

THE WAIRARAPA CONNECTION

PERFORMANCE REPORT SUMMARY

1 January – 30 April 2000

(Report to Group General Manager Marketing from Manager Customer Services
- 1 May 2000)

BACKGROUND

The Wairarapa Connection is a Tranz Metro rail commuter service connecting the Wairarapa townships of Masterton, Carterton, Matarawa, Woodside and Featherston with the Hutt Valley and Wellington.

There are three main market segments:

- Early morning and evening peak commuter services used by Wairarapa residents who work in Wellington and the Hutt Valley.
- Off-peak weekday services used by Wairarapa residents travelling between Masterton and Wellington, and return, generally for non-work related reasons.
- Weekend services, including excursions to the Wairarapa.

Early this year there were a number of complaints concerning late Wairarapa Connection services. The complaints were mainly prompted by three lengthy delays, caused by locomotive malfunctions, on peak-time commuter services in late February.

Lengthy and unexplained delays are seldom tolerated by customers.

Tranz Rail acknowledges these complaints and is committed to improvement. A number of measures have already been taken to improve timekeeping.

PERFORMANCE

As already mentioned two locomotive malfunctions in late February caused serious delays to early morning services to Wellington. On two of those services, some passengers were more than 100 minutes late arriving at their destination.

About the same time there was another serious delay on a Wellington-Masterton service caused by the late arrival of an inbound train, and waiting for passengers attending a Super 12 game at the WestpacTrust Stadium. This service was nearly one hour late arriving in Masterton.

The two locomotive malfunctions on The Wairarapa Connection were the main cause of customer concern.

In any case, delays exceeding 10 minutes are the main reason for complaint from regular users of The Wairarapa Connection.

ACTIONS

To improve punctuality on The Wairarapa Connection we will improve:

- Locomotive reliability and availability.
- The handling of large parties.
- Inter-related timekeeping on other Tranz Metro services.

To improve services on stadium event days we will:

- Advise regular customers of upcoming Stadium events and recommend they board the train as early as possible to ensure they get a seat.

To improve customer communication we have:

- Erected signs at all Wairarapa stations advising commuters of Tranz Rail's general enquiry number for information on late running services. This is an interim measure before the installation of a passenger information system planned for the 2000/2001 financial year.

These actions are already underway.