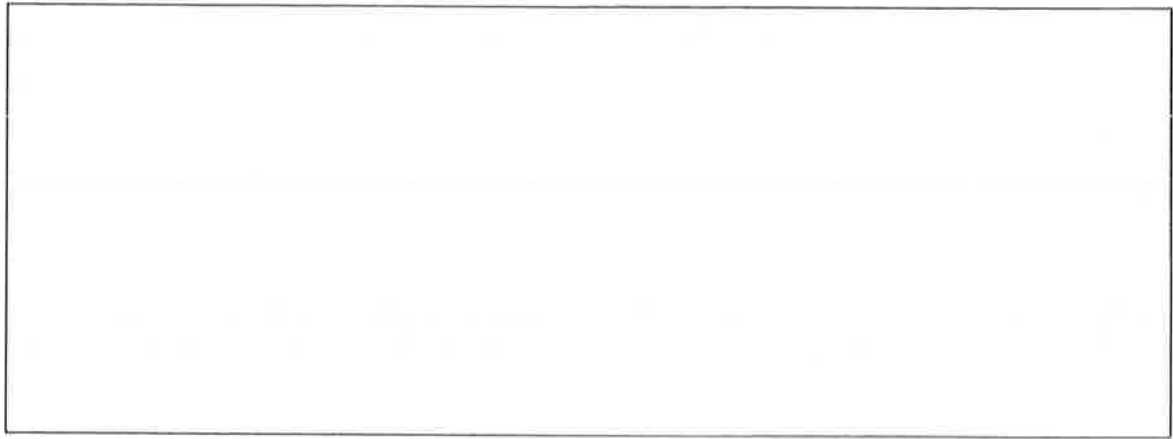
Q7. Are there any other considerations you wish to identify or comment on, that are relevant to the new contracts for bus passenger services?

Currently, Dublin Bus-in my opinion-run a very poor service. I use it twice a day and find the frequency of the services inadequate (15-20minutes waits is the norm.) Not only that: there is a serious lack of basic information

throughout the network. Many stops have not one piece of information. There are no route maps in existence on the vast majority of bus shelters (and where present on the very few shelters) don't show all the relevant routes for that stop! Bus shelters are generally devoid of any information (which to me is shocking) though they are always furnished with advertising posters. There exists no booklet that shows all the bus routes in diagram format (current available loose leaflets are of no use without a map or route diagram). Timetables are not available at most busstops, and where present don't show times from that particular stop. The fare system is maddeningly, overly complicated with too many payment methods. You have no way of knowing all the destinations en route from a particular stop. There is no consistency in the look and design of busstops and most have timetables in a tattered state or dirty bus numbers. Having no middle doors on buses also increase inefficiencies at each stop. There are no automatic stop announcements in the buses so if you're not familiar with the route, you won't have a clue where you are-this facility is available on all London buses. The use of the Leap card on Dublin Buses is not very efficient and needs a rethink-see the Oyster card to see how it should have been done. There is a lack of enforcement of passenger behaviour on board-drinking, intimidation even smoking -are all tolerated.

No contract should be given to any company without these above issues been part of the contract or agreement to run the routes. These are the basics in the running of any capital city's public transport and I find it surprising that the National Transport Authority allows Dublin Bus to operate like this, unchallenged. Clearly the people of Dublin Bus never use the bus or have no interest in improving the service. Though the provision of real-time displays is welcome - and long overdue- it should not be allowed to paper over the current flaws and shortcomings of the service.

A test to see just how difficult or easy it is to use any bus system is to go to a random stop, without knowing your destination or current location, price of the ticket, direction of travel or frequency of buses. Then try (or better still - get some people from the National Transport Authority to try it) to get the relevant information and get to your destination without asking anyone for help.



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SUBMISSION 24

Non-statutory public consultation on 2014 Public Bus Service Contracts

Questionnaire

Q1. How can the new public service contracts best ensure a good quality of service is provided to passengers?

We believe that the best way to ensure a good quality of service is to define clear quality targets in the new public service contracts together with an appropriate incentive/penalty regime to enforce them.

Veolia Transdev's experience shows that a performance monitoring system (PMS) is most efficient when it is structured around the following principles:

- Each quality aspect is clearly defined and has a target performance
- The KPI are easy to understand and simple to calculate
- Performance against the target is measurable in a fair and transparent way
- The number of KPI is kept to as few as possible to minimise bureaucracy and focus management attention on critical success factors
- The PMS includes penalties for underperformance but also significant bonus to incentivise the operator and its staff to maximise the quality of the service.
- Options to review the KPI and targets during the contract to adjust to the changing needs or priorities of the NTA, when the network or context evolves.

Q2. How can the new public bus contracts best ensure the integration of the public bus services and the integration of these services with the wider public transport network?

Veolia Transdev has significant experience of managing integrated public transport network across Europe. Most of the time Veolia Transdev is contracted by the Local Transport Authority (LTA) to operate and maintain the entire public transport network including all modes from bus, tram, metro, BRT or on-demand transport, to park and ride or car and bike sharing systems.

In all these networks Veolia Transdev has designed the network to make the light rail system the backbone of a coherent, integrated and multimodal public transport system.

This includes:

- integrated fares and ticketing with multimodal pass,
- set up of transfer stations or transit centre with coordinated timetable to facilitate seamless transfer between modes,
- real time information and visual display screen at the connection points but also on board to enable hassle-free transfers for passengers.

In the Limburg province of the Netherlands, we integrated train, bus and taxi services to

expand the transportation offer by 30% without increasing public expenditure. Examples of Veolia Transdev achievements in terms of integrated networks are available as Appendix 1 to this questionnaire.

We recognise that integration of public transport is easier when all the modes are managed and operated by a single contractor. However, we believe that a fully integrated service can be achieved by the NTA while having separate contracts for trams, trains and buses.

There are different ways to achieve the integration of the wider public transport network:

- Option 1: the input specification approach, where the NTA retains the majority of the control and only outsource the operation of the service.
- Option 2: the pure output specification approach, where the NTA specify clearly its vision and objectives and transfer the management of all the transport network to a single operator
- Option 3: a middle ground, output specification approach where the NTA leaves it to the different operators to coordinate with each other to achieve its objectives and vision.

Given the current timetable and the level of work required to implement it, option 2 is likely to be too ambitious in the short and medium term. It may however be a viable option for the longer term.

Option 3 is achievable but fairly complex to implement in that it requires all of the operators to work in an integrated way. The formulation of a global vision for transport by the NTA and buy-in from all stakeholders would be key success factors of this approach. Reflecting the integrated vision in all off the contracts through joined-up objectives will help in driving the different operators to work together. Detailed procedures would need to be established and included in the operation contracts to define:

- The establishment of the fare structure,
- The management of the ticketing clearing house,
- The consultation process to establish timetables in order to ensure ease of transfer between modes
- The contractual obligation around waiting time at the main connection stops to facilitate the transfers, etc

The input specification approach seems the most relevant to the NTA's objectives. This would imply the following:

- The NTA controls the fares and ticketing and therefore retains the revenue risk,
- It designs the network as well as the timetable of the bus network to facilitate the creation of hubs and the ease of transfer between services and modes.
- The operation is outsourced and punctuality and reliability which will impact on integration are enforced through a performance regime.

This would give the NTA the confidence that its vision is delivered. The challenge will be to keep a streamline contract management organisation while retaining a large chunk of the

control. The downside of this approach is that it doesn't encourage private sector innovation as revenue risk needs to remain with the NTA.

Q3. How can the new contracts best ensure value for taxpayer money?

We believe that the best way to ensure value for taxpayer money is to procure the contracts through a tendering process. The competition is very likely to drive the prices of the service down and the financial imperatives from the private sector will force efficiencies.

Our experience shows that:

- simpler tendering processes that minimise bid costs, are more likely to attract significant competition;
- contract length will also impact both the competition level and the price. We believe that a 5 to 7 year contract period is a good balance.

The level of risk transferred to the operators plays also a key role in maximising value for money. Where the level of risk is perceived by the operator to be high, this risk will be priced into the bid. The challenge is therefore to balance the risk levels for bidders against additional cost to the client. Finding this balance given the economic difficulties of recent years will be difficult and bidders are likely to price risks more heavily than was the case a few years ago.

The main risks to be considered are:

- revenue risks: while inclusion of revenue risk should not be discounted, we believe the transfer of this risk to the operator is likely to require greater safeguards than has historically been the case and will adversely impact the value for money. Also, as mentioned in Q2, it is key from an integration of service point of view that the NTA retains control over fare and ticketing and therefore the revenue risk.
- indexation: an indexation formula accurately reflecting the cost structure of the operator will avoid operator factoring a risk premium to cover indexation risk.
- fixed assets: better value for money will be achieved if the NTA keeps the ownership of the garages and fleet and lease them to the operators. This will also encourage competition as access to the garages will be paramount to bids especially in the Dublin area.

Full transparency and disclosure of employee's terms and conditions including pension information will also be key, as uncertainties in this domain will most likely be covered by risk premium.

