VAGO

Victorian Auditor-General's Office

Improving Bus Services

June 2026

Independent assurance report to Parliament
2025–26: 26

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Improving Bus Services

Independent assurance report to Parliament
Published by order, or under the authority,
of the Parliament of Victoria
June 2026

The Hon Shaun Leane MLC
President
Legislative Council
Parliament House
Melbourne

The Hon Maree Edwards MP
Speaker
Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
Melbourne

Dear Presiding Officers

Under the provisions of the *Audit Act 1994*, I transmit my report *Improving Bus Services*.

Yours faithfully

Andrew Greaves
Auditor-General
17 June 2026

The Victorian Auditor-General's Office (VAGO) acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters throughout Victoria. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, their continuing culture, and to Elders past and present.

Contents

Audit snapshot

Are Melbourne's bus services meeting transport users' needs?

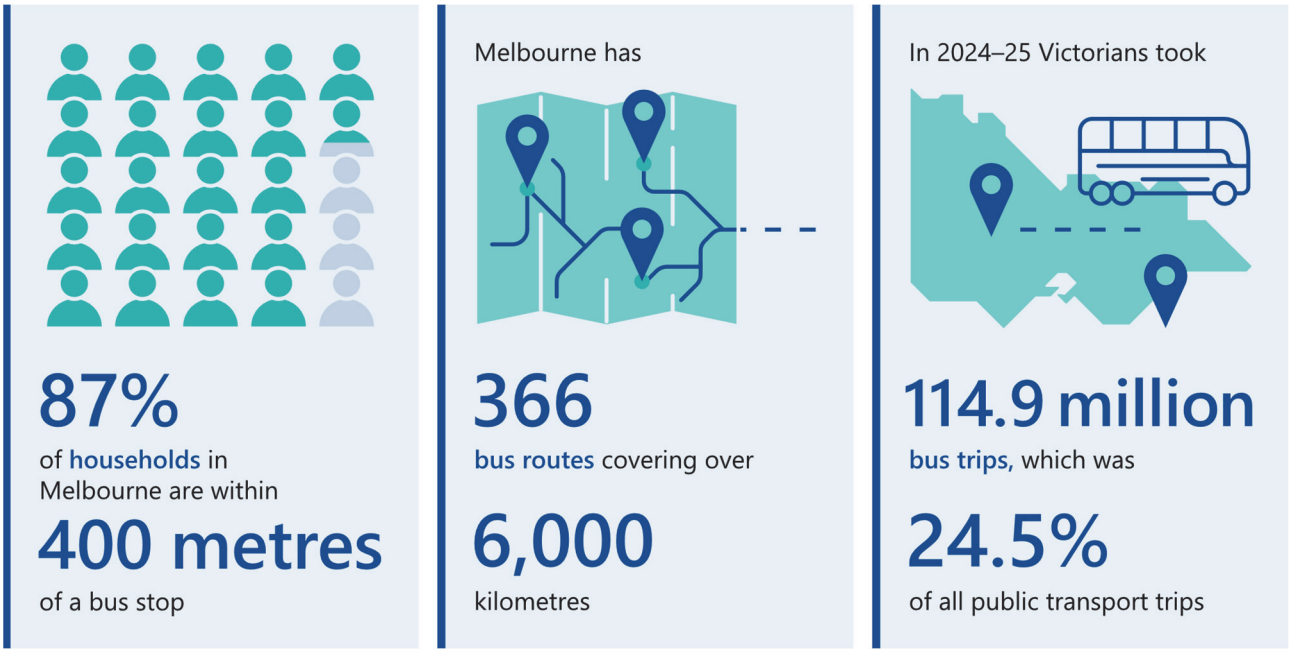
Why we did this audit

Many Victorians depend on buses to access work, education and social activities. Because buses go where trains and trams cannot, reforming Melbourne's bus network has the most impact for growing suburbs. It also means more transport options for young people, the elderly, people with disability or those who cannot afford to run a car.

The Department of Transport and Planning (the department), through *Victoria's Bus Plan* (the Bus Plan), aims to deliver a modern, high-performing, integrated and more sustainable bus network that meets users' needs.

We did this audit to see if Melbourne's bus network is meeting passenger needs. We examined the department and 4 bus network operators.

Key background information



Note: The number of routes and kilometres covered is based on data from June 2025.
Source: VAGO, based on department information.

What we concluded

The Bus Plan sets an ambitious goal for Melbourne's bus network to become a mass transit option from 2031. It aims to meet user needs by reforming the network so that it is simpler, faster and more reliable. Given the current network, and progress implementing the Bus Plan, on present indications the department will not achieve the Bus Plan's mass transit ambition.

Implementing the Bus Plan through routine planning and management will not deliver the full scope of bus network reform. The department has not been transparent with Victorians about its progress.

Melbourne's bus services also do not meet many performance targets. The department's data collection, performance measurement and modelling focus on bus operators' performance, but this can miss important parts of bus passengers' experiences and misjudge passenger numbers.

We made 3 recommendations to the department about improving its data quality and performance methodology, setting a design standard to inform network planning and resourcing, and being transparent about its progress in delivering the Bus Plan.

