



MEDIA RELEASE

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Government gets a ‘fail’ on buses, but cycling score improves

The Conservation Council and Pedal Power have given the ACT Government 4 out of 10 for public transport but improved its mark for cycling to 7.5 in their latest transport report card.

‘In our July report card we gave a good 7 out of 10, so it is really disappointing to have to give a fail this time around, but we see no alternative,’ said Trish Harrup, Director of the Conservation Council.

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

‘The ACTION bus timetable has been slashed following funding cuts in the ACT Budget. Suburban services have been reduced, with many services now hourly from 8.30 or 9 am. The service cuts are going to lead to a significant drop off in passengers and reverse the good growth that’s happened over the last three years.

‘An hourly service will result in very low patronage, with only those with no other transport choice using the buses.’

Though the Government rated a ‘fail’ on buses, the Conservation Council and Pedal Power raised the score for cycling to 7.5/10, from 6.5/10 in the last report card. Pedal Power spokesman Tony Shields, said there were a number of factors behind the upgrade.

‘The Government has released the best bicycle parking guidelines in Australia. This will ensure most new and renovated buildings provide good bike parking, showers and other facilities to encourage cycling.’

‘The Government reaffirmed its commitment to cycling and cycle lanes after a negative media release from the NRMA in November. Roads ACT has also carried out a number of minor capital works projects which shows an increased understanding of what is needed to encourage cycling.’

Mr Shields said the mark for cycling would have been higher if adequate funding had been committed to cycling capital works. ‘Only \$350,000 is in the 2006-07 capital works budget for cycling projects. This does not go a long way to fixing the missing links in Canberra’s cycle network,’ said Mr Shields.

For more details: Tony Shields 6262 5150, 0418 67 68 01
Trish Harrup 0412 425 665 Report available on request.