Q4. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments within the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

Three different segmentations could be envisaged for the Dublin area:

- a London type model where each route is tendered separately
- a separate contract for each bus garage
- a single contract for the entire Dublin area

The garage assets require careful management, as this will be the most significant barrier to entry; we would recommend that these assets are retained by the NTA and leased to operators. From this point of view, the route model would not be recommended. This model will also require significant tender and contract management by the NTA and therefore is also likely to be the most expensive one in terms of management cost for the NTA.

Both the garage model and the single contract can work well. The garage model is however likely to generate a more competitive market and would also allow for comparison of efficiencies between the different operations.

Q5. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments outside the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

The context is different outside the Dublin area where the integration is not the prime objective and the access to new garages is more achievable. Therefore we believe the three following models could be envisaged:

- fully deregulated market supported by contracts where no operator wants to run a service
- contracts per route
- a single contract

In the interurban the attractiveness of the service will be key to encourage use of public transport and modal shift from cars. This will be driven by a combination of quality of vehicle, schedule and fare structure.

We believe that in the area outside Dublin, the transfer of the revenue risk to the operators will encourage innovation to increase the use of public transport. This can be achieved with all three models.

The benefit of the deregulated market or the route contracts is to generate more competition and drive the prices down. If however the NTA's objective is to achieve ticketing integration throughout the Republic of Ireland, then a single contract would be the most straight forward approach.

Q6. What are the potential benefits or otherwise of competitively tendering for the award of new bus service contracts, compared to directly awarding contracts to Dublin Bus or Bus Éireann?

We see the main benefits of competitively tendering for the awards of the new bus service contracts as the following:

- As referred to in question 3, the tendering process is likely to increase value for money by driving the prices down.
- Encourage innovation
- Give opportunity to operators to change their behaviour
- Separating the operator from the Local Transport Authority will make it much easier to control the quality and enforce a Performance Monitoring system.
- In a quickly changing environment, private companies are often more flexible and mobile than local authority controlled companies.
- Private companies often have better ability to deal with the unions to resolve social issues.

Q7. Are there any other considerations you wish to identify or comment on, that are relevant to the new contracts for bus passenger services?

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SUBMISSION 25

Non-statutory public consultation on 2014 Public Bus Service Contracts

Response to Questionnaire from Malahide Shuttle Project Group

Q1. How can the new public service contracts best ensure a good quality of service is provided to passengers?

The best service will be offered to passengers if services match passengers' needs. This will require knowledge of passengers' intentions. For example, passengers seeking a bus to get to a station should be facilitated by ensuring that bus timetables coincide with train departures (and also with train arrivals). At present, in Malahide, only 7% of rail passengers use buses to get to the station, whereas around 40% get to the station by car. Many of these people who use cars say they would switch to buses if there were a reliable local service.

Q2. How can the new public bus contracts best ensure the integration of the public bus services and the integration of these services with the wider public transport network?

As described in Q1, bus services which bring passengers to railway stations should be timed to coincide with train services. At present they are not.

Q3. How can the new contracts best ensure value for taxpayer money?

It should not be necessary, over the long term, to subsidise local bus services which are providing access to rail connections, though integrated ticketing is essential. However, we suggest that the NTA should be willing to provide a subvention for the first year or two of a new service, to allow the passenger base to be built up.

We also believe that subsidies giving reduced fares for students and persons on pension, which are currently available for Dublin Bus services, should be extended to all public bus services.

Q4. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments within the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

It is essential that different market segments should have different services. This does not necessarily call for different contracts, but it may be easier to achieve if it does.

For example, local services which feed a railway station are not really compatible with longer distance services, even where these longer services stop at the stations. The reason for this is that timing of arrival at the station can be critical, whereas peak traffic on the longer service can delay arrival at the station.

Q5. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments outside the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

We do not have the knowledge to comment on this.

Q6. What are the potential benefits or otherwise of competitively tendering for the award of new bus service contracts, compared to directly awarding contracts to Dublin Bus or Bus Éireann?

Taking the Malahide situation as a case in point, it is clear that Dublin Bus is not interested in providing reliable and timely feeder links to Irish Rail services, since Irish Rail is seen as a competitor for commuter passengers. A local contractor is much more likely to provide a relevant service than Dublin Bus.

Q7. Are there any other considerations you wish to identify or comment on, that are relevant to the new contracts for bus passenger services?

Local services (such as commuter shuttle services to rail stations) barely exist today but have large potential benefits, such as reduced traffic around stations, reduced parking problems around stations, additional commuter rail passengers. These services, which require reliability in timing, cannot be provided by long distance bus routes, and must be designed specifically for local needs.

SUBMISSION 26

Non-statutory public consultation on 2014 Public Bus Service Contracts

Questionnaire

Q1. How can the new public service contracts best ensure a good quality of service is provided to passengers?

The NTA should be very strict on the quality of services and should set targets for the bus operators. If operators fail to meet their targets the NTA should be able to cancel their contract and give it to another bus company. The NTA should be notified and sent details of any complaints received by operators in relation to the quality of services.

Timetables of routes should be set by the NTA, not the operator, to make sure that appropriate frequencies are operated on the route. The NTA should use GPS / RTPI to monitor the punctuality and reliability of services. The NTA should also carry out random spot checks on passenger comfort and the cleanliness of buses and other passenger facilities. To help passenger comfort all buses should be fitted with free Wi-Fi.

Q2. How can the new public bus contracts best ensure the integration of the public bus services and the integration of these services with the wider public transport network?

All public bus operators in the Dublin area (and eventually the whole country) should be required to accept Leapcards on their buses and should use the same fare system. A zonal fare system should be introduced in the Dublin area covering all public transport. All fares should be paid directly to the NTA, and the NTA should pay a set price to operators to cover the cost of running the services. This would mean that operators would not be in competition with each other while running the services, and would only be in competition with each other during the tender process. The operator's customer should be the NTA, not the passengers.

All passenger information covering all public transport nationwide should be provided centrally on one website / smartphone application, managed by the NTA. The NTA should allocate route numbers to all operators to prevent confusion by the same number being used twice by two different operators. Timetables and RTPI for all services should be on this website, as well as an all-Ireland multi-modal journey planner, covering all operators. Operators should be required to have GPS on buses, compatible with RPTI. Electronic

RTPI signs at bus stops should show all services calling at the stop, regardless of operator. Existing private operators should also be included in this, such as Swords Express and Aircoach. To passengers it should look like one company is operating all transport services.

Timetables of routes should be set by the NTA, not the operator, to make sure that buses meet each other to allow passenger connections, even if the routes are being operated by different companies. They should also be timetabled to connect with trains and trams.

Q3. How can the new contracts best ensure value for taxpayer money?

Bus companies operating busy routes should not be making huge profits while companies operating low demand routes are being paid large subsidies. The NTA should take all of the fares from passengers, then pay the bus operators a set price covering the cost of running the service, regardless of how many passengers they carried that day. This would mean that the profits from services can go back into funding other public transport services, instead of into the pockets of bus company owners. The costs would be spread out evenly between companies and fewer subsidies would have to be paid.

This would also make it easier to simplify the fare systems in Dublin into a zonal system covering all public transport.

The majority of the contracts should go to Bus Eireann and Dublin Bus in 2014, with this being lowered again during the next contract renewal. If Dublin Bus and Bus Eireann lose most of the contracts in 2014, they will have to reduce a lot of staff and it will cost the taxpayer more in social welfare.

Q4. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments within the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

Bus market segments should be defined by location and the main bus corridors. e.g. the majority of services operating along the Swords Road should be operated by the same operator. Exceptions should be made for

cross city and orbital routes, which should be grouped with the corridor they follow the most.

Q5. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments outside the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

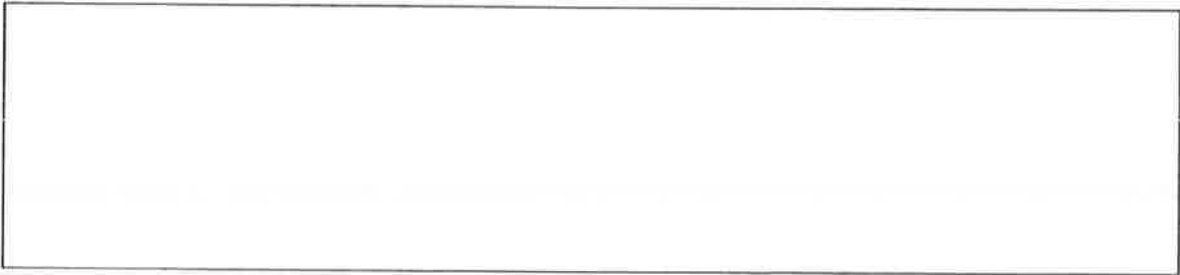
Bus route market segments should be defined by general location. This will make it easier for operators to locate their depots in a location near all of the routes they operate, and also makes it easy for operators to switch buses between routes.

Q6. What are the potential benefits or otherwise of competitively tendering for the award of new bus service contracts, compared to directly awarding contracts to Dublin Bus or Bus Éireann?

The main benefit is that it should improve standards of bus services in Ireland. Bus operators will focus more on passenger comfort, cleanliness, reliability and punctuality to make sure they keep the contract for the route. The threat of losing their contract to another operator will encourage them to provide a better service.

Another benefit should be to reduce the impact on the environment. To give a more competitive price during the tender process, operators will try to reduce operating costs by investing in more energy efficient buses.

