

By email

15 September 2017

File Ref: OIAP-7-4292

Tony Randle

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Dear Mr Randle

Request for information OIA 2017-104

I refer to your request for information dated 16 August 2017, which was received by Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) on 16 August 2017. You have requested the following information:

“1) Can I please have a copy of all GWRC meetings and/or workshops documentation since January 2016 where the Rail Monthly Passes was considered and/or decided not to be changed including the meeting agenda, information provided to the meeting and meeting minutes ?

2) Can I please have a copy of any analysis and/or information on usage of the Rail Monthly Passes such as the total number of passes by line & zone and also the average number trips are made per month per user ?

3) Can I please have a copy of any estimates held on the patronage impact and revenue impact of discontinuing the Rail Monthly Pass ?

4) Can I please have a copy of any estimates held on the patronage impact and revenue impact of reducing the discount currently applied to the Rail Monthly Pass ?

5) Can I please have a copy any report or analysis that details the Fare Recovery ratios for the option for the proposed 3% Increase and the ratios if there was no fare Increase ?

6) Can I please have a copy of the actual Fare Recovery calculations for the option of no 3% Increase and for the proposed 3% Increase ?

7) Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a -0.8% Patronage impact for this proposal [General 3% fare increase] including, if available, the changed number of passengers and the patronage changes by zone and/or mode (both percentage and actual numbers) ?

RESPONSE TO OIA 2017-104

The Greater Wellington Regional Council promotes **Quality for Life** by ensuring our environment is protected while meeting the economic, social and cultural needs of the community



8) *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a +\$2.3 million Revenue impact for this proposal [General 3% fare increase] including, if available, the revenue changes by zone ?*

9) *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a +0.4% Patronage impact for this proposal [Free bus transfers] including, if available, the changed number of passengers and the patronage changes by zone and/or mode (both percentage and actual numbers) ?*

10) *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a -\$2.4 million Revenue impact for this proposal [Free bus transfers] including, if available, the revenue changes by zone ?*

11) *Can I please have any and all information on the number of "customers in Wellington city who use the three-zone maximum fare" ?*

12) *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a +2.6% Patronage impact for this proposal [25% off-peak discount] including, if available, the changed number of passengers and the patronage changes by zone and/or mode (both percentage and actual numbers) ?*

13) *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a -\$3.1 million Revenue impact for this proposal [25% off-peak discount] including, if available, the revenue changes by zone ?*

14) *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a +0.2% Patronage impact for this proposal [25% accessible concession] including, if available, the changed number of passengers and the patronage changes by zone and/or mode (both percentage and actual numbers) ?*

15) *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a -\$0.7 million Revenue impact for this proposal [25% accessible concession] including, if available, the revenue changes by zone ?*

16) *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a +1.0% Patronage impact for this proposal [50% discount for all school children] including, if available, the changed number of passengers and the patronage changes by zone and/or mode (both percentage and actual numbers) ?*

17) *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a -\$0.7 million Revenue impact for this proposal [50% discount for all school children] including, if available, the revenue changes by zone ?*

18) *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a +0.9% Patronage impact for this proposal [Free bus connections to trains when using a rail monthly pass] including, if available, the changed number of passengers and the patronage changes by zone and/or mode (both percentage and actual numbers) ?*

19) Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a -\$0.4 million Revenue impact for this proposal [Free bus connections to trains when using a rail monthly pass] including, if available, the revenue changes by zone ?

20) Can I please have a copy of any submissions made to implement this zone boundary change [Move Porirua zone boundary north]?

21) Can I please have a copy of any other submissions for zone boundary changes received by the GWRC but not being proposed to be changed including the reason why this change was not included in the Fare Review ?

22) Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a +0.2% Patronage impact for this proposal [Move Porirua zone boundary north] including, if available, the changed number of passengers and the patronage changes by zone and/or mode (both percentage and actual numbers) ?

23) Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a -\$0.4 million Revenue impact for this proposal [Move Porirua zone boundary north] including, if available, the revenue changes by zone ?

24) Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a minimal Patronage impact for this proposal [Discontinue 30-day bus passes] including, if available, the changed number of passengers and the patronage changes by zone and/or mode (both percentage and actual numbers) ?

25) Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a minimal million Revenue impact for this proposal [Discontinue 30-day bus passes] including, if available, the revenue changes by zone ?

If the requested information is held in electronic form, I would prefer it was provided in its complete and original electronic format. I would also prefer that all communications with respect to this OIA request be via the FYI web site."

On 13 September 2017, GWRC sent you a letter advising you that due to the size of your request, an extension was necessary, and therefore has extended the time for responding to your request from 13 September to 22 September 2017. This decision was made pursuant to section 14 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 (the Act).

In your response to our letter of extension on 13 September 2017, you have requested the following information and a time extension for your submission on the Better Metlink Fares proposals:

"Can I please ask that the response information already compiled by the GWRC be provided immediately in an interim release as agreed with the GWRC Officer on Tuesday 12 September?"

Finally, I have requested this information to support a possible submission on the GWRC Fare Review public consultation but submissions are due by the 18th of September ... before the requested information will be provided by the GWRC on the 22nd of September. Can I also ask for a time extension on the provision of a written submission to Monday, 25th of September so that I can use the requested information to support the points outlined in a possible Fare Review submission ?”

GWRC’s response is as follows:

GWRC is aware that you are seeking the requested information in order to make a submission on the proposed fare changes, which is currently being consulted on. Given the time limits in relation to responding to your requests for information, GWRC is prepared to offer you an extension to the submission period, and will accept a copy of your submission by 9am on Monday, 25 September 2017.

Please note that the information you have requested includes background calculations and estimates of revenue and patronage impacts of various fares proposals. This information and data is contained in several cross-referenced and linked spreadsheet models that are stored on GWRC’s document management system. Much of the data contained in these spreadsheets relates to revenue and boarding data that is subject to confidentiality agreements between GWRC and the existing bus operators.

The extensive cross-referencing and links between the models and input data therefore restricts our ability to release the background calculations you have requested in their complete and original formats. In response to the data confidentiality issues, we have redacted some information and modified the formats of the spreadsheets.

The following explains the information withheld, the ground for withholding the information and the impacts of the data redactions applied to the spreadsheets. Where needed, further explanations are provided as part of the responses to your specific questions.

Information withheld and description of the attached spreadsheets

As discussed above, some of the attached spreadsheets contain revenue, patronage or cost information that are protected under the confidentiality agreements between GWRC and the operators of bus services (in particular with NZ Bus). Such information has been withheld in accordance with section 7(2)(c)(i) of the Act on the ground that withholding the information is necessary to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence, where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied.

We have provided you with copies of each spreadsheet in two formats as described below:

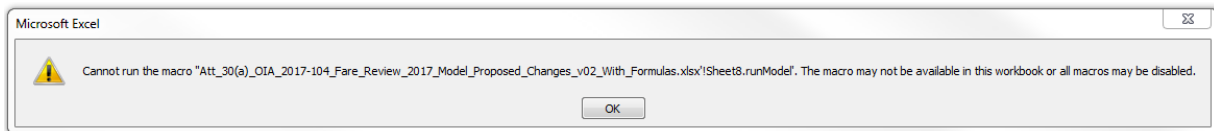
- **A spreadsheet identified with an (a) in its name:** is a copy of the spreadsheet with the confidential information relating to boardings, revenue and costs deleted in a format that gives the formulas

- **An spreadsheet identified with a (b) in its name:** is a copy of the spreadsheet with the confidential information relating to boardings, revenue and costs deleted in a format that gives the figures but does not give the formulas behind the figures