1.
Our key findings

What we examined

Our audit followed 2 lines of inquiry:

1. Does the department, through its Bus Plan, ensure that Melbourne's bus network is planned and delivered in a way that meets transport users' needs?
2. Are Melbourne's bus services meeting transport users' needs?

To answer these questions, we examined:

- the department
- CDC Victoria (CDC)
- Dysons Group (Dysons)
- Kinetic
- Ventura.

Identifying what is working well

In our engagements we look for what is working well – not only areas for improvement.

Sharing positive outcomes allows other public agencies to learn from and adopt good practices. This is an important part of our commitment to better public services for Victorians.

Terms used in this report

High quality public transport

High quality public transport is a train, tram or a bus service that runs every day, with services until at least 9pm on weekdays and an average frequency of 20 minutes or better between 6am and 8pm.

Outer metropolitan

Outer metropolitan refers to 5 local government areas that cover Melbourne's outermost suburbs: Cardinia, Casey, Hume, Melton and Whittlesea.

Background information

Melbourne's bus network connects suburbs to the city, and commuters to trains and trams. It runs mainly in mixed traffic alongside cars, trucks, pedestrians and cyclists. Because of this, buses can provide services where trains and trams cannot run.

The department plans, builds and maintains the bus network. It contracts private sector operators to deliver metropolitan bus services. Payments to bus operators totalled around $1.7 billion for 2023–2025. In the financial year 2024–25, bus operators delivered 366 routes covering 6,000 kilometres. The department reported that there were 114.9 million bus trips which represented 24.5% of all public transport trips.

Bus operators are responsible for delivering their routes, providing the department with operational data and meeting performance targets set by the department.

Victoria's Bus Plan

The Victorian Government announced *Victoria's Bus Plan* (the Bus Plan) in 2021. The Bus Plan sets out how the government will deliver a modern, high-performing, integrated and more sustainable bus network. It includes 6 reform objectives:

1. **Make the network simpler, faster and more reliable** – reorganising the bus network and using new types of buses.
2. **Introduce a cleaner, smarter fleet, the right buses for the right routes** – moving to a zero emissions bus fleet from 2025, with supporting depot infrastructure, improved safety and passenger flow, and better data and bus design.
3. **Better performing buses** – simple and direct network structures supported by measures such as bus lanes, priority traffic signals and upgraded interchanges to keep buses moving.
4. **Better customer experience** – improving journey times and frequencies, simplifying route design, better passenger information to plan journeys, and improving infrastructure.
5. **Better governance and systems management** – improving capacity and capability to deliver bus reforms, and collecting and managing bus data to inform better planning and performance management.
6. **Deliver better value for money** – ensuring value for money and continual service improvement under existing and new contracts with bus operators, manufacturers and infrastructure partners.

According to the Bus Plan, the department was to plan reforms between 2021 and 2023 then deliver them between 2023 and 2030. We examined the department's progress in implementing the plan between 2021 and 2025.

What we found

This section focuses on our key findings, which fall into 3 areas:

1. The way the department measures and reports bus network performance does not fully reflect users' experience.
2. The Bus Plan has an ambitious objective for the network to become a mass transit option, but current progress will not achieve this.
3. The department is not transparent about the Bus Plan's progress.

The full list of our recommendations, including agency responses, is at the end of this section.

Consultation with agencies

When reaching our conclusions, we consulted with the audited agencies and considered their views.

You can read their full responses in Appendix A.

Key finding 1: The way the department measures and reports bus network performance does not fully reflect users' experience

Melbourne's bus services do not meet many performance targets

Melbourne's bus services meet the department's target for on time running, but do not meet performance targets for passenger numbers, timetable coordination or customer experience.

The department's performance data and measurements do not fully reflect user experience or passenger numbers

The way the department uses the data it collects does not give it a complete picture of bus user experiences. For example, its punctuality performance measure focuses on contract management and assesses only a selection of stops in a route, not all stops. This means the measure does not reflect how on-time running operates across an entire journey from the user's perspective.

The department has a target for passengers each year that it has not met in the last 5 years. The department's passenger data and modelling produces inaccurate results. This means the department's understanding of demand for bus services is not accurate.

Bus passengers have varied experiences when they travel

While bus operators reliably complete their intended routes across the metropolitan network, passengers' experience of punctuality at timing points falls below the department's benchmarks. For the whole metropolitan network, the proportion of buses arriving on time at all stops is 69 per cent for the last 2 years.

Many bus passengers transfer to trains to complete their commute. Bus and rail timetable coordination allows passengers to transfer smoothly. The department has a methodology for this coordination but does not have consistent targets for it.

We found that in June 2025, travellers connecting between buses and trains would be able to connect within a transfer window of 5–10 minutes for 68 per cent of bus services.

Addressing this finding

To address this finding, we made one recommendation to the department about improving its data quality and using the data to better understand transport user experiences and demand.

Key finding 2: The Bus Plan has an ambitious objective for the network to become a mass transit option, but current progress will not achieve this

The department's current rate of improvement is not consistent with the Bus Plan's ambition

The Bus Plan sets clear objectives to make the bus network simpler, faster and more reliable. It identified Melbourne's large and complex bus network as a challenge to attracting bus passengers. Small changes over time mean that many routes may not have a clear purpose or serve a distinct travel need. The Bus Plan recognises that Melbourne's population growth in outer metropolitan areas will create new demand for transport in more locations.