Q7. Are there any other considerations you wish to identify or comment on, that are relevant to the new contracts for bus passenger services?



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SUBMISSION 27

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Questionnaire

Q1. How can the new public service contracts best ensure a good quality of service is provided to passengers?

Dublin Bus is doing a very good job...I do not think that in the actual environment and economic market can be run any different!

Q2. How can the new public bus contracts best ensure the integration of the public bus services and the integration of these services with the wider public transport network?

They will not be able to perform and interfere or connect the two or more...there are problems now with some of the private operators... very 'picky' and less accountable ...no were to answer any questions...ghosts!

Q3. How can the new contracts best ensure value for taxpayer money?

Cannot see how will work any better! Now the public transport is accessible for anyone...basically anybody can get in the bus and go places...money or not, pass or not(most people got one anyway...for same reason)...is a transport for everyone...with private operators...that will change and most of passengers will be left behind for many reasons...no valid pass, not an accompany one, not enough change, short of money, to smelly, to wet, to many bags, kids to big have to pay, not access for all....

Q4. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments within the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

There are no benefits...I cannot imagine anybody working in some of the areas where even Dublin Bus has difficulty ...and they were there for so long!

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Q5. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments outside the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

Same as Q 4?

There are no benefits...I cannot imagine anybody working in some of the areas where even Dublin Bus has difficulty ...and they were there for so long!

Q6. What are the potential benefits or otherwise of competitively tendering for the award of new bus service contracts, compared to directly awarding contracts to Dublin Bus or Bus Éireann?

There are no benefits...those companies are working all ready in a competitive market which is not working and is a hassle for us customers having to endure those privates which are only after profits... does not make any sense in

introducing anybody else when what we had was better and is already reduced and changed....continuously changing...with longer routes and busier...but still OK!

Q7. Are there any other considerations you wish to identify or comment on, that are relevant to the new contracts for bus passenger services?

No one will be better than what we have now...is an unreal belief that a company that will start now to be able to do a better job...the personal involvement of the Dublin Bus, the drivers that they know their job and their customers, that personal touch is built on many-many years, on practice and understanding of the people and their lives...that is something which no new company will be able to achieve at any given time or near future....!

SUBMISSION 28

Non-statutory public consultation on 2014 Public Bus Service Contracts

Questionnaire

Q1. How can the new public service contracts best ensure a good quality of service is provided to passengers?

First point to make is that NTA supporting document correctly identifies the key stakeholders as bus users (passengers or customers), taxpayers (who provide some funding) and the general population (who benefit from reduced congestion and pollution arising from less use of private cars).

The most important quality aspects that generate confidence for people to use the service are reliability, punctuality and information. Targets for these should be set to best international benchmark, ideally close to those of tram networks such as Luas. Financial incentives and penalties need to be applied to encourage performance to standards. These need to be structured in a way that they are meaningful for management and staff, i.e., they are not simply passed back to the taxpayer in a different form. There should be an incentive to manage and operate the bus network to the required standards.

Reliability and punctuality need to be priorities for bus operators in planning and managing their business. Relevant, reliable and accurate information is also required. Information displays must prioritise useful and correct information, rather than cosmetic displays that look good, but do not provide useful information, as happens sometimes.

Q2. How can the new public bus contracts best ensure the integration of the public bus services and the integration of these services with the wider public transport network?

Integration is essential in an urban environment, it is less important in rural settings. Most rural journeys are either point to point travel, or connecting to intercity services (trains or commercial buses), which are not part of this process.

Cities, on the other hand, need integration. A good urban public transport system allows seamless travel between any two parts of the city, either as one journey or multiple journeys involving one or more transport modes.

Ease of transfer is critical. Many journeys in Dublin city are best done by two buses and (despite an increase in crosscity routes) require a transfer in city centre. In this regard, a survey is required of bus stops in Dublin city centre to ensure that transfers are facilitated within reasonable distance. There are some instances of stops being too far apart, or inconveniently placed, and transfer has become more difficult in recent years with changes to stop locations.

Passenger information is also needed, and the recently launched journey planner is an excellent tool for showing all possible routings and detailed timetables. This highlights the fact that, despite very useful high tech systems such as RTPI, the timetable will continue to be the basic tool for planning journeys.

Ticketing and fares is the third issue for integration. It is worth pointing out that the Leap Card is basically an e-purse usable on all transport in Dublin. It is not an integrated ticket. Integrated ticketing implies integrated fares. While fares may differ between modes, in an integrated urban environment the fare should be basically the same to get from Point A to Point B, whether the journey involves one, two or more legs. This is the model used in virtually every European and British city. The focus of the Leap project on fares for each individual boarding of a bus is not customer friendly. It is not integrated and it is more likely to be a disincentive rather than an incentive for seamless travel. Good urban public transport is journey focused, not operator focused. So using a Leap Card to get from A to B, regardless of number of changes, is not very effective unless the fare is the same regardless of number of changes. This is a big subject in its own right, and not central to the topic under discussion, but it is one that needs substantial attention.

Q3. How can the new contracts best ensure value for taxpayer money?

Good value for taxpayers' money is achieved by

- 1. specifying as far as possible the services and/or customer for which the subsidy is being applied (e.g.)**

- schoolchildren

- essential services to outlying areas
- essential service at low demand times
- compensation for cost of congestion.

It is also good to compare subvention per passenger or per journey over a range of routes, and to put an upper limit on them.

2. Capping the total amount payable. Lessons should be learnt from the experience with Domestic air service PSOs, where cost per passenger and per flight increased dramatically over time.

3. Competitive tendering, to ensure padding is not built into the cost.

4. Providing incentives for operators to:

- deliver service to agreed standards at lower cost
- deliver more service to agreed standards at same cost
- reach and surpass targets set for reliability, punctuality and accuracy of customer information.

Q4. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments within the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

See general comments under “outside Dublin area” first. Comments here focus on aspects in which Dublin may be different from other regions.

It is critical that the service throughout the whole city is marketed and managed as a complete network. Clearly this raises different issues if there are multiple operators (which is a possible outcome from separate contracts).

The network needs to be planned, branded and marketed as one unit, with integrated fares and customer information. How this would be done in a situation with different operators on different routes needs to be worked out. It raises issues of relationship between regulator and operator. To some extent, it comes down to practicalities, such as where is the expertise and experience for tasks such as network planning.

Experience in other countries is also relevant to what might happen in Ireland. It is worth noting that in London (the only UK example where a city network is managed by the regulator, with routes out to tender) tendering of routes only happened after the dominant operator had been broken up and privatised. So they were starting from a very different position from Dublin.

There is also no clear evidence of performance difference between private and public sectors. Some of the best UK bus operators (recent award winners) are among the remaining publicly owned companies (Lothian, Warrington, Nottingham for example). These companies did have to compete route for route with private operators, and many others council owned companies did not survive the competition.

While it is desirable, and indeed urgent, to apply competitive pressures (cost, flexibility, speedy response to change, priority in protecting customer confidence), it is not as straightforward in applying tendering by market segment in Dublin as it would be in other parts of Ireland.

If it were decided to do some tendering by market segment in Dublin, perhaps it might be better to select some niche areas, rather than breaking up the whole network, at least on the first time around. Examples of how this could be done might include:

- separate the outliers in the Dublin bus network, e.g. North Wicklow, North County Dublin
- provide a separate contract for a corridor that is self sufficient (i.e. not linked with other corridors through crosscity routes)
- provide a separate contract for a geographic region that is served from one garage, with a view to all services in that garage being under one contract. This is more difficult with crosscity routes, especially as many are now operated from two different garages. Best opportunity here might be a contract for all routes from Clontarf bus garage.

The same practical issues, and tendering evaluation apply as in “outside Dublin” below.

Q5. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments outside the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

Yes, there are benefits for separate contracts for different market segments. It is good practice for someone other than the operator to evaluate benefits derived from financial support provided to operators. This allows for a cost/benefit approach to be taken, and support to be focused where there is a social need or social benefit.

The bus network outside Dublin is easily segmented. It falls naturally into about 9 segments, given that there are very few non-commercial services in the midlands, other than to Dublin:

- 1. Dublin long distance commuter (up to about 100km)**
- 2. Drogheda/East Meath**
- 3. Dundalk, Monaghan, Cavan**
- 4. Donegal**
- 5. Sligo, Leitrim, North Mayo**
- 6. Galway and South Mayo**
- 7. Limerick, Clare, North Kerry and North Tipperary**
- 8. Cork and South Kerry**
- 9. Waterford, Wexford and South Tipperary**

Many of these include urban service, all will include rural routes. A small number of rural routes operate outside these regions.

It would be beneficial to offer separate contracts for each of these areas. There is little overlap between subvented services in these regions, and there is little or no need to co-ordinate local services between the regions, but services within each region should be co-ordinated (especially urban networks).

Separate contracts give more scope for a local operator to tender. They also allow management attention and expertise to be on the needs of the area

(e.g.) managing highly competitive intercity routes is very different from understanding how to plan and manage Galway city services.

There would be practical issues to address in the event that an alternative operator was successful in any of the tenders. Garage and management/supervision is shared between local tendered routes and commercial routes. Vehicles and drivers would also be shared to some extent.

