



MEDIA RELEASE

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Buses score improves, but cycling score drops

The Conservation Council and Pedal Power ACT have given the ACT Government an improved 7 out of 10 for public transport but reduced its mark for cycling to 6.5 out of 10 in their latest report card on the implementation of the ACT Sustainable Transport Plan.

Trish Harrup, Director of the Conservation Council, said the ACT Sustainable Transport Plan which aims to increase public transport, cycling and walking trips was released in April 2004. Since then, the Conservation Council and Pedal Power have issued a six-monthly report card on the implementation of the Plan.

'Figures show that Canberrans are changing their transport choices and this is an achievement for the Sustainable Transport Plan. For the first time in May this year, adult bus boardings topped 24,000 for a day, this compares with the 2005-06 target of 19,300. Cordon counts by Pedal Power in 2004 and 2006 recorded a 16% increase in cycling numbers,' said Ms Harrup.

'Given the increase in bus patronage, it is pleasing to award the Government a 7/10 mark up from the 6.5/10 we awarded in our previous report last December,' said Ms Harrup. 'Initiatives to improve public transport include the Flemington Dr Busway and the introduction of express buses.'

'Recent improvements in the public transport service have brought modal share back up to the level it was at in the early 1990's, however, we have strong concerns that the potential impact of the budget cuts, including an indication of intention to cut off-peak services, could see Canberrans abandoning the buses once again.'

Though the score for buses had improved, the Conservation Council and Pedal Power have significantly lowered the score for cycling down to 6.5/10, from 8.5/10 in the last report. Pedal Power spokesman, Tony Shields, said, 'After giving an excellent mark in the last report card, it's disappointing to reduce the mark, but funding for cycling capital works was reduced by over 50% in the 2006/07 Budget and some work, while excellent, has been slow in coming.'

'The new bicycle parking guidelines and new cycling engineering guidelines look great, however we hoped they would be completed by now,' said Mr Shields. 'We hope they will be finalised in the next few months, along with an on-line cycle map.'

Mr Shields also highlighted as good initiatives new on-road cycle lanes on Flemington Rd, Cotter Rd, Fairbairn Ave, Northbourne Ave and Drakeford Dr.

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