But our analysis of the network found that the improvement rate to current network design and service coverage is not consistent with that ambition. This is particularly the case for outer metropolitan and high-growth communities.

Communities' access to bus services varies significantly across Melbourne

Households in Melbourne generally have good access to bus services but there is significant variation. While 87 per cent of households had a bus service within 400 metres, only 26 per cent have a high quality bus service within 800 metres.

Communities in outer metropolitan areas do not always have access to train and tram services so rely more heavily on buses. In Hume and Whittlesea, only 21–24 per cent of the population has access to high quality public transport. For Casey and Melton, it is 9–12 per cent of the population, and in Cardinia, it is less than one per cent of the population. There are a few highly populated communities in outer metropolitan areas that rely on bus services as their public transport. We found that about half of this population could access a bus service within 400 metres but less than 4 per cent could access a high quality bus service.

Addressing this finding

To address this finding, we made one recommendation to the department about setting a standard for network design so that it can achieve the Bus Plan's objectives.

Key finding 3: The department is not transparent about the Bus Plan's progress

According to the Bus Plan, network reform will be delivered by 2031. The department told us that it is committed to delivering the Bus Plan through its routine bus network planning and management.

The department is unlikely to deliver the Bus Plan by 2031

The department has a Bus Reform Implementation Plan (action plan) to deliver the Bus Plan's full scope of intended network reform. But it has made limited progress since 2021.

It has not been transparent with the community that it is unlikely to deliver the intended scope of reform by 2031.

Key issue: additional decision-making for key actions

The department's action plan for delivering network reform has key actions that identify decision-making and resourcing that is not available through its routine management and planning.

Without this, the department is unable to deliver the Bus Plan's intended network reform by 2031.

The department has not communicated its progress in delivering the Bus Plan

The department has not been transparent with the community about its progress in implementing the Bus Plan. The department consulted some communities about bus reform using the government's Engage Victoria platform. Although the consultation period closed in 2022, the department has not updated Victorians on the future of bus network reform.

The public release of documents on the Bus Plan and its implementation, as ordered by the Victorian Parliament's Legislative Council, was another opportunity for the department to explain the lack of progress to Victorians.

Addressing this finding

To address this finding, we made one recommendation to the department about publicly reporting its progress on Bus Plan implementation.

2.
Our recommendations

We made 3 recommendations to address our findings. The relevant agency has accepted these recommendations in part or in principle.

			Agency responses
Finding: The way the department measures and reports bus network performance does not fully reflect users' experience			
Department of Transport and Planning	1	To enable the department to accurately understand and respond to users' needs: • review its data collection practices to ensure its data can be used to fully understand user demand and service delivery experiences • review and update its public reporting of service delivery to more closely reflect users' experience, including but not limited to: – punctuality – reliability – transfer to train services – distance from bus services (see Section 3).	Partially accepted
Finding: The Bus Plan has an ambitious objective for the network to become a mass transit option, but current progress will not achieve this			
Department of Transport and Planning	2	To achieve the Bus Plan's objectives: • confirm its aspirational standard for households' proximity to high quality bus services • assess the gap between existing households' proximity to high quality bus services and its aspirational standard • use this information to inform bus network design, planning and resourcing, and to guide its contribution to any reviews of planning and land use provisions (see Section 4).	Partially accepted
Finding: The department is not transparent about the Bus Plan's progress			
Department of Transport and Planning	3	Publicly report progress on the Bus Plan's progress (see Section 5).	Accepted in principle

3.

Measuring bus network performance

Our analysis, based on departmental reporting and available data, shows that Melbourne's bus services do not meet many performance benchmarks.

The way the department uses the data it collects does not fully reflect users' experience or passenger numbers.

Covered in this section:

- The Bus Plan's objectives for network performance
- Buses running on time
- Passenger numbers
- Passenger experience

The Bus Plan's objectives for network performance

Buses as mass transit

The government's Bus Plan sets out 6 objectives to deliver a modern, high-performing, integrated and more sustainable bus network. When these objectives are achieved, buses can play a mass transit role that gets commuters to where they need to be.

The department is also committed to its public performance objective that the state's bus network is reliable and people-focused.

Department's performance measures

The department uses a set of measures to assess whether it is achieving its performance objectives and publicly reports against them. These measures include:

- buses running on time
- bus services delivered
- the number of passengers
- passenger experience.

The department assesses the network's performance using its timetable data and data supplied by bus network operators. It combines information from individual operators for an overview of network performance. This is to help the department monitor each bus operator's performance and ensure operators deliver their contracted services.

The Department of Treasury and Finance, in its *Resource Management Framework*, provides guidance on specifying departmental objectives and their indicators. It stresses the need for objective indicators to identify the impact of output delivery on the community. A focus on reporting contractual performance measures can miss bus passengers' travel experience and what they need from their bus services.