Evaluation of tenders would need to be based on a number of factors, including:

- cost**
- operation – confidence in ability to deliver a quality, reliable service, with flexibility**
- ability to innovate, plan, change with changing demand, identify potential markets (new housing, places of employment, shopping etc)**
- professional approach to customer care, customer information, vehicle presentation etc.**

Q6. What are the potential benefits or otherwise of competitively tendering for the award of new bus service contracts, compared to directly awarding contracts to Dublin Bus or Bus Éireann?

- the risk of losing part of a business is a great motivator to focus on providing superior service at a competitive price.**
- Competitive focus is bound to bring innovation and flexibility to how the business is managed.**

Q7. Are there any other considerations you wish to identify or comment on, that are relevant to the new contracts for bus passenger services?

The amount of money available for subvention clearly is declining due to pressure on Govt finances. Ideally, this amount would be fixed and would

relate to specific costs and to specific social and other benefits. It is worth noting that fares have risen substantially higher than inflation in recent years. This in itself has a negative impact on demand. Services have also been cut and the new Network Direct of Dublin Bus is a more efficient way to serve the market, catering for demand with less capacity and with faster journey times.

It is important, however, that a sense of proportion is applied. I would be very concerned about additional general fare increases, and the impact on demand. More needs to be delivered by operators through efficiency and flexibility. A couple of points need to be made about pricing and subvention.

Discounts for school fares in Dublin are much higher than in other cities, or than public transport in general in Ireland and elsewhere. Adult passengers tend to be people with less income, while school passengers are from all social strata. In fact, they are more likely to be from homes with sufficient resources, as much school travel by bus is due choice of school, rather than using the local school.

It would be worth working out the difference in revenue between what is earned in school fares, and what would be the adult fare for the same number of passengers. This could be considered a specific subvention for school fares. It would then highlight that the subvention for adult fares is probably quite small, and it is important that it does not become negative, as then adult passengers of limited means may be subsidising school children from families of greater means.

In the context of fare revision, it may be worth looking at changing the balance between school fares and adult fares, as adult passengers pay a lot more and are more at risk of being lost to private motoring.

The fare structure in Dublin needs to be overhauled. There are too many single fares, and Leap card has not reduced transactions with the driver, which delay the journey, with negative impact on cost and on customer perception of being slow (as well as limiting the capacity of bus stops at critical city centre locations). Most cities both in UK and in Continental Europe, both in high and low subsidy models, both in state run and privately run, have gone for a structure that eliminates the need for interaction with

the driver on virtually all journeys. This is by a combination of flat single journey fares and strong incentives to use period tickets. This would require single ticket fares to be increased on average, but would not cost more for users of prepay and period tickets. This would be more appropriate for encouraging use of public transport in Dublin, making transactions seamless, and protecting revenue.

Submission by Bob Laird

Please complete the questionnaire and

- submit by email to 2014busconsult@nationaltransport.ie or

- submit by post to

2014 Bus Public Consultation

National Transport Authority

Dun Scéine

Iveagh Court

Dublin 2.

Any submissions must be received by the NTA by 5pm on Wednesday 11th July 2012.

SUBMISSION 29

Non-statutory public consultation on 2014 Public Bus Service Contracts

Questionnaire

Q1. How can the new public service contracts best ensure a good quality of service is provided to passengers?

In my local area, Killorglin Co. Kerry, our children are dropped 1.2 km away from the school, Intermediate School Killorglin. The weight of the schoolbags walking that distance is one thing but with the rainy weather our children are getting soaked wet at 9 o clock in the morning and must sit in these wet uniforms for the whole day. I believe that children could be dropped to the school gate, and this is possible as the private companies who have much larger busses than our bus do this each day.

Q2. How can the new public bus contracts best ensure the integration of the public bus services and the integration of these services with the wider public transport network?

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Q3. How can the new contracts best ensure value for taxpayer money?

We pay good money for our bus ticket each year which is hard earned. We would expect to receive a good service in return for our money. We do not need the extra costs of doctors bills from colds and flues and physio bills from heavy bags.

Q4. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments within the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

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Q5. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments outside the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

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Q6. What are the potential benefits or otherwise of competitively tendering for the award of new bus service contracts, compared to directly awarding contracts to Dublin Bus or Bus Éireann?

Private bus companies are already dropping children at the school gate, if Bus Éireann would do the same it would be beneficial for all parties as the image of Bus Éireann would be improved in our local areas and there would be less sickness within the students and less absenteeism in school.

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Q7. Are there any other considerations you wish to identify or comment on, that are relevant to the new contracts for bus passenger services?

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Please complete the questionnaire and

- submit by email to 2014busconsult@nationaltransport.ie or

- submit by post to

2014 Bus Public Consultation

National Transport Authority

Dun Scéine

SUBMISSION 30

Non-statutory public consultation on 2014 Public Bus Service Contracts

Response by the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in Ireland

Q1. How can the new public service contracts best ensure a good quality of service is provided to passengers?

Overarching Policy Framework

The starting point should be the development, with wide stakeholder input, of an overarching policy framework which will provide a broad policy context for the development and specification of the next round of Public Service Contracts (PSCs). This framework needs to encompass a clearly articulated long term vision for the future development of public transport as well as more specific high level objectives addressing issues such as service coverage and minimum standards of provision. It is accepted that it may not be possible to fulfil this vision and achieve all these objectives in the short or even the medium term, but it is important that there is a clear roadmap which will guide the preparation of the post-2014 PSCs. You shouldn't start a journey if you don't know where you are going.

The development of this policy framework can be guided by existing policy instruments such as *Smarter Travel*. While there has been less emphasis on environmental concerns since the start of the current economic downturn and financial crisis, the issue has not gone away as was made clear in the EPA's latest *State of the Environment* report. This work should also take account of the findings which emerge from the National Integrated Rural Transport Committee. For example should the next round of PSCs encompass not only conventional public transport, as at present, but extend to the other areas of transport being considered by this Committee? We do not underestimate the challenge involved in developing such a comprehensive approach, but it would undoubtedly help address anomalies in the current provision which, for example, see services provided from rural areas to large towns but no services within those towns.

Realistic Financial Framework

The policy framework needs to be accompanied by a realistic financial framework which seeks to predict the likely sources and quantum of public funding for the contract period.

Independent Needs Assessment

For a range of practical reasons, the first public service contracts (PSCs) were based on the existing Bus Eireann and Dublin Bus timetables. The new contracts should be based on an independent assessment by the NTA of the needs of the travelling public, both existing and potential public transport users. The Authority should also consider how best to deliver optimum value for money for the taxpayer, recognising the constraints on public funding.

Clear Service Specification

The NTA should clearly define the quantity and quality of service it wishes to procure under the new PSCs, reflecting actual customer needs and priorities and involving changes to existing service patterns where necessary. The service specification needs to be realistic and achievable within the financial resources likely to be available to the Authority over the contractual period, but must also challenge the service provider. The service specification should be based on a clearly defined network identified by the NTA as its desired outcome. In quantitative terms, the new PSCs should clearly and expressly define the places and routes to be served, the service frequencies to be operated and the passenger capacity to be provided, differentiated by peak/off-peak and weekday/weekend or other appropriate temporal denominators. The service specification should also be flexible enough to enable the operator to respond to changes in demand, whether short term relating to specific events or longer term as a result of changing travel patterns or the economic situation. Provisions should be built into the new contract to enable speedy authorisation of such changes. They should also set down clear qualitative parameters in respect of the range of criteria found in good contracts, covering issues such as accessibility, average fleet age, maintenance standards, cleanliness, customer service, safety management, staff training, information provision and so on.

Precise Performance Standards

The new PSCs should include a well designed, clear, precise and challenging set of performance standards based on all of the quantitative and qualitative service requirements referred to above. For example, contracts in major urban areas should specify a performance standard relating to average and excess waiting time for passengers at bus stops to encourage operators to ensure that bunching of services is avoided as much as possible, particularly off-peak. This could be modelled on the approach adopted by Transport for London and should take account of the level of traffic congestion and the quality of bus priority. Where appropriate, these performance standards should be

progressive, encouraging improved performance over the period of the contract. While the performance standards need to be challenging, they also need to be realistic and take account of the cost of delivery.

Independent Performance Monitoring

There should be provision for independent monitoring and reporting on performance, using ICT applications wherever possible. Information on the service standards specified in the PSCs and on operator performance against them should be published regularly on the web and on operator premises and vehicles. Iarnród Éireann sets an example in this regard by displaying posters with relevant route performance in its stations.

Incentives and Penalties

The contracts should include provision for incentives and penalties in the range of 5-10% of contract value. Incentives should be used to encourage performance beyond the contract requirements, particularly the achievement of significant growth in patronage. However great care is needed in defining the performance baseline to minimise the risk of windfall gains for the operator arising from external factors rather than its own actions. For example, the operator should not benefit from financial incentives where the amount of travel increases because of general growth in the economy or employment. Penalties should be applied where performance falls materially below the standards specified in the contracts, particularly but not exclusively in relation to service delivery. Escalating penalties should be considered where there is continuing underperformance on key parameters over a sustained period. It is critically important that the incentives and penalties are enforceable under the provisions of the new PSCs and that the Authority acts to fully enforce them throughout the contract period.

Q2. How can the new public bus contracts best ensure the integration of the public bus services and the integration of these services with the wider public transport network?

