

CILT SUBMISSION TO JOINT COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT REGARDING BUS TRANSPORT IN DUBLIN

1. Introduction

1.1. The Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport in Ireland (CILT) are very grateful to the Joint Committee on Transport in allowing submissions on the subject of effective bus transportation in the Greater Dublin Area. Our Institute follows closely the debates and investigations of the Joint Committee and congratulates the very important work it is doing. The main focus of the Joint Committee appears to us to be on the pressing problems of sub optimal transportation mobility for people and goods in our urban areas due to congestion, we believe that these problems impact greatly on, the quality of life of Irish citizens, the costs of passenger and freight transport and Irish commitments under Kyoto obligations. We believe that these problems are so serious that only quite radical solutions can overcome them.

1.2. The CILT is the independent professional body for those engaged in logistics and all modes of transport, enhancing the professional knowledge and competence of its members through comprehensive training, continuing professional development and certified educational programmes. With members involved in all aspects of Logistics and Transport the CILT has advised and contributed to transport developments in Ireland through ongoing activities and through membership of various consultative bodies. As an independent professional body, the Institute does not lobby on behalf of any individual modes of transport. Rather it strives to take a considered overview grounded in best practice, and tries to influence developments that are likely to impact on the transport and logistics sector as a whole; believing that an effective transport and logistics industry is fundamental to a prosperous and sustainable Ireland. For more than fifty years the Institute has promoted expertise and professionalism in our industry in Ireland, and currently have over 1,100 members involved in all aspects of logistics and transport. We maintain close links with the International Institute which has a

membership of about 31,000 logistics and transport professionals throughout the world.

2. Modal Shift

2.1. Modal shift from private car based transport, with its inefficient use of infrastructure, to public transport and its efficient use of infrastructure is fundamental to the CILTI belief that congestion is imposing unacceptable financial, social and economic costs on the city of Dublin and the country as a whole. Our Institute's believe that while there are very many and complex reasons why it is difficult to effect modal change, that maximising the public's perception of an excellent public bus transport is the key to this change, and that this perception relates to much more than just the bus trip but to the whole door to door experience of the passenger.

2.2. The CILTI believe that the reduction in congestion in many urban areas during school holidays is a prime example of the complex issues to be addressed in order to achieve a shift from car based transport to public transport. A school bus system similar to that operated extensively in the United States would address some of the issues but not all. Census figures show that in the main journey distances to schools in urban areas are short and the provision of bus services would not address a lack of bus service and its subsequent substitution by private car. The issue of safety for children by their parents is significant, as is the inclusion of the school run with other journeys e.g. work or childcare. But some reasons for using a car for short school trips could be put down to a lack of awareness or plain laziness. The use of private cars by children for short trips not only adds to congestion but assists in promoting unhealthy living and helps create various psychological barriers to future public transport use. The Dublin Transportation Office has done some work in assessing the barriers to public transport use in this area; the CILTI hold the view however that much more needs to be done to determine why there is such a large amount of car use for so many very short journeys. Following on from a study and analysis for the motivations behind the making of such short journeys, measures to counteract these should be implemented.

2.3. Notwithstanding our believe that work needs to be done to asses and analysis the reasons why school transport is problematic our Institute feel

that local authorities should act on known safety problems for school children trying to access their schools by foot or on bicycles, including:-

2.3.1. Very poor or dangerous parking close to schools that adds to the danger of pedestrian and cycling children, e.g. parking on footpaths forcing children to walk on roads.

2.3.2. Lack of safe bicycle-ways near schools.

3. Dublin Transport Authority

3.1. The CILTI are convinced that a Dublin Transport Authority (DTA) is vital to the provision of a modern, integrated and sustainable Greater Dublin Area (GDA) transport system, and its setup would be a most important step in providing such a system, of which bus transport is and will remain the main stay. We understand that the DTA Bill is near completion and will come up very soon, and we welcome this and look forward to a speedy passage through the Oireachtas.

4. Land Use and Transport Planning

4.1. There are many obstacles to providing a modern, integrated and sustainable transport system the first of which is the generally sub optimal land use and transport planning heretofore being the norm in the GDA. While matters have improved in this regard the CILTI believe that many aspects of County and Local Area plans in the region do not take a systems view of transportation. We believe that if and where possible these plans, and future plans, should contain provisions for a transport system rather than disjointed plans for individual areas and individual routes. We are convinced that the DTA has a major role in ensuring the transport elements of such plans are coordinated with all the other plans within the region. We believe that where necessary existing County and Local Area plans should be revised in this regard.