Reflecting passengers' needs

The way the department uses its data does not give it a complete picture of bus passengers' network experience. So, its decisions about the network may not be based on high quality data and methods.

In its action plan, the department recognises the importance of good quality data to understand how to best optimise the bus network and to have confidence in the network reforms' impact on passengers. It nominates particular focus areas for improving data:

- passenger numbers
- bus running time
- community demographics.

Having more accurate and detailed data about how bus passengers use the bus network will help the department better understand bus passengers' needs.

Our analysis

We examined the department's monitoring and operational data and the performance benchmarks it sets. We also analysed bus network performance and focused on the passenger experience of the bus network. As well as looking at the same elements of performance as the department's public reporting, we also looked at how easy it is to change from a bus to a train service.

Because our analysis focuses on the passenger experience, our measures and methodology are not always the same as the department's. We describe these differences when we discuss performance results below.

Buses running on time

Measuring punctuality

The department has clear targets for punctuality for the whole network and for each bus operator. It considers a bus to be punctual if it arrives no more than 4 minutes and 59 seconds late, and departs no more than 59 seconds early, from timing points (which are major bus stops) along each route. The department refers to buses' early arrival at a timing point as 'on time running', so long as the bus does not also depart early.

The department measures bus punctuality through buses' onboard GPS units. When buses pass through a stop, the unit records the time and bus operators upload this data.

The department monitors punctuality by checking the timing data for selected timing points in each route. The department selects these timing points by considering major destinations and where it is safe and legal for buses to pause to keep to timetable. This is an industry-standard approach to assessing bus operator performance.

For the 2021–25 period, the department's performance target for punctuality was 86 per cent of metropolitan services running on time and bus operators have exceeded or met this target. But services running on time have decreased from 93 per cent in 2020–21 to 86 per cent in 2024–25.

Measuring reliability

Reliability is when bus operators deliver their contracted services. The department sets clear benchmarks for reliability at both a metropolitan Melbourne and individual operator level and in 2024–25, the benchmark was 99.9 per cent. The department's reporting shows that bus operators met this target.

User expectations

The department consulted with some communities on pilot projects on what they want from their bus network. These communities identified buses turning up (reliability) and on time (punctuality) as the second highest priority. The highest priority was that buses run frequently.

But the way the department uses data it collects does not give it a complete picture of punctuality and reliability.

For example, data on bus services' punctuality looks at selected timing points and then combines the information across routes and bus operators to understand network performance. This means that the department is not capturing if punctuality varies between stops on a route or between different routes.

Using their method, the department calculated that 86 per cent of buses were running on time. But when we analysed all bus stops in a route, we found that 70 per cent were on time.

User experience of buses running on time

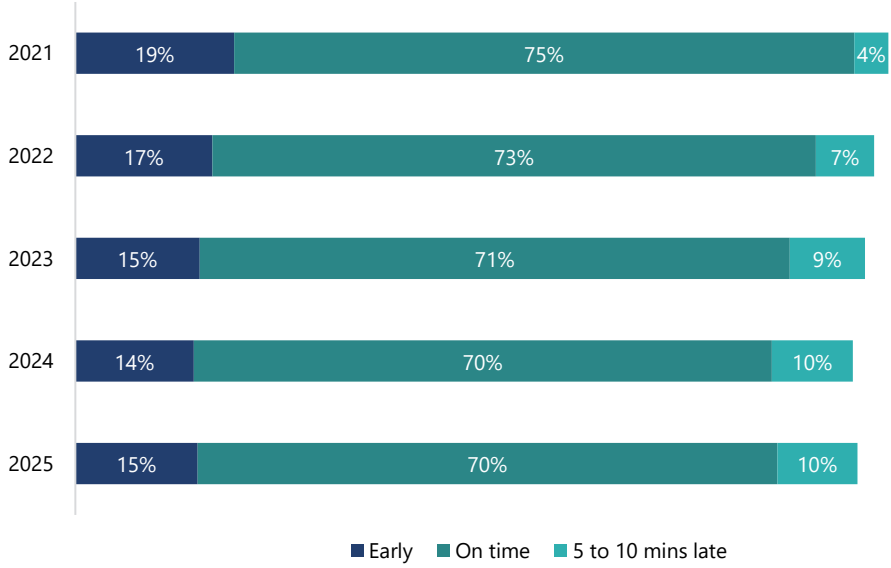
We analysed timetable data that focused on bus users' experience of timeliness and cancellation of buses. This means we examined bus arrival and departure times for every stop along the route, not just timing points.

Assessing punctuality data from all stops more accurately reflects passengers' experience of actual service delivery, rather than using a smaller collection of stops. Measuring punctuality this way does lead to lower rates of punctuality.

We categorised bus arrival times so that if ...	**then ...**
the bus arrived more than one minute early	it is an early arrival.
the bus arrived less than one minute and 5 minutes late	it is running on time.
the bus arrived more than 5 minutes late	it is a late arrival.

Our analysis shows that buses running on time declined from 2021 to 2025 but it has stabilised over the last 2 years, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Buses running on time on the metropolitan network in 2021–25



Note: For each year, results do not add up to 100 per cent because buses that arrived very late (more than 20 minutes), or did not arrive, are excluded. The results for 2021 may be affected by changed travel patterns during COVID-19.
Source: VAGO, based on information from the department.