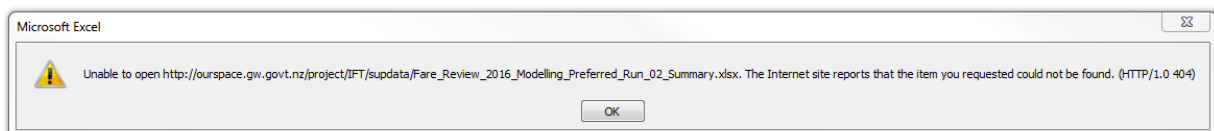
With these formats, the following changes will happen in the second group of spreadsheets i.e. those identified with a (b) in their names:

- Values in the 'Summary' or other worksheets that contain summary of outputs or aggregate calculations that outline the results are affected. This has occurred because the formulas in that part of the document rely on the redacted values contained in the same worksheet or in other linked worksheets. The formulas will still be visible in the formula bar.
- Some cells have formulas that use values from other worksheets. Where there is a link between worksheets, the totals and subtotals in the worksheets with formulas will be incorrect as some may require data from the redacted cells. Please note that where data has been deleted from cells, the value of the cell becomes zero.
- Some graphs drawn using the cells affected by redactions will also be affected.

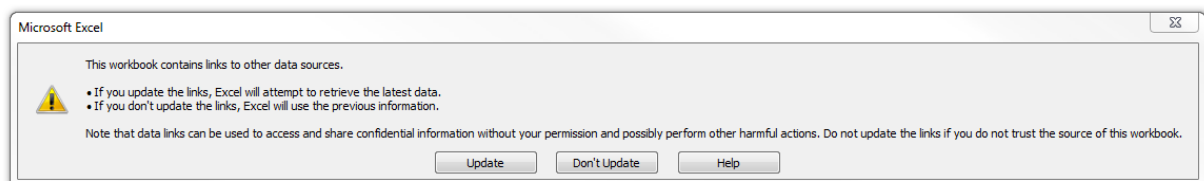
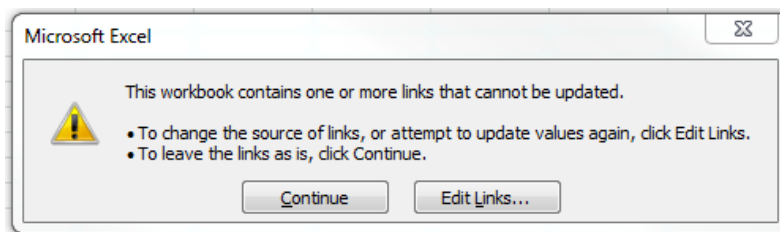
Some workbooks contain Macro buttons that are disabled. This means that attempting to run a macro will result in messages indicating that the macros are disabled, such as the message shown in the image below:



When opening some spreadsheets you may be prompted with a message as shown below reading “Unable to open [http://\[URI address\]](#). The internet site reports that the item you requested couldn't be found. (HTTP/error #)”. This will happen if the active workbook contains links to external data sources or models.



Other messages such as the ones shown below may also appear at the start of the spreadsheets. This will also happen if the active workbook contains links to other data sources and unable to source the linked data or model. Breaking the links to external sources of data or models in the workbooks could affect the formulas and therefore they are retained.



Response to specific questions

Question 1. *Can I please have a copy of all GWRC meetings and/or workshops documentation since January 2016 where the Rail Monthly Passes was considered and/or decided not to be changed including the meeting agenda, information provided to the meeting and meeting minutes?*

During the early stages of the fares review, a long list of options was developed that included options for rail monthly passes among other fare change options. These options were evaluated in a series of workshops with GWRC officers and discussed with a reference group established to provide early input into the 2016 Fares Review project.

Attachments 1 to 23 are copies of the memos, notes, slides and papers that were presented to and/or discussed in various meetings and workshops through the fares review process. The documents include the rail monthly pass options that were evaluated along with other fare change options. These documents need to be read in conjunction with the attached copies of the Long-list Option Evaluation Report (Attachment 24) and the Methodology Working Paper for Fares Review (Attachment 25) that describe the processes and methods used for the evaluation of options.