Clear Network Concept and Design

The starting point for integration is a clear network concept and design. As already mentioned in response to Question 1, the service specification should be based on a well-defined network identified by the NTA as its desired outcome. Physical and service integration should be at the core of that network.

Designated Interchange Points

The network should include a number of designated interchange points which facilitate transfers between bus services. The new PSCs should require operators to serve these interchange points adequately and directly, as well as mainline railway stations and specified suburban rail stations and Luas stops (designated as interchange points). This may require the provision of extra bus stop locations and facilities in city and town centres where existing stops are overcrowded or placed away from central locations. Operators should also be required to achieve the best possible timetable integration so as to minimise interchange waiting time for passengers. Targets for maximum waiting times might be considered but these would have to take into account factors such as any additional cost and the potential knock-on impact on other services. As far as possible interchange points should be “across platform” or “across street”. Interchange points should be designated as multi-user facilities accessible by all operators. Where this is not possible the distance between interchange points should be minimised as much as possible. Good information should be available for passengers on the route between interchange points, through signposting and maps at interchange points and via mobile phone applications. The implementation of these recommendations will require the full co-operation of local authorities in their capacity as planning and traffic authorities.

Flexibility to accommodate Route and Service Changes

There should be flexibility in the contracts to enable amendments to services and routes to reflect changing circumstances or customer needs. This would ensure proper integration between customer needs and service provision, delivering the product to customers where they want it, when they want it and to the standard they expect. Such provisions are likely to have cost implications where they require the availability of additional buses.

Direct NTA Contribution to Integration

The NTA itself can do a lot to improve integration in advance of the negotiation of the new PSCs by continuing the development of integrated ticketing, real time passenger information and the national travel planner. The launch of the Leap card is most welcome and the inclusion on it of additional ticketing products, the extension of its geographical and service coverage and the availability of card top-up facilities at all ticket machines should be progressed as quickly as possible. The objective should be to ensure that the Leap card can be used on all PSC services before the new contracts begin at the end of 2014.

Real time passenger information should be extended and the defects in the current system (such as phantom buses) should be addressed without delay so as to improve reliability and enhance customer confidence. There should also be a multimodal dimension to the provision of real time passenger information. For example, signs at bus stops could be used to draw attention to serious delays in road traffic which impacts on bus services or to disruption to adjacent rail services. The aim should always be to provide travellers with relevant information to inform their journey or modal choice decisions.

The introduction of integrated fares should be considered, with the fare charged reflecting the journey made rather than the number of service/mode changes involved. It is accepted that there may be revenue implications for operators. These should be clearly identified and a decision made based on an assessment of the costs and benefits.

There should also be an emphasis on the continuing implementation of operations management systems, such as automatic vehicle monitoring.

Contractual Obligation to Participate in Integration Measures

The new PSCs should continue to require operators to participate in the speedy development and full implementation of these ticketing, fares, information, planner and operations management systems and should ensure that the equipment and systems used by operators are compatible.

Q3. How can the new contracts best ensure value for taxpayer money?

Clearly defined Outcomes and Outputs

The answer to this question encompasses much of what we have already stated. Value for money will not be achieved unless the NTA is absolutely clear as to the outcomes and outputs it requires. These should be expressed in terms of a clear network concept and design, well designed service specifications and performance requirements and effective independent monitoring and reporting arrangements. The contracts need to be designed so as to encourage increased efficiency and effectiveness by operators. They also need to strike an appropriate balance between efficiency (in the utilisation of resources such as buses, depots and personnel) and effectiveness (in terms of the quantity and quality of service provided to users).

The contracts should include incentives and penalties related to performance, as described in response to Question 1.

Potential Use of Competitive Mechanisms

Competitive tendering can be considered as a way of achieving better value for money and this issue is addressed further in response to Question 6. In the case of continued direct award contracting, consideration might be given to the scope for introducing an internal market within those contracts. For example, would it be possible to look at the cost of delivering comparable services as between different districts or depots and basing contract pricing on the most cost effective outcomes? Building on the benchmarking studies of Bus Eireann and Dublin Bus commissioned by the Department of Transport prior to the 2009 contracts and to guide decision making by the NTA, new benchmarking comparisons with other operators should be carried out, independently of the service providers, well in advance of the next contract period. The PSCs should include provisions requiring full co-operation and full access to information to enable benchmarking studies to be carried out and should permit the Authority to renegotiate the contract based on the findings of any subsequent studies.

Adequate NTA Resources and Skillsets

The NTA needs to have the necessary in-house resources, skills and expertise to enable it design and implement the PSC process in a way which ensures the optimum value for money for the taxpayer. The skillsets required include financial, legal, strategic network planning and contract design, negotiation and administration.

The Influence of the Operating Environment

The operating environment has a critical influence on the reliability of bus services and on the effective use of the bus fleet. The NTA can play an important part in improving value for money in the provision of PSO bus services by continuing and intensifying the implementation of bus priority measures in the major urban areas and on critical trunk bus routes.

Q4. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments within the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

Considerations relating to Direct Award Contracts

If it is proposed to continue with direct award contracts for the foreseeable future, there is probably little to be gained from introducing separate contracts for different segments of the bus market in the Dublin area, in respect of existing services. Consideration should be given, as referred to in the response to Question 3, to the potential for the development of an internal market within the direct award operator. If this proved to be a viable proposition, separate contracts might be of value.

If new types of service (for example demand responsive, neighbourhood or orbital services) are being contemplated for inclusion in the public service obligation, separate contracts should be considered for these services and perhaps be tendered.

Considerations relating to Competitive Tendering

If competitive tendering is being contemplated for some or all of the bus services from 2014, separate contracts will be required. Contracts could be area, route or corridor-based. Area contracts could be based on specific geographical sectors, possibly using the Network Direct or existing depot catchments with some modifications. Route contracts could be based on a bundle of routes. Corridor contracts could be based on the QBC corridors. Any decision on this should take account of the extensive experience of contracting authorities abroad. Contracts should be of a sufficient scale to encourage a wide range of domestic and international interest, large enough to attract international operators and not so large as to preclude domestic private operators from tendering.

If competitive tendering is being contemplated for some later date, beyond the period of the 2014 contracts, the NTA should consider putting at least some limited services to tender in the 2014 round. This would give the Authority some experience of preparing for a tender process and negotiating the relevant contracts in advance of wider recourse to tendering.

Possible Amendment of PSO

The NTA should consider whether some towns previously served by intercity (“Expressway”) services need to be included in the public service obligation. The completion of the motorway network is likely to lead to more direct services between the principal cities and the resulting full or partial withdrawal of these services from smaller intermediate towns.

Legal Caveat on Limited Competitive Tendering

The comments above should be read in the context of our response to Question 6 and are subject to the following caveat. The NTA would need to consider whether it is legally possible to introduce tendering on a limited basis for existing or new services while at the same time retaining exclusive rights and direct award contracts as provided for in section 52 of the Dublin Transport Authority Act 2008.

Q5. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments outside the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

Potential for Market Differentiation

The market outside the Dublin area is more differentiated and may therefore be better suited to a number of contracts. Contracts could be introduced by area or by type of service. At its simplest it is possible to contemplate two contracts – one for city services and one for stage carriage services. Wider differentiation is also possible. Contracts could, for example, be geographically based using the Bus Eireann districts or similar area-based divisions. Individual contracts could be contemplated for each city or each city and its hinterland, though these would be quite small in terms of bus requirements. Differentiation may also be possible based on service type – city, town, regional, local stage carriage. In carrying out its assessment, the NTA should consider what approach best achieves network and integration benefits.

In principle a single contract should be best capable of delivering an integrated network. If a multiple contract approach is proposed, the Authority has to consider how best it can ensure, through contractual provisions or otherwise, that an integrated timetable of services will be delivered across the boundaries of the contracts and how resources will be deployed to best effect countrywide. For example, at present buses are used to provide different types of service over the course of a day and it would be important not to lose that flexibility. Or could buses operate across contractual boundaries?

Considerations relating to Direct Award Contracts

If it proposed to continue with direct award contracts for the foreseeable future, there is probably little to be gained from introducing separate contracts beyond perhaps a differentiation between city services on the one hand and stage carriage services on the other.

Considerations relating to Competitive Tendering

If competitive tendering is being contemplated for some or all services from 2014, separate contracts will be required. At a minimum, there could be two contracts – one for cities and one for stage carriage. The stage carriage services could be sub-divided into a small number of area-based contracts. If competitive tendering is being contemplated for a later date, the NTA should consider putting some limited services to tender in the 2014 round as a way of gaining experience before moving to wider tendering.

Legal Caveat

The above comments are also subject to the same caveat as on Question 4.

Q6. What are the potential benefits or otherwise of competitively tendering for the award of new bus service contracts, compared to directly awarding contracts to Dublin Bus or Bus Éireann?

Preliminary Legal Considerations

Before it commences any evaluation of the potential benefits of competitive tendering, the NTA will need to address a preliminary question relating to the performance of the existing direct award operators. Is the Authority satisfied that the operators comply with the relevant provisions of Irish and EU legislation and jurisprudence so as to permit the continuation of the exclusive rights and direct award contracts beyond 2014? These considerations include the continued existence of a public service obligation as defined in section 47 and the reasonable cost and efficient operator tests referred to in section 50(4).

