



Bus transport during Glasgow Commonwealth Games 2014

Transform Scotland position paper

30 October 2013

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This paper arises as a result of our concerns regarding the quality of buses to be used to transport spectators during the Commonwealth Games, and the lack of response from the Organising Committee (under whose responsibility these arrangements lie) to enquiries regarding this matter.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Scottish Green Bus Fund rounds 1 and 2 has assisted in the purchase of 70 new low carbon buses between July 2011 and March 2013. The third round will help to finance a further 24 hybrid buses, which are expected to be in service by March 2014.
- 2.2 There has, however, been a significant underspend in rounds 2 and 3 of the fund, being around 27% (of a budget of £2million) and around 37% (of a budget of £3million) respectively. A fourth round of the fund, with a budget of approximately £2million was announced by Transport Scotland on 30 August 2013, but bids are not yet known (<http://www.transportscotland.gov.uk/public-transport/Buses/Bus-Fund>).
- 2.3 Of more specific concern to this paper, there has been a clear lack of interest in purchasing low carbon buses in the Glasgow area in the run-up to the Commonwealth Games. This is a particular worry given the city's notorious air quality problems and the contribution that buses can make to those problems. Meanwhile, Lothian Buses in Edinburgh has made a substantial bid to each round of the Green Bus Fund.

3 The situation in 2014

- Lothian Buses will have 45 low-carbon buses in service on key routes across Edinburgh
- First in Glasgow will have 10 hybrids on key routes, while other operators will have a handful of small vehicles on community/ subsidised routes across the urban area.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1 It is indicative of the lack of importance with which the Scottish Government/Transport Scotland regards public transport, and buses in particular, that they cannot see the benefit of encouraging the uptake of fleet investment opportunities with the operators in the host city of an event such as the Commonwealth Games.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 Transport Scotland should take immediate action to rectify the lack of uptake of low carbon buses in the Glasgow area.
- 5.2 The Commonwealth Games Organising Committee must make a commitment to procure the maximum number of low carbon buses available for supplementary transport during the Games.

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Transform Scotland is the national sustainable transport alliance, campaigning for a more sustainable and socially-just transport system. Our membership includes bus, rail and shipping operators; local authorities; national environment and conservation groups; consultancies; and local transport campaigns. Transform Scotland Limited is a registered Scottish charity (SC041516).

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