Passenger information

The department's action plan includes actions to improve real time service information for bus passengers. This means improving the bus stop passenger experience by making real time arrival information available in Public Transport Victoria's journey planning app. At the moment, this tool uses timetable data for arrival information; on some buses, real time information is also available.

Passenger numbers

Passenger numbers

Collectively, bus operators carried 114.9 million passengers on metropolitan services in 2024–25. This did not achieve the department's target of 125.3 million.

Although bus operators have carried less passengers than the departments' targets, passenger numbers have nearly doubled from 58.6 million in 2020–21 to 114.3 million in 2024–25.

Passenger numbers have not returned to the pre-COVID-19 levels. In 2017–18 there were 117.8 million passengers, and 121.8 million in 2018–19.

The department has set a reduced target of 116.6 million for 2025–26.

Modelling passenger count

The department's passenger data and modelling produce inaccurate results.

The department uses myki ticketing data to estimate bus passenger numbers. This model uses a 'boost factor' to account for passengers who do not scan their myki ticket.

To test the accuracy of the department's method for calculating actual passenger numbers, we analysed data from buses fitted with an automated passenger counter (APC). We looked at changes in passenger numbers between 2022 and 2025. We compared APC data to myki data.

We found that when the department applies its boost factor to myki data, it still risks both over and underestimating passenger numbers.

When we looked at an average trip tracked with APC, we found it had 25.7 per cent more passengers than reported by the department using its method. In our analysis, for half of the trips

reporting myki data, the number of passengers ranged from 15 per cent lower to 62 per cent higher than typically reported.

Based on data supplied by the department, their modelling approach indicates there are 112 million metropolitan passengers each year. But it may be underestimating this number by up to 30 million passengers on the metropolitan bus network in a single year.

The department's method also means that it cannot get accurate bus passenger numbers by route or understand temporary patterns in bus use.

Passenger experience

Customer experience index

The department uses surveys to measure bus passengers' experience of the network. The survey brings together 6 elements of the user experience for an index score. They are:

- travel needs were met
- it was easy to travel
- how travelling made the user feel, including feeling safe
- how likely the user would recommend the bus service to others
- use of information sources to plan travel and keep up to date
- compliance with guidance on being a considerate passenger.

The department's annual target for this index score is 77.5 and in 2024–25 the score was 76.7.

The department also measures the passenger experience for trams and trains. Buses score similarly to trams for passenger experience and slightly lower than metropolitan trains.

Bus and train coordinated services

Many bus passengers use their bus service to connect to train services for work, education or community activities. Passengers can transfer between services smoothly when timetables are coordinated. For example, a bus and rail service is coordinated when both services run every 10 minutes, or the bus runs every 20 minutes while train runs every 10 minutes.

While the department does not publicly report on bus and rail coordination, it does set targets for the proportion of bus or train services that are coordinated. These can vary considerably across train lines.

The department told us that it coordinates bus and train services at the bus route level using their bus and rail coordination guidelines. This means it prioritises particular bus routes for train timetable coordination, including school bus routes.

Timetable coordination

We analysed daily timetable data to understand the current user experience of bus and train timetable coordination. We did this by examining daily timetable data for high priority connections between buses and trains using a sample of train stations.

High priority connections

A connection point is where bus routes connect to train stations and the department has identified that there is a need to coordinate services in particular directions at different times of the day. The department may assign more than one level of priority to balance passenger needs.

High priority connections are connection points listed as the top priority.

These connections are prioritised by the department because they fall within the commuter peak for travelling to and from places of work. The sample includes routes from the 4 main bus operators and each of the 6 metropolitan regions.

In June 2025, for this representative sample, travellers connecting between buses and trains would be able to connect within a transfer window of 5–10 minutes for only 73 per cent of bus services. One exception is Laverton station which has a longer transfer window of 7–12 minutes.

We also found that:

- **78 per cent** of bus services on a **weekday before 3pm** could have connected to an inbound (towards the city) train within the transfer window.
- **69 per cent** of bus services on a **weekday after 3pm** could have connected to an outbound (away from the city) train within the transfer window.
- **70 per cent** of bus services on a **weekend before 3pm** could have connected to an inbound train within the transfer window.
- **62 per cent** of bus services on **a weekend after 3pm** could have connected to an outbound train within the transfer window.

For details of our method, including our sampling approach, please see Appendix D.

4.

Access to bus services

Communities' access to bus services varies significantly across Melbourne. This is particularly the case for outer metropolitan and high-growth communities.

While local bus network upgrades and other on-demand services have improved service coverage, the improvement rate is not enough to deliver the broader, system-wide reform consistent with the Bus Plan.

Covered in this section:

- Designing high quality bus services
- Melbourne's bus network
- Access to public transport for outer metropolitan communities
- Access to public transport for communities with high populations

Designing high quality bus services

Bus network reform

The Bus Plan's first reform objective sets an ambitious goal for Melbourne's bus network to become a mass transit option from 2031. One of the Bus Plan's key aims is to 'unscramble' the bus network and provide routes that go where people need them and connect more places and services.