As described in the attached documents, the fares review was undertaken in several stages that involved identification and evaluation of a long list of policy options followed by an evaluation of a small number of packages of best performing options. These evaluations ultimately lead to the preferred package of fares initiatives. All options and package were evaluated against a set of principles endorsed by the Sustainable Transport Committee (STC) on 1 August 2016 (Attachment 26, Report 16.351).

Question 2. *Can I please have a copy of any analysis and/or information on usage of the Rail Monthly Passes such as the total number of passes by line & zone and also the average number trips are made per month per user?*

The table in Attachment 27 provides the total number of rail monthly passes sold in 2014/15.

The available data for rail tickets does not identify the number of trips per monthly pass. The trip rates for rail monthly passes were estimated using the results of the 2004 and 2014 rail surveys. Attachment 27 includes the trip rate analysis for rail monthly passes.

Question 3. *Can I please have a copy of any estimates held on the patronage impact and revenue impact of discontinuing the Rail Monthly Pass?*

Attachments 28(a) and 28(b) are copies of the spreadsheet analysis and modelling used to estimate the revenue and patronage impacts of an option to discontinue and replace existing monthly passes with a combined bus and rail monthly pass extended to the entire network in all areas including in Wellington city. This option was considered as a proxy for fare capping regime and was evaluated along with several other options for the purpose of the long-list evaluation of options. The complete removal of existing rail monthly passes without proper replacements was not considered as an option, given that such an option was in essence at odds with the objectives and most of the guiding principles set out for fares review in Attachment 26.

The modelling was part of the long-list evaluation of options and was used for the purpose of rapid assessment of options as described in the Methodology Working Paper (Attachment 25). This option was further analysed in the context of fare capping during the analysis and assessment of the packages of fare policies using the models contained in Attachments 30(a) and 30(b), with the assumption that the cost of capping and multi-modal monthly passes are about the same.

Question 4. *Can I please have a copy of any estimates held on the patronage impact and revenue impact of reducing the discount currently applied to the Rail Monthly Pass?*

The long-list of options included a number of pricing options for the existing rail monthly passes. Copies of the models used to estimate the revenue and patronage impacts of the pricing options for existing rail monthly passes are provided in Attachments 29(a) and 29(b) for two options A1 (pricing at 32 times the smartcard fares) and A2 (pricing at 34 times the smartcard fares). Please note that these models were part of the long-list evaluation of options and were further optimised during the analysis and assessment of the packages of fare policies using the models contained in Attachments 30(a) and 30(b).

Question 5. *Can I please have a copy any report or analysis that details the Fare Recovery ratios for the option for the proposed 3% Increase and the ratios if there was no fare Increase?*

The impact on farebox recovery of the proposed fare initiatives including the proposed 3 percent fare increase are estimated at a high level in Attachment 30(a) and 30(b).

Please note that the estimates assume everything else remain unchanged and do not account for any likely change in the operating costs as a result of moving to the new contracting environment. A detailed review of the farebox recovery policy will identify the appropriate targets for farebox recovery, but the review is pending finalisation of the on-going contract

negotiations for directly appointed units with NZ Bus and Mana, and the Council's endorsement of the proposed fares policy package and the Council's Long Term Plan budget.

Question 6. *Can I please have a copy of the actual Fare Recovery calculations for the option of no 3% Increase and for the proposed 3% Increase?*

Please refer to the answer under question 5.

Question 7. *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a -0.8% Patronage impact for this proposal [General 3% fare increase] including, if available, the changed number of passengers and the patronage changes by zone and/or mode (both percentage and actual numbers)?*

The information you have requested is contained in Attachments 30(a) and 30(b). Please note the calculations in the "Run_Model" and "Run_Forecasts" worksheets will need to be updated to show correct results for the 3 percent fare increase. The analysis estimates the patronage and revenue impacts of various scenarios of fare changes, including the proposed 3 percent fare increase.

Question 8. *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a +\$2.3 million Revenue impact for this proposal [General 3% fare increase] including, if available, the revenue changes by zone?*

Please refer to the answer under question 7.