Potential Benefits of Competitive Tendering

A range of potential benefits are claimed for competitive tendering of bus services, including:

- establishing the real cost of providing services through a market test;
- significant cost savings for initial contracts, possibly declining in subsequent contract periods as a result of market consolidation;
- significant improvements in operational performance, service quality and customer care;
- innovation in management practices and service provision.

Achieving Benefits dependent on Contracting Authority Skillset

These benefits are not an automatic consequence of the introduction of competitive tendering. They are critically dependent on the resources, skills and expertise of the contracting authority in planning, administering, implementing and monitoring the contractual process. The issues discussed in our responses to Questions 1 and 2 are directly relevant in this context. The contractor will deliver precisely what it is asked to and no more. If the contracting process is badly designed or managed, the taxpayer will get poor value for money and the responsibility for this will lie with the contracting authority. Therefore a key question to be considered by the NTA is whether it has, or will be able/permitted to acquire, the necessary resources, skills and expertise to proceed with contracting while avoiding the pitfalls referred to in this response.

Retaining Competitive Tension

There is a tendency towards consolidation after the initial contract period, often with fewer tenderers and higher contract costs for equivalent output. A key question for the contracting authority is how best to retain adequate competitive tension in the longer term. It is important to avoid the risk of replacing a public monopoly provider with a private one. This is an issue of particular significance for Ireland because of the relatively small size in international terms of its PSO bus market.

Retaining an Integrated Network

Among the benefits claimed for a direct award system is the level of integration and flexibility it provides. An integrated network of services is probably most easily provided by a single operator. There is greater flexibility to amend services to reflect changing customer requirements, falls or increases in demand, exceptional peaks in demand or reduced public funding.

By way of contrast, a potential downside of competitive tendering is that it can lead to a static model of service provision which is slow to respond to external factors. The contractor provides the services required by the contract and has no incentive to increase that level of provision. If additional services are required it may be necessary to review the terms of the contract, involving both time and money.

Risk of Under-priced Tenders

A related risk that needs to be considered is under-pricing the tender to win the contract. This can have adverse consequences for the quality of service delivered or ultimately for the viability of the contractor itself. Under-pricing can also be used to remove competitors, potentially resulting in less competitive future tender rounds and higher prices.

Importance of Considering Risks and Rewards

The NTA needs to consider the extent to which the claimed benefits are derived from the direct award system and how best they can be preserved in a tendered system. It also needs to assess the potential downsides of a contracted system and how to address them in tender design and implementation. These are not new issues and it will therefore be essential for the NTA to look for guidance based on the extensive experience of public transport authorities elsewhere.

Staff Pay and Conditions

The NTA should consider whether it would wish to include conditions in any competitive tendering process which stipulate requirements in relation to pay and conditions. Public transport authorities in some countries have included conditions which effectively prevent price competition based on lower remuneration, terms and conditions for employees than apply in the existing direct award operator. This may be done for social policy reasons or because there is a concern about de-skilling in the sector. It may also facilitate a smoother transition from direct award to tendered service provision, reducing the concerns of existing employees. Such contract stipulations would of course diminish the scope for tenderers to reduce costs. The alternative approach is that tenderers should be free to pay what market conditions require and in any event they will be subject to the Transfer of Undertakings Directive which affords significant protections to employees transferring from one employer to another.

Potential Impact on Incumbent Operators

Tendering has potentially significant impacts on the incumbent direct award operator, particularly if it loses substantial market share, and these should be considered by the NTA. They take on an even greater significance in a shrinking public transport market and could affect the future viability of the operator, with cost implications for the public purse. Employees would usually transfer to a new employer under EU transfer of engagements legislation, but what about buses and depots which become surplus to requirements? If they cannot be put to beneficial alternative use, there will be a significant economic loss and a failure to maximise the use of existing public assets.

Implementation Costs for NTA

The design, administration, management and monitoring of a system of competitive public service contracts involves a substantial financial overhead cost for the NTA, and by extension for the public purse. A sizeable proportion of this cost should anyway be incurred in the implementation of an effective direct award contracts system, but the cost of the tendering process itself will certainly be additional and significant. The NTA should therefore weigh up the benefits against the additional expenditure involved.

Consider Extensive Foreign Experience

There is extensive experience of tendering across Europe and worldwide and studies have been carried out of its effectiveness. These should be fully considered by the Authority as part of its deliberative process.

Overall View of Institute

While free competition is among the guiding principles of the Institute, it accepts that there are complex issues to be addressed when considering whether to continue with direct award contracts or move towards competitive tendering in respect of the provision of PSO bus services. The Institute is not adopting a definitive position at this time, but urges the NTA to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the issues involved, including those referred to earlier in this submission. Some of the key issues that the Authority should address can be summarised as follows:

- Do the incumbent operators comply with the reasonable cost and efficient operator tests under section 50(4) of the Dublin Transport Authority Act 2008?
- Has the NTA the necessary resources, skills and expertise to design and implement a competitive tendering process in a way which best delivers

value for money for the taxpayer and public transport user?

- What are the benefits for public transport users and the taxpayer? Can they be quantified and will they be sustained over time?
- How can a competitive tendering process be designed in a way that delivers an integrated network and provides at least cost the necessary flexibility to respond to changes in demand, economic conditions or other relevant factors?
- What measures can be taken to minimise the risks of tender underpricing and market consolidation in later tender rounds?
- What are the implications for the incumbent direct award operators and are they relevant considerations in the decision making process?
- What are the implications for staff of the incumbent direct award contractors? Should provisions be included in the tender process to address them and what are the cost implications of so doing?
- What are the additional costs of implementing a competitive process, over and above those of putting in place an effective direct award process, and do these additional costs outweigh the benefits?
- Are there other lessons that can be learned from the extensive experience of other public transport authorities in implementing a range of bus service procurement models?

Q7. Are there any other considerations you wish to identify or comment on, that are relevant to the new contracts for bus passenger services?

Large Exchequer Expenditure

The total cost to the State of public service contracts for bus services over a five year period could be up to €600 million. This is a very substantial sum and the design, administration, management and monitoring of those contracts needs to be well resourced, notwithstanding the continuing difficulties with the public finances.

NTA Resources and Skillset

At the risk of labouring this point yet again, we wish to emphasise the paramount importance of the NTA having adequate resources, skills and expertise to carry out this work. This is true whether direct award or tendered contracts are involved. If it has not already done so, the NTA should carry out a skills audit to establish what skills deficits it needs to address.

Develop Skills In-House

The necessary core skills and expertise should be developed in-house and supplemented by specialist consultancy services. This approach represents best value for the taxpayer. A consultant-led approach would be more expensive and result in less skills transfer. Having the core skills in-house will also enable the Authority more effectively to manage the output of the consultancy work.

The Institute would be happy to support the NTA's business case to Government for the necessary resources generally and additional staff in particular. We recognise that there are continuing major constraints on the public finances and consequent restrictions on creating new posts. However exceptions should be made where there is a good business case and where there are demonstrable benefits to the public purse. Only a small number of specialist staff should be required which, together with the upskilling of existing staff and appropriate consultancy support, should be adequate for the task of ensuring best value for both taxpayer and public transport user in respect of Exchequer expenditure of up to €600 million. This expertise would also be available for the later renewal of the rail PSC which could involve Exchequer expenditure of up to €2 billion over a 15 year period.

Second Staff

As well as direct recruitment of staff with the requisite skills and experience, the NTA should second members of its existing staff to public transport authorities abroad. We have the advantage of being late into this process and we can therefore learn from the experience, and more particularly the mistakes, of others. The issues arising in Ireland are unlikely to be unique and solutions will have been found by others which are likely to be applicable in Irish circumstances. It would also be useful to seek staff placements in a range of public transport authorities which use different procurement methods, whether direct award, competitive tenders, concessions or hybrid forms.

Field Visits

Field visits to public transport authorities abroad are strongly recommended for relevant NTA staff, senior management and members of the Authority. These should include dialogue with the staff and management of those authorities and with public transport operators, local politicians, user groups, trade unions and business representatives. These visits tend to be very enlightening and the people consulted are usually very open and honest about

their experiences. While it is understandable that the NTA might wish to curtail expenditure on foreign travel in current circumstances, it would be a false economy in this particular case. Should this become an issue at some future stage, you are free to refer to the Institute's support for such field visits.

Continuing Professional Development

The Institute considers that there is an urgent need to improve the availability and quality of education and training specific to the transport sector and is engaged in a continuing dialogue with the third level educational sector about this issue. As discussed earlier in this submission, the effective implementation of PSCs, whether direct award or tendered, requires a range of skills and expertise which are in short supply. The NTA should consider how this deficit might best be addressed in advance of the 2014 PSC process. The Institute would be happy to work with the NTA on this issue.

Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in Ireland

10 July 2012

SUBMISSION 31

DRAFT

Non-statutory public consultation on 2014 Public Bus Service Contracts

Questionnaire

South Dublin Chamber suggested response is shown in red

Q1. How can the new public service contracts best ensure a good quality of service is provided to passengers?