The department's action plan for bus network reform focuses on key strategic corridors to ensure connections between and to:

- current and future activity centres
- public transport nodes
- employment hubs
- education centres
- commercial and retail centres across the state.

Its action plan describes a modern network with an 800-metre grid structure based on arterial roads. This structure has the potential to form a network of key strategic corridors that carry more people, more frequently and more quickly.

Bus network design

Communities without nearby access to tram or train services rely heavily on bus services to get them to work, education, community and social activities. When their bus service is poor quality, it

limits transport options for young people, the elderly, people with disability or those who cannot afford to run a car.

High quality bus services

A high quality bus service is defined as a bus route that runs:

- at an average frequency of 20 minutes, or better, between the hours of 6am and 8pm Monday to Friday
- until at least 9pm Monday to Friday
- on both Saturday and Sunday.

Bus network design

Bus network design is the number of bus routes and where they go.

Melbourne's current bus network design prioritises easy access to any kind of bus service. This is seen in planning guidelines which say that 95 per cent of households should be no more than 400 metres' street walking distance from an existing or proposed bus stop.

While this means that nearly all households in Melbourne are close to a bus stop, many of these routes are longer and slower because of the distance they need to travel. And for some communities, suburban development has been faster than the incremental change to bus routes. This can mean that these communities have little or no access to any bus service.

Bus user preferences

When the department consulted with communities as part of bus reform pilot projects, it found that 63 per cent of people will walk up to, or over, 10 minutes (or about 800 metres) to a bus stop if the bus is frequent, fast and reliable.

North and northeastern metropolitan communities were asked about what is important to them when catching a bus.

North	Northeastern
• 81 per cent preferred to have fewer bus routes but have them run more frequently. • 77 per cent prefer to have buses run more frequently even if they have to walk further.	• 76 per cent preferred to have fewer bus routes but have them run more frequently. • 71 per cent prefer to have buses run more frequently even if they have to walk further.

This community sentiment aligns with the department's action plan for bus network reform.

Melbourne's bus network

Melbourne's bus routes

We analysed where Melbourne's bus routes travelled and the communities they served for the period of June 2025. We looked at how close households are to bus stops (400 and 800 metres) and whether those bus stops provide high quality public transport.

Figure 2 shows how much of the metropolitan area the bus network covers. We found that:

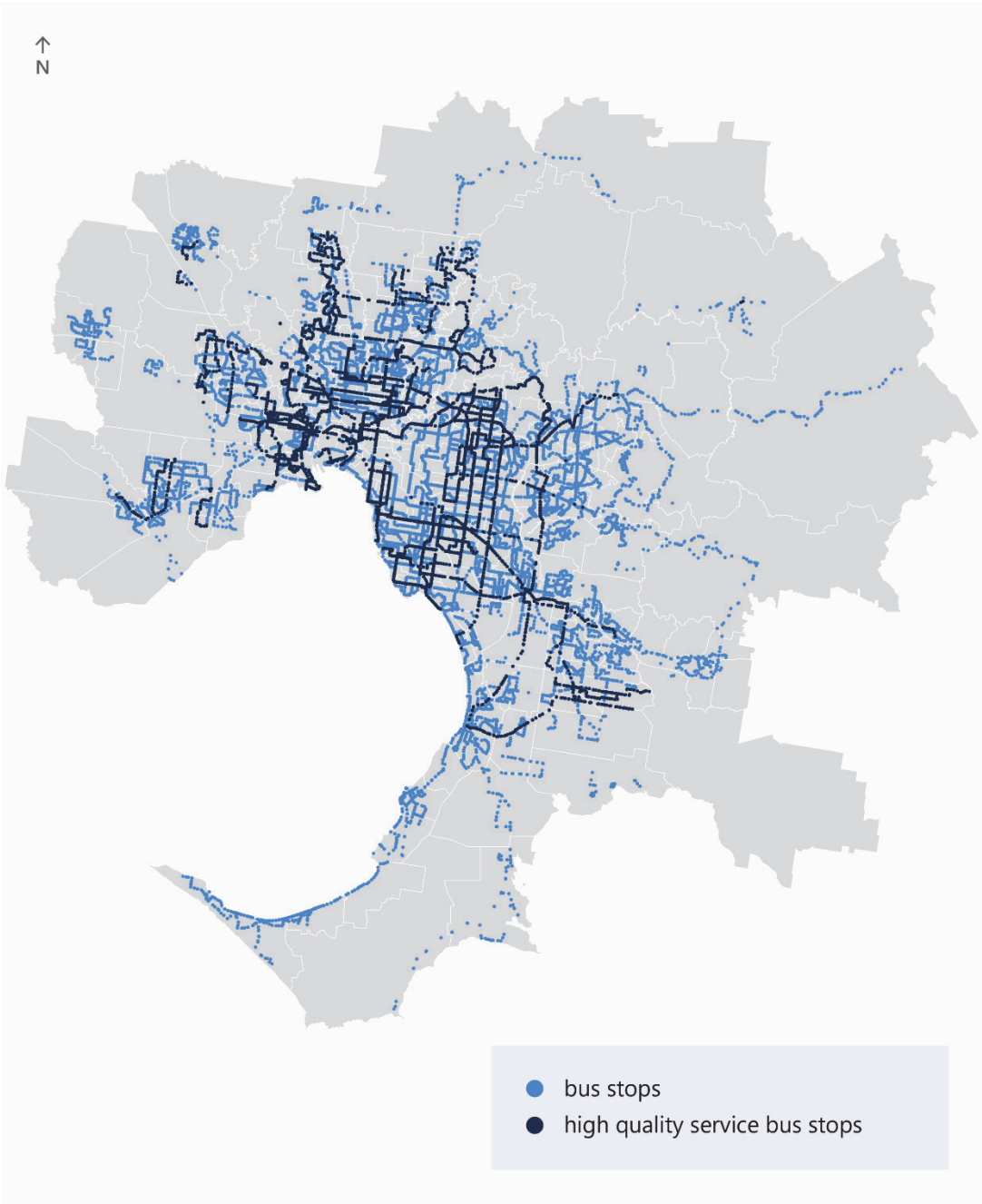
- 87 per cent of households had a bus service within 400 metres
- only 26 per cent had a high quality bus service within 800 metres.