Question 9. *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a +0.4% Patronage impact for this proposal [Free bus transfers] including, if available, the changed number of passengers and the patronage changes by zone and/or mode (both percentage and actual numbers)?*

The information you have requested is contained in Attachments 30(a) and 30(b). Please note the calculations in the "Run_Model" and "Run_Forecasts" worksheets will need to be updated to show correct results. The calculations in the document provide the substantive estimates for patronage impacts of the proposed bus transfer option and was supplemented by separate detailed modellings and analysis used to validate the results. The supplementary spreadsheet model used for the detailed transfer analyses contains the data that is subject to confidentiality agreement between NZ Bus and GWRC. The confidential data is contained in all worksheets of the spreadsheet model used for the analysis of transfers and therefore has been withheld in accordance with section 7(2)(c)(i) of the Act on the ground that withholding the information is necessary to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence, where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied.

Question 10. *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a - \$2.4 million Revenue impact for this proposal [Free bus transfers] including, if available, the revenue changes by zone?*

The information you have requested is contained in Attachments 30(a) and 30(b). Please note the calculations in the “Run_Model” and “Run_Forecasts” worksheets will need to be updated to show correct results. The calculations in the document provide the substantive estimates for revenue impacts of the proposed bus transfer option and was supplemented by separate detailed modellings and analysis used to validate the results. The supplementary spreadsheet model used for the detailed transfer analyses contains the data that is subject to confidentiality agreement between NZ Bus and GWRC. The confidential data is contained in all worksheets of the spreadsheet model used for the analysis of transfers and therefore has been withheld in accordance with section 7(2)(c)(i) of the Act on the ground that withholding the information is necessary to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence, where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied.

Question 11. *Can I please have any and all information on the number of "customers in Wellington city who use the three-zone maximum fare"?*

The available data does not directly identify the number of customers in Wellington city who use the three-zone maximum fare. A separate analysis was undertaken at early stages of fares review to estimate the number of boardings based on the detailed data provided by NZ Bus for a period of one year in 2014/15. The estimate indicated that the number boardings on through-routes in Wellington city that involved 4 or 5 zones was approximately 0.3 percent of all bus boardings in 2014/15.

The spreadsheet model used for the analysis contains the data that is subject to confidentiality agreement between NZ Bus and GWRC. The confidential data is contained in all worksheets of the spreadsheet model used for the analysis of throughroutes and transfers and therefore has been withheld in accordance with section 7(2)(c)(i) of the Act on the ground that withholding the information is necessary to protect information which is subject to an obligation of confidence, where the making available of the information would be likely to prejudice the supply of similar information, or information from the same source, and it is in the public interest that such information should continue to be supplied.

Question 12. *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a +2.6% Patronage impact for this proposal [25% off-peak discount] including, if available, the changed number of passengers and the patronage changes by zone and/or mode (both percentage and actual numbers)?*

The information you have requested is contained in Attachments 30(a) and 30(b). Please note the calculations in the “Run_Model” and “Run_Forecasts” worksheets will need to be updated to show correct results.

Question 13. *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a - \$3.1 million Revenue impact for this proposal [25% off-peak discount] including, if available, the revenue changes by zone?*

The information you have requested is contained in Attachments 30(a) and 30(b). Please note the calculations in the “Run_Model” and “Run_Forecasts” worksheets will need to be updated to show correct results.

Question 14 *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a +0.2% Patronage impact for this proposal [25% accessible concession] including, if available, the changed number of passengers and the patronage changes by zone and/or mode (both percentage and actual numbers)?*

The information you have requested is contained in Attachments 30(a) and 30(b). Please note the calculations in the “Run_Model” and “Run_Forecasts” worksheets will need to be updated to show correct results.

Question 15. *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a - \$0.7 million Revenue impact for this proposal [25% accessible concession] including, if available, the revenue changes by zone?*

The information you have requested is contained in Attachments 30(a) and 30(b). Please note the calculations in the “Run_Model” and “Run_Forecasts” worksheets will need to be updated to show correct results.