Following inclusions are recommended in the New Contracts to ensure a good quality of service is provided to passengers :-

1. The details of inspection, enforcement and monitoring regime should be made more specific with a requirement that quarterly reports are provided by the NTA and published on the websites of both the NTA and the Dublin Bus/new contractor.
2. Dublin Bus/new contractor should be obliged to seek regular feedback from the passengers, the National Consumer Agency and the European Consumer Centre Ireland and promptly act on their observations.
3. The reporting regime for Dublin Bus/new contractor should include number of passenger complaints received and numbers acted upon/ actions taken.
4. Dublin Bus/new contractor should be encouraged to prominently display performance reports inside the buses for information of passengers along with details of telephone numbers etc for lodging complaints if any.

Q2. How can the new public bus contracts best ensure the integration of the public bus services and the integration of these services with the wider public transport network?

Following inclusions are recommended in the New Contracts to ensure the integration of the public bus services and the integration of these services with the wider public transport network:-

1. Dublin Bus/new contractor should be obliged to formulate short, medium and long term policies for integration in conjunction with the NTA with clear time lines of implementation.
2. The co-ordination of different transport modes and different transport companies should be made the central plank of the new contracts to create an integrated public transport system from the viewpoint of the passenger.
3. Time lines should be laid down for full implementation of the Integrated Ticketing Scheme (ITS) and the LEAP Card.
4. A concerted public information campaign should be launched for popularising the new integrated services.

Q3. How can the new contracts best ensure value for taxpayer money?

Following inclusions are recommended in the New Contracts to ensure value for taxpayer money:-

1. Government subvention should be primarily aimed at subsidising the non-viable 'public service obligation' routes.
2. The system of monitoring and inspection should ensure that the Dublin Bus/new contractor fully meets the requirements of service provision and the quality of services provided at all times.
3. Dublin Bus/new contractor should be obliged to ensure certain level of investment in research and development, new technology and equipment for continual improvement of services.

Q4. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments within the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

South Dublin Chamber feels that separation of the bus market segments would lead to higher back-office and admin costs making it more difficult to obtain value for taxpayer money. A unified contract, on the other hand, would ensure economies of scale and consequently a better product for the consumers.

Q5. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments outside the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

Considering the relatively small size of the overall bus market in Ireland, outside the Dublin area, (an average of 37.5 M passengers carried annually by Bus Éireann), South Dublin Chamber feels that separation of the bus market segments at this stage would lead to higher back-office and admin costs making it more difficult to obtain value for taxpayer money.

Q6. What are the potential benefits or otherwise of competitively tendering for the award of new bus service contracts, compared to directly awarding contracts to Dublin Bus or Bus Éireann?

South Dublin Chamber feels that in the present context, when bus passenger numbers have declined by 21%, competitive tendering at this stage would result in enhanced requirement of government subvention and a possibility of more job losses. Considering the good performance of Dublin Bus [resulting in progressively decreasing government subvention (reduction of € 16.2m in 2011) despite fuel costs rising by € 14m a year], it would be in public interest to award new contracts directly to both Dublin Bus and Bus Éireann. Further, it is felt that direct contracts awarded to the existing contractors would enable us to build on the following successes achieved by them so far:-

- Integrated Network Management: Redesign and simplification of the network under the Network Direct project.
- Efficiency Improvements: reduction of 230 buses and 630 staff and revised operational practises.

- Customer service Improvements:
 - Real Time Passenger Information rollout.
 - introduction of the Automatic Vehicle Location system of bus control to improve service reliability
 - Introduction of Leap (a card that can be used for travel on all Dublin bus services)

Q7. Are there any other considerations you wish to identify or comment on, that are relevant to the new contracts for bus passenger services?

As award of direct contracts is within the remit of EU regulations at this time, we must take advantage of this facility to continue with the existing contractors to consolidate on the successes achieved so far to make the public transport system more responsive and modern.

Please complete the questionnaire and

- submit by email to 2014busconsult@nationaltransport.ie or

- submit by post to

2014 Bus Public Consultation

National Transport Authority

Dun Scéine

Iveagh Court

Dublin 2.

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SUBMISSION 32

Non-statutory public consultation on 2014 Public Bus Service Contracts

Questionnaire

Q1. How can the new public service contracts best ensure a good quality of service is provided to passengers?

- 1. Frequency and reliability of bus service.**
- 2. Affordability of public transport.**
- 3. Travel Destinations – being able to get to where you want to go and also providing better public transport services where travel needs justify.**
- 4. All buses must be super low floor, thus giving east access particularly For people with disabilities, the elderly, mothers with buggies, etc.**
- 5. Work with transport providers to make information more accessible and legible, i.e. information and marketing campaigns.**
- 6. User friendly transport stops – bus shelters at all stops containing timetables and route maps in large print. Seating should also be there.**

Q2. How can the new public bus contracts best ensure the integration of the public bus services and the integration of these services with the wider public transport network?

- 1. Get a clear understanding of existing travel demands and mobility patterns.**
- 2. Fully develop an integrated travel and mobility management plan. This in turn should result in a significant behavioural change, i.e. a modal shift, specifically a reduction in car-use.**
- 3. Work closely with local city Councils so that the required infrastructure (e.g. bus lanes, bus shelters, etc.) is in place on bus routes and also to ensure traffic management measures are managed as efficiently as possible.**

Q3. How can the new contracts best ensure value for taxpayer money?

- 1. Cities (or part of) would be included as a package for bus operators to submit their bids. One of the best examples of this practise is in London. Transport For London have been doing this for a number of years very successfully.**

Q4. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments within the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

In April 2011 Colm McCarthys review group on State assets and liabilities concerning the possible semi-state companies contained a letter received from Mr. Cyril Carniel, Northern Europe Director, Rapt Dev. In this letter dated (16th August 2010) Mr. Carniel states that Rapt Dev “recommendation would be to divide the network by depot or by group of depots with a minimum fleet number of 200 vehicles for economy of scale purpose, and to draw up a gross contract.”

Q5. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments outside the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

Yes. The NTA would receive quotes/bids from commercial bus operators who are experienced in specific market segments. Obviously relevant work experience is always very valuable.

In April 2011 Colm McCarthys review group on State assets and liabilities concerning the possible semi-state companies contained a letter received from Mr. Cyril Carniel, Northern Europe Director, Rapt Dev. In this letter dated (16th August 2010) Mr. Carniel states that Rapt Dev would be interested in purchasing Bus Eireann and then “divide the network by region and/or market segment (i.e. Expressway on one side and regional lines on another side).”

Q6. What are the potential benefits or otherwise of competitively tendering for the award of new bus service contracts, compared to directly awarding contracts to Dublin Bus or Bus Éireann?

- 1. The NTA would obtain the most competitive bids possible, thus resulting in best possible value for the taxpayer.**
- 2. The NTA would be removing the monopoly that currently exists which is totally unacceptable.**

Q7. Are there any other considerations you wish to identify or comment on, that are relevant to the new contracts for bus passenger services?

Please complete the questionnaire and

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- submit by post to**

2014 Bus Public Consultation

National Transport Authority

Dun Scéine

Iveagh Court

Dublin 2.

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SUBMISSION 33

Non-statutory public consultation on 2014 Public Bus Service Contracts

Questionnaire

Q1. How can the new public service contracts best ensure a good quality of service is provided to passengers?

- **Include annual/bi-annual reviews of services provided. Items to be reviewed should include timetables, routes, loadings, ticket types, fare structures, running times and routes**
- **Reviews should allow for some type of public consultation**
- **Include more targets for areas such as customer service, accessibility and environmental issues.**
- **Contract should include all rural transport services**
- **Set levels of minimum numbers required for a service to operate**

Q2. How can the new public bus contracts best ensure the integration of the public bus services and the integration of these services with the wider public transport network?

- **Contracts should include all rural transport services**
- **Define 'Integration'. Does integration mean that a bus carries school children, commuters, OAPS and special needs or does it mean that all buses, planes and trains will link together?**
- **Review fare structure e.g. evaluate zones rather than current fare scale**
- **Set goals and targets for integration and connectivity**

Q3. How can the new contracts best ensure value for taxpayer money?

- **Public consultation will allow the taxpayer to have input into decisions re levels/types of services provided**
- **Average minimum numbers should be achieved for a service to continue or for service to change from being operated by a large to a medium/mini bus.**
- **Ad hoc efficiency reviews**
- **Levels of marketing/advertising Public Transport should be part of the contract.**
- **More targets in line with Smarter/Greener Travel**
- **Levels of service provided should vary with requirements. For example extra services to schools during term time. Summer months should see increase in service levels to beach or tourist areas.**
- **Review services to tourist areas during summer months. Ensure adequate provision of services to beach/tourist areas will increase revenues in local, more rural communities during summer months.**

Q4. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments within the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

Unlikely. Difficult to imagine that cost to taxpayer would improve as the efficiencies of scale achieved by the operator would reduce and therefore increase costs. Costs of managing the contract for the NTA should increase if number of operators increase.

From my own experience travelling internationally, cities where bus transport is operated by one main operator are easier to navigate. Timetables, stops and vehicles are easily identifiable. In addition, the level of trust I would have in one main well known provider of transport is higher than many of the smaller ones. This trust covers areas such as driver and vehicle standards. For example on a recent visit to Edinburgh, I decided to use one of the more well known sightseeing bus brands for the reasons listed, as well as a belief that the more known brand would provide a more frequent reliable service.