When taking into account access to trams and trains, we found that:

- 89 per cent of households had a public transport service within 400 metres walking distance
- 37 per cent had a high quality public transport service within 800 metres.

When households do not have access to train or tram services, they rely on bus services to get them where they need to go when they need it.

Figure 2: Bus stops across metropolitan Melbourne



Source: VAGO, based on information from the department.

Service changes

The department told us that, since 2021, it has improved more than 128 local bus networks which have created more than 11,000 extra services each week and increased patronage. The department also told us that its FlexiRide service, an on-demand bus service, is available in growth areas such as Tarneit North and Melton South.

These bus service changes align with the ambition of the Bus Plan to make the network simpler and increase patronage. FlexiRide is useful to those communities who do not yet have access to fixed bus routes.

But incremental changes to local bus networks and FlexiRide services cannot deliver the scale of reform described in the Bus Plan.

Access to public transport for outer metropolitan communities

Outer metropolitan access

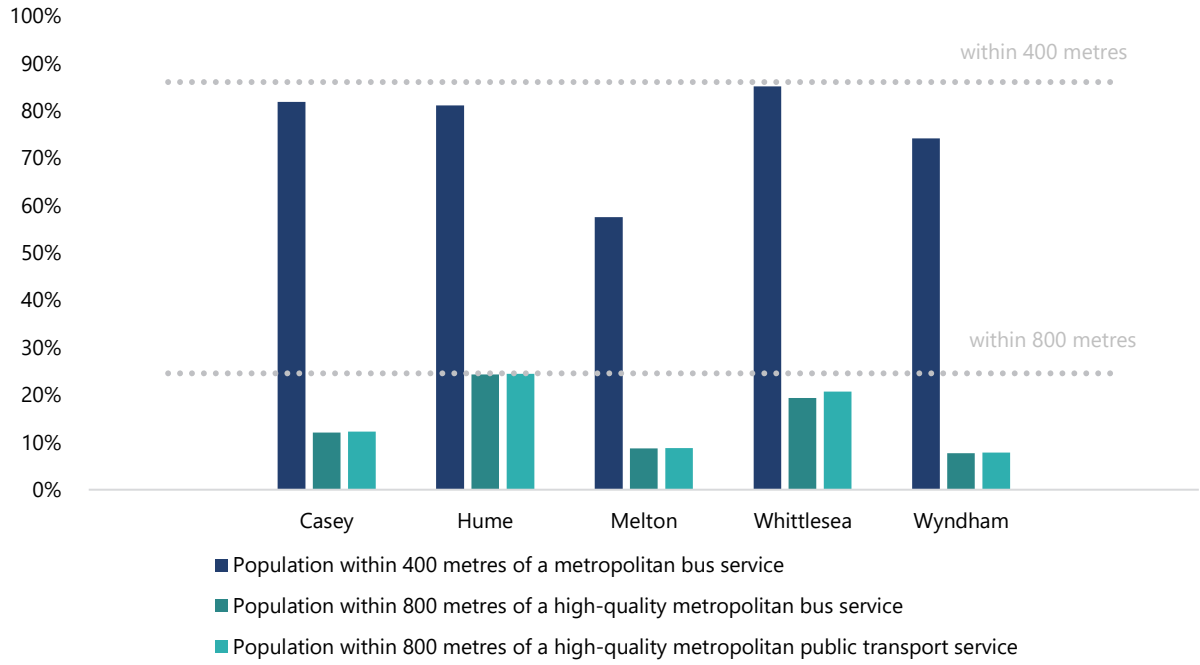
Outer metropolitan areas are more likely to rely on bus services for public transport. This is because tram and rail services have less coverage in these areas. These outer metropolitan areas are also experiencing high population growth and increasing demand for public transport.

We looked at 5 local government areas (LGAs), as examples of these population and transport conditions. Each of these LGAs is on the periphery of the Melbourne metropolitan area and they are the 5 most highly populated LGAs in Melbourne:

- Casey
- Hume
- Melton
- Whittlesea
- Wyndham.