4.2. Notwithstanding the role generally of the Joint Committee on Transport in looking at transport matters only; the CILTI believe that such planning matters are so fundamental to best practice in public transport planning that there should be a way for the committee to consider this issue in their deliberations.

5. Congestion Charging/Road User Charging

5.1. The CILTI believe the Irish system of transport taxation generally taxes ownership rather than use. Owners pay high capital costs and then try and maximise the value they perceived they have paid very highly for. They tend to see their operating costs as only fuel. Our Institute believe in a system where ownership costs are low and the costs of use are high, this would encourage car owners to use public transport and free up road space. Notwithstanding this we believe that a system of congestion charging based on the current London model would be very expensive to implement and would be unfair to some users. We believe that such charging is difficult to impose fairly and complex to operate, but further believe that work currently underway in London and Holland on the use of GPS technology can solve these issues. Our Institute believe that charging measures to reduce congestion should not be used until a country wide system of road user charging, capable of charging a variable fee based on fair and relevant details is available, and such technology provides the best hope of this.

6. Bus Company Business Models

6.1. The CILTI see merit in both single bus company and a multi bus company, business models. The Institute hold the view however, that for several very important reasons both of these models individually offer less than best possible service and efficiencies. The Institute takes the view that features of both are possible in a system that offers best service and efficiencies. We believe that the bus business in the United Kingdom illustrates very good examples of good and bad practice provided by differing business models. Such examples can help guide changes in bus operations within the GDA to achieve best possible utilization of resources and maximise customer service.

7. Passenger Issues

7.1. There are a number of issues in this regard that should guide the best possible bus business model for the GDA. Such issues are in the opinion of the CILTI fundamental to improvements in bus operation, modal shift from cars and the consequent reduction in congestion. These issues do not, or should not relate to bus operator ownership. The public do not generally

have issues with who operates the bus they are waiting for, their issues are much more fundamental. The CILTI hold the view that addressing these issues, would increase the propensity to travel by bus.

7.2. Lack of confidence in the bus system is generally held to be the very strong reason as to why people who have other choices of mode do not use busses. This lack of confidence can be attributed to several factors.

7.2.1. Reliability or perceived lack of it, affects people who have to be in particular places at particular times. If a person cannot be confident that the bus will get them to work on time they will not use them.

7.2.2. Frequency, gives the confidence that even if a person misses a bus one will come soon and not cause her/him problems. Lack of frequency has the opposite effect.

7.2.3. Operational Security, in that the passenger knows or finds it easy to; find bus stops, knows where busses are going, know what the fare is, knows where and how connections with other busses/modes are made, knows times and frequency of the services he/she requires.

7.2.4. Physical Security, this is very important for off peak and for passengers who feel vulnerable. The failure of the queuing system in Dublin over the past number of years also contributes to a fear for physical security. Barriers with an opening at the top of a queuing line and bus driver stopping with the doors at these openings could remedy some of this. Top priority in policing illegal car parking in the area of bus stops should be given by police and parking officers. Security personnel operate on the DART system and help reduce the fear of physical danger, our Institute believe that this could be extended to the bus system.

7.3. Where different bus companies operate in the same streets passengers do not always know what bus company is operating a public service or private hire. The CILTI believe that busses operating public service should have some commonality of livery easily identified with potential passengers not familiar with particular routes or operators.

7.4. Currently bus stops for different bus companies have different designs and are located at different points often in the same street. While stops at

termini are dedicated to a particular route or group of related routes, on route bus stops should serve as many routes as possible being readily identified and easy to locate.

7.5. The CILTI believe that the lack of integrated ticketing is holding back public transport use. Where passengers need to change mode or even bus route lack of seamlessness is constraining passenger growth.

7.6. Currently at bus stops in Dublin information is published on times busses are due to leave the terminus with approximate times to get to that particular stop. With congestion such times are not accurate. Times for when the next bus is due in real-time together with where it is going would let intending passengers know when to expect a bus. If they have to make a connection with busses or other modes nearby that information would also be very useful.