Q5. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments outside the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

Unlikely. Difficult to imagine that cost to taxpayer would improve as the efficiencies of scale achieved by the operator would reduce and therefore increase costs. Costs of managing the contract for the NTA should increase if number of operators increase.

Allowing one main operator to operate all services will allow for smoother operations and increased connectivity. Existing communications systems in the organisation should allow for seamless transfers from one service to another.

Increased levels of competition can lead to better value for the consumer but can also lead to having to deal with a number of companies in relation to queries or complaints.

I have seen in other countries where increased competition can lead to unhealthy vying for business and aggro at stations/facilities.

Q6. What are the potential benefits or otherwise of competitively tendering for the award of new bus service contracts, compared to directly awarding contracts to Dublin Bus or Bus Éireann?

Price of contract may be decreased. However, competitive tendering will not always allow the best but the cheapest company to get the contract and if the best company does not get the contract the negative impact on public transport could take a long time to repair.

I would have concerns if large multinational organisations successfully tendered for the contracts. Profits of multinationals would not be held in Ireland and therefore have negative impact on the taxpayer.

In these uncertain economic times it is important that government departments try to retain all revenues, taxes and jobs in Ireland.

Q7. Are there any other considerations you wish to identify or comment on, that are relevant to the new contracts for bus passenger services?

- **Improve commuter services i.e. nonstop auxiliaries or improved commuter fares. Levels of commuter public transport use are no way near the levels seen in England**
- **Improve customer information and facilities i.e. bus poles, shelters, online information.**
- **Set objectives to increase the usage of public transport e.g. marketing and advertising levels or target youth audience (fares promotions) to ensure growth in the industry in the coming years**
- **Review fares and bring in line with EU averages**
- **Services should not be limited to large vehicles.**
- **Continuous improvements in levels of fraud detection**
- **Some focus on tourism transport**
- **Include all rural transport as part of PSO contracts**

Please complete the questionnaire and

- submit by email to 2014busconsult@nationaltransport.ie or

- submit by post to

2014 Bus Public Consultation

National Transport Authority

Dun Scéine

Iveagh Court

Dublin 2.

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SUBMISSION 34

Non-statutory public consultation on 2014 Public Bus Service Contracts

Questionnaire

Q1. How can the new public service contracts best ensure a good quality of service is provided to passengers?

Q2. How can the new public bus contracts best ensure the integration of the public bus services and the integration of these services with the wider public transport network?

Q3. How can the new contracts best ensure value for taxpayer money?

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Q4. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments within the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

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Q5. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments outside the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

Q6. What are the potential benefits or otherwise of competitively tendering for the award of new bus service contracts, compared to directly awarding contracts to Dublin Bus or Bus Éireann?

I write as one of the thousands who have been forced to use, pay for and subsidise Dublin Bus (DB) for decades. I have no vested interest whatsoever beyond wanting to see efficient, reliable, customer friendly customer-oriented bus transport in Dublin. Since Dublin Bus have never provided this over the decades, I have no faith that they ever will.

I have been forced to use Dublin Bus for the best part of 4 decades. I am frankly appalled that it should even be suggested that they just be handed a new contract. For most of those 4 decades – dating from the time when they were just plain old CIE – they have been by far the worst company of any kind I've ever used. They given me more grief, hassle, rudeness, indifference, incompetence lies and lousy service than any other company of any kind, public, private, transport, non-transport, Irish, foreign. Moreover, they've given me more grief, hassle, rudeness, indifference, incompetence lies and lousy service than all the other companies I've ever used, rolled into one. And my experience is very far from unique.

There have been some improvements in recent years, but they were from an extremely low level. Eg

- Drivers used routinely and deliberately leave early – this is nicknamed 'going sharp' in Dublin Bus (see Prime Time investigation c December 2006). This is less routine now
- Destination scrolls on the front of buses were routinely incorrect; Dublin Bus has reduced this by installing expensive new electronic scrolls – as opposed to just obliging drivers to do

the job they're paid for

- Dublin Bus had a 'smoking ban' from 1988-2004, 16 years, which was a total farce – after 16 years there were smokers on most of the buses I used at peak commuting time. This has improved only because the real ban that was introduced in 04 is enforced externally by Environmental Health Officers, as opposed to the previous 'ban', which was enforced by Dublin Bus – ie not enforced at all. This is the best proof I've seen that only strict and effective external regulation will bring about a decent service.

In my decades of experience, customer service in Dublin Bus, especially with regard to complaints, is farcical. If a complaint receives any reply at all it is repeated and word-processed 'boiler plate' – essentially 'the matter will be investigated. And then whatever you complained about happens again, the next day, the next week, the next month, the next year, the next decade.

As far as I can see the 'theory' of Dublin Bus is that it will combine the best of the private sector and public sector. Like a private company it will have a bottom line, and will need to please and attract customers to improve its receipts. However it will not be only interested in profit, but also in the public good, so will run at times and in places that are not profitable.

The actuality is that it is the worst of both worlds for customers. If a customer has a problem with a private company in the real world he can threaten to take his business elsewhere. He can tell his friends, relatives and family. Do this to Dublin Bus – they don't care. However, they are not responsive to politicians, parliamentary questions etc like the Civil Service. Try writing to the Minister – 'the minister has no function in the day to day operation of this company but has asked me to pass your correspondence directly to Dublin Bus ...'

To my mind to achieve a competent bus service in Dublin you need

- (a) Competition – possibly just in awarding contracts for routes, as in Dublin, or possibly as in having more than one company operating similar routes, as in Edinburgh, OR
- (b) Proper regulation. This means that customers don't complain to Dublin Bus, they complain to an independent regulator which has power to force Dublin Bus to answer complaints and adhere to its obligations – the powers of the regulator should of course include the power to take some or all routes away from any contract-holder, OR
- (c) Both, ie regulated competition, where companies compete for routes, but are still answerable to an independent regulator.

It is frankly ludicrous that it should even be suggested that Dublin Bus should automatically be handed a contract with no competition. They have had decade after decade to provide an acceptable service. They have failed.

No doubt they will explain at length how they're doing a great job and everyone loves them. In what universe? Listen to the passengers.

Q7. Are there any other considerations you wish to identify or comment on, that are relevant to the new contracts for bus passenger services?

SUBMISSION 35

Non-statutory public consultation on 2014 Public Bus Service Contracts

Questionnaire

General Information

Contact person's name	Jonathan Williams
Company name	Cubic Transportation Systems Limited
Address	AFC House Honeycrook Lane Salfords Redhill Surrey RH1 5LA
Email address	Jonathan.Williams@cubic.com
Contact telephone number	+353 (0) 87 991 8737
What is the main business of your organisation?	AFC Maintenance and solution provider As such, we have constrained our responses to that of AFC Maintenance

Q1. How can the new public service contracts best ensure a good quality of service is provided to passengers?

By providing reliable, consistent service fit for the passengers needs.

Q2. How can the new public bus contracts best ensure the integration of the public bus services and the integration of these services with the wider public transport network?

By providing reliable and dynamic options for travel based on the customer's needs rather than an individual operators business.

By providing the customer a series of options / incentives to use the public transport network dependent on day, time route and congestion and further providing dynamic real time updates and routing to other services if and when situations arrive

Q3. How can the new contracts best ensure value for taxpayer money?

One option could be revenue share option.

The NTA (taxpayer) part with no capex or opex funds and the supplier provides the necessary equipment, service and SLA on an on-going basis for a % of the click revenue.

This further increases the supplier to innovate to drive more customers onto the service.

Provision of one AFC solution across the public transportation system. This is not intended to mean at equipment level.

Q4. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments within the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

The advantages and disadvantages are very much dependent upon NTA objectives.

There are some key themes however which could be considered.

- **A single source provider is easier for NTA to manage and interact with but would generally mean that NTA couldn't gain from specialist, niche providers who would bring innovation and specific knowledge to distinct areas of the services as they would not be incentivised to participate in the tender process.**
- **Separating Operations; AFC Maintenance; Infrastructure Maintenance and Vehicle Maintenance enables specialist providers to participate and provide NTA with unique solutions and would ensure each individual provider applies a good level of focus to the area they are responsible for.**
- **The objectives and requirements for each of the services are very different and respond to a completely distinct set of variables. There is a danger in losing the opportunity to drive value by "commoditising" the elements into a conglomerate.**

Q5. Are there benefits in introducing separate contracts for different bus market segments outside the Dublin area? If so, how should such market segments be defined?

See above

Q6. What are the potential benefits or otherwise of competitively tendering for the award of new bus service contracts, compared to directly awarding contracts to Dublin Bus or Bus Éireann?

Non AFC question

Q7. Are there any other considerations you wish to identify or comment on, that are relevant to the new contracts for bus passenger services?

We would look to the NTA to adopt a Service Level Approach (SLA) and Key Performance Indicator (KPI) to the service.

If the NTA were to set out business guidelines, SLA and KPI's, then the specialist providers would then be free to change the infrastructure as required to meet the business guidelines, SLA and KPI's rather than being constrained to maintaining existing / aging equipment and infrastructure.

Contract duration of 10+ years drive innovation.

Please complete the questionnaire and

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- submit by post to

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