Question 16. *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a +1.0% Patronage impact for this proposal [50% discount for all school children] including, if available, the changed number of passengers and the patronage changes by zone and/or mode (both percentage and actual numbers)?*

The information you have requested is contained in Attachments 30(a) and 30(b). Please note the calculations in the “Run_Model” and “Run_Forecasts” worksheets will need to be updated to show correct results.

Question 17. *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a - \$0.7 million Revenue impact for this proposal [50% discount for all school children] including, if available, the revenue changes by zone?*

The information you have requested is contained in Attachments 30(a) and 30(b). Please note the calculations in the “Run_Model” and “Run_Forecasts” worksheets will need to be updated to show correct results.

Question 18. *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a +0.9% Patronage impact for this proposal [Free bus connections to trains when using a rail monthly pass] including, if available, the changed number of passengers and the patronage changes by zone and/or mode (both percentage and actual numbers)?*

The information you have requested is contained in Attachments 30(a) and 30(b). Please note the calculations in the “Run_Model” and “Run_Forecasts” worksheets will need to be updated to show correct results. The calculations in the document provide the substantive estimates of revenue and patronage impacts of extending the rail monthly pass to include regional bus connection and was supplemented by separate detailed modellings used to validate the results.

Question 19. *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a -\$0.4 million Revenue impact for this proposal [Free bus connections to trains when using a rail monthly pass] including, if available, the revenue changes by zone?*

Please refer to the answer under question 18.

Question 20. *Can I please have a copy of any submissions made to implement this zone boundary change [Move Porirua zone boundary north]?*

The proposed package of fare changes including the proposal to change the fare zone boundary in Porirua is currently being consulted. Any submission on this proposal will be considered by the Council through their decision making on the final package of fare changes.

Question 21. *Can I please have a copy of any other submissions for zone boundary changes received by the GWRC but not being proposed to be changed including the reason why this change was not included in the Fare Review?*

No formal submission was received through the review of fares in 2016/17 requesting changes to fare zone boundaries in other parts of the region. The proposed package of fare changes is currently being consulted. Any submission on fare zone boundaries will be considered by the Council through their decision making on the final package of fare changes.

Question 22. *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a +0.2% Patronage impact for this proposal [Move Porirua zone boundary north] including, if available, the changed number of passengers and the patronage changes by zone and/or mode (both percentage and actual numbers)?*

The information you have requested is contained in Attachments 30(a) and 30(b). Please note the calculations in the “Run_Model” and “Run_Forecasts” worksheets will need to be updated to show correct results.

Question 23. *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a -\$0.4 million Revenue impact for this proposal [Move Porirua zone boundary north] including, if available, the revenue changes by zone?*

The information you have requested is contained in Attachments 30(a) and 30(b). Please note the calculations in the “Run_Model” and “Run_Forecasts” worksheets will need to be updated to show correct results.

Question 24. *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a minimal Patronage impact for this proposal [Discontinue 30-day bus passes] including, if*

available, the changed number of passengers and the patronage changes by zone and/or mode (both percentage and actual numbers)?

The information you have requested is contained in Attachments 30(a) and 30(b). Please note the calculations in the “Run_Model” and “Run_Forecasts” worksheets will need to be updated to show correct results. The calculations in the document provide the substantive estimates of revenue and patronage impacts of the proposed changes to pass products and was supplemented by separate detailed modellings used to validate the results.

Question 25. *Can I please have the background calculations that support the estimate of a minimal million Revenue impact for this proposal [Discontinue 30-day bus passes] including, if available, the revenue changes by zone?*

Please refer to the answer under question 24.

We have considered whether the public interest in the requested information outweighs GWRC’s need to withhold certain aspects of the requested information. As a result, we do not consider that the public interest outweighs GWRC’s reason for withholding parts of the document under the grounds identified above.

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

Yours sincerely



Angus Gabara
General Manager, Public Transport (Acting)