7.7. Many possible passengers would use park and ride provisions if these facilities were introduced and high speed and frequency express busses were operated from them. They CILTI believe that possible bus passengers could also be induced to use busses for the final parts of their journeys if well designed inter modal interchange facilities were added or a well designed interchange was added to existing facilities. Such a well designed interchange would be expected to provide car parking and frequent local feeder busses as well as convenience shopping etc for commuters under time pressures. The CILTI believe that the provision of such services provides a synergy that helps to achieve a critical mass not always achieved just by a car park at a bus stop.

7.8. In issuing operators route licences currently, an indication of the service to be provided is required. However the public are not generally privy to this information nor it seems is there a published prescribed standard of service the operators must adhere to. The CILTI believe that there should be standard minimum service level agreements used by the licensing authority, for all operators and perspective operators. The details of these agreements are not known to the public. The CILTI believe they should be, as well as results of regular audits to ensure adherence.

8. Traffic Issues

8.1. There are a number of traffic issues that if addressed could enhance the door to door journeys for passengers. The CILTI believe the implementation of all or some of these would increase the public and passengers positive perception of bus journeys .

8.2. Public Transport passengers have to complete their journeys by becoming pedestrians and walking to their final destination. The figures provided by the City Council peak hours traffic counts, for public transport and private car usage show that many more pedestrians use Dublin city centre than the number of private cars. The average speed of vehicles is quite low, but at times and on some streets cars can travel much faster than average. Lowering the city centre speed limit could make pedestrian journeys safer and more pleasant in streets where traffic can sometimes travel much faster than average e.g. pedestrians crossing the road or streets with very narrow footpaths where it is often necessary to step out onto the road to allow people to pass. The average speed of this traffic is not usually increased because while it can attain high speed in one street it generally speeds up just between stops on other streets. The CILTI believe that the city centre speed limits could be lowered with little or no impact on vehicle average speeds.

8.3. As there are much more pedestrians, who are completing their journeys having used public transport, than private cars in the city centre; the CILTI believe in many cases that pedestrians should have right of way in crossing most city streets thus enhancing the public transport passenger's experience of their total journey.

8.4. The CILTI believe the great success of Quality Bus Corridors warrants their continued installation, however the designs have not always included for busses passing each other.

8.5. The number of city centre car parking spaces remains high, both public and private spaces. Dublin City Council fund their traffic management services from the revenue earned by on street parking. With the introduction of the Luas service the number of parking spaces for busses at their termini within the city centre has been reduced while the number of busses has increased. There is some evidence to suggest that busses waiting to begin service at evening peak times are adding to

congestion because they often have to double park. The CILTI believe that a reduction in the number of parking spaces for private cars would reduce the number of cars in the city centre, thus reducing congestion and speeding up bus traffic. The Institute believes that a reduction of on street parking could also allow for more bus parking, reducing congestion caused by waiting busses.

8.6. Currently many Dublin streets that do not normally become congested allow parking on one or both sides. The CILTI believe that in streets where any congestion takes place or is likely to take place and where parking is allowed, such car parking could be switched to Bus Lanes, if there is a bus route on that street. Even when congestion is infrequent on these streets busses would have the facility to "skip" to the top of the traffic queue in each of these streets when it does occur.

8.7. The CILTI believe that the current parking regime, as operated by Dublin City Council has by its vigorous use of clamping and tow away, ensured that there is usually a surplus of available on street parking spaces. Given this situation the Institute feel that the rules on the length of time a car can spend on a particular parking space are not been enforced to the extent as was previously the case. There seems to be an inclination for car owners to use such spaces for the whole day. There is evidence to suggest that the price of all day parking does not deter many of the current all day "Car Parkers"; we believe that having to move a car every two hours may be a bigger incentive for them to leave their cars at home than increased parking fees but allowing all day parking in the same street.

8.8. The CILTI believe that it is unfair that very short cars and very long cars should have to pay the same amount for parking. The Institute feel that there could be some differentiation in the price of long and short vehicle parking charges.

9. The Optimum Public Transport Model for Dublin

9.1. The CILTI believe the best business model to deliver effective public transport in the GDA should be first and foremost, based on a well defined and very high level of service to the community. We believe that a single supervising body, the DTA should be responsible for all public transport in

the GDA. The GDA would be responsible for the analysis and measurement of demand, route planning, operations and service standards. Demand for services would not be mode specific but would conclude by analysis which or what mode would be best suited to a particular demand. The CILTI believe that even with the proposed rail capacity due under Transport 21, the bus will still be the main mode for GDA commuters. Routes for busses would become the property of the DTA, they could set the fares, determine where stops should be and they could own and provide the stops. The stops would have real time traffic displays not only for the busses on the routes that stop at that particular stop, but where there was a transfer point close by, between other routes or modes, information on these routes and modes also; the DTA would own the information system.

9.2. Bus operators would provide a pre-determined level of service on DTA designated routes and be paid by the DTA on a per kilometre basis. The operators applying on a tender basis. All successful bidding companies would use a single system wide DTA owned ticketing system, they would collect cash if necessary, and pass it on to the DTA. Busses and personnel would have an almost identical livery.

9.3. The CITLI believe that such a system would allow one or a number of operators to operate what the public would see as a seamless system. The DTA being in control of the ticketing could ensure that ticketing would be integrated across all services and modes. The ticketing system would provide readership data thus allowing for more needs responsive management. The system would not have to provide the level of financial accuracy demanded by competing companies, to ensure they get what they believe should be their revenue. Such a ticketing system should be less difficult to introduce than one to serve a number of competing companies.

Recommendations

9.4. Having regard for the issues raised and reviewed the CILTI make the following recommendations, these we believe if implemented would have a very positive effect on the effectiveness of bus transportation in the GDA.

9.5. That the members of the Joint Committee do all in their power to speed the passage of the DTA Bill through the Houses of the Oireachtas.

9.6. That there should be a greater integration of transportation system planning and County and Local Area Plans, and Oireachtas members on the Transport Committee should consult with members on the Environment Joint Committee and with relevant Government Ministers to ensure this takes place.

9.7. That more work should take place to identify the physical and emotional reasons why people do not use public transport. The analysis of such work should inform strategies designed to promote modal shift. As well as the provision of physical resources to assist modal shift, more effort should be put into the reduction of emotional barriers. Examples of this would include more awareness education, better design of facilities and much better customer focus on the part of the public transport providers.

9.8. There should be single design quality bus stops, very visible and with cover from weather. Where possible a single stop for any bus service operating in the same street should be used. Stops should have barriers to assist queuing, bus drivers should stop with doors at the correct part of the barrier. Prevention of illegal parking at bus stops (including other busses) should have priority.

9.9. There should be some visible security at bus stops particularly at off peak.

9.10. All public bus services should be part of a GPS locating system that delivers real time information to bus stops on the busses due over at least a one hour period. Luas and Train systems should also be displayed at relevant bus stops.

9.11. Busses and bus staff, regardless of ownership should have enough commonality of livery to reduce confusion with to passengers or perspective passengers.

9.12. Passengers should have an integrated ticket useable on all bus and rail services within the GDA.

9.13. Very high standard modal interchanges should be provided by local or central government that provides not just park and ride but all the extra security and facilities to attain the critical mass often lacking in these facilities in the past.

9.14. Passengers should know what levels of service bus companies propose in route licence applications. Audits of these service levels should be conducted regularly and the results made public.

9.15. The number of city centre car park spaces private and public, should be reduced, to reduce the number of cars using the roads and streets but also to make more room for bus termini.

9.16. On street parking charges should be increased to make up for reduced revenue to the local authorities.

9.17. The rule that limits metered on street parking to two or three hours should be enforced more rigorously.

9.18. On street parking charges should be greater for vehicles over 3 meters long.

9.19. QBC installation should continue for more major routes and the design should include for busses passing other busses stopped to pick up passengers.

9.20. Every street that is also a bus route should have a bus lane, on street parking should be removed to assist in making these bus lanes.

9.21. City centre speed limits should be reduced to 30 kph.

9.22. On city centre streets that are not bus routes pedestrians should have right of way.

9.23. The DTA should be brought into operation as soon as possible, it should have a very high level of control over the various transport companies providing public transport in the GDA. For busses it should own the various components of the system, bus companies should operate services on behalf of the DTA and be paid only on a mileage basis.

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