We found that communities in these LGAs had lower access to bus services than the Melbourne average, when using the 400 and 800 metre standards. For each of these areas, there was no other high quality public transport service. Figure 3 shows this in detail.

Figure 3: Outer metropolitan growth areas with access to bus services within 400 and 800 metres



Source: VAGO, based on information from the department.

Access to public transport for communities with high populations

High population areas

We also looked at highly populated areas of Melbourne to understand their access to public transport. We defined high population as a community of more than 30,000 people.

There are 5 areas in outer metropolitan Melbourne with a population of more than 30,000:

- Rockbank – Mt Cottrell (Melton LGA)
- Mickleham – Yuroke (Hume LGA)
- Wollert (Whittlesea LGA)
- Werribee – West (Wyndham LGA)
- Beaconsfield – Officer (Cardinia LGA).

Households in these areas rely on the bus for public transport as they are not close to either train or tram services.

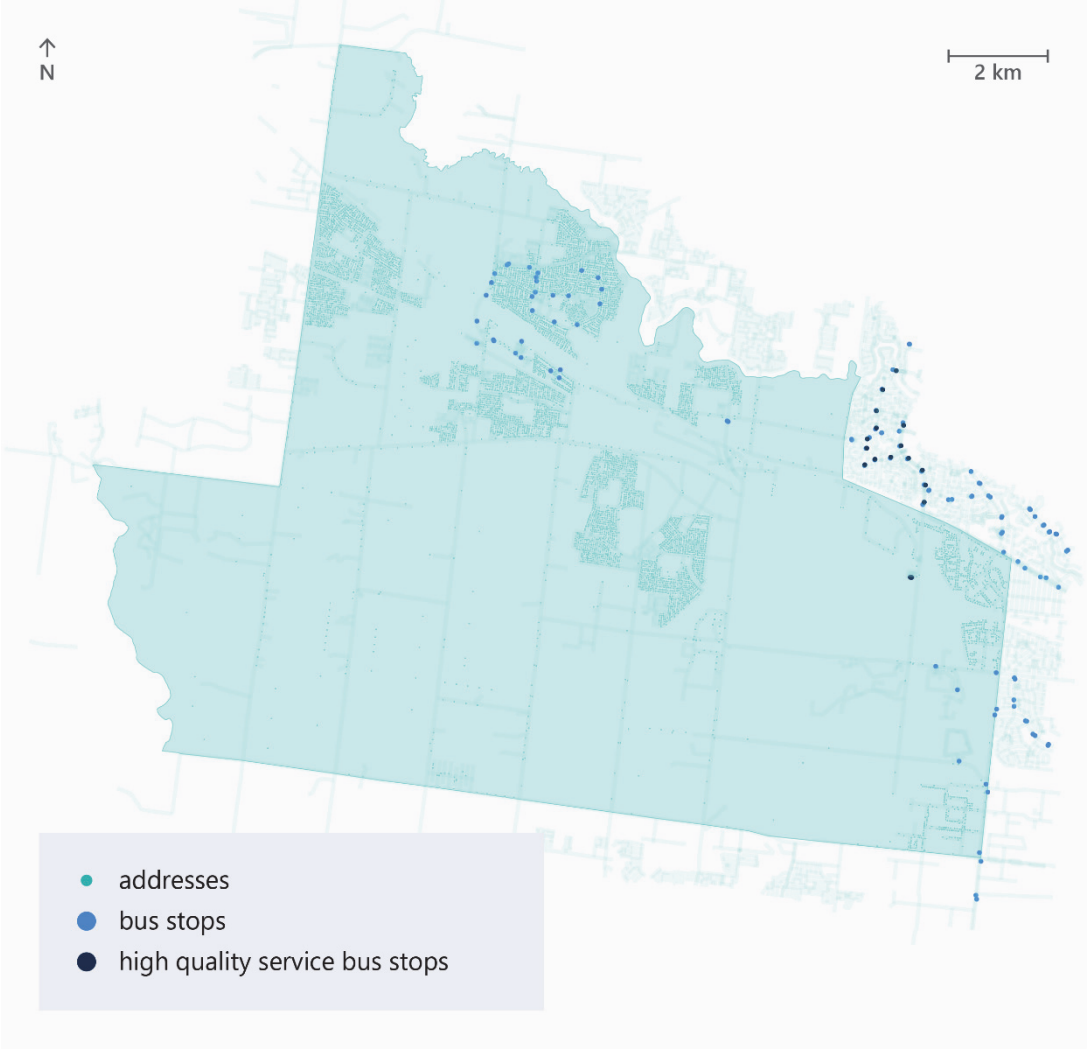
We excluded Wallan, a high population community on the northern edge of Melbourne's metropolitan area, because this community also has access to regional public transport services.

Community with very limited access to public transport

The Rockbank – Mt Cottrell community is the most poorly served by the public transport network. Less than 23 per cent of the population has access to a bus service within 400 metres. High quality public transport of any kind (bus, train or tram) is more than 800 metres away from households.

Figure 4 shows households in these communities and how close they are to bus stops.

Figure 4: Community access to public transport services in Rockbank – Mt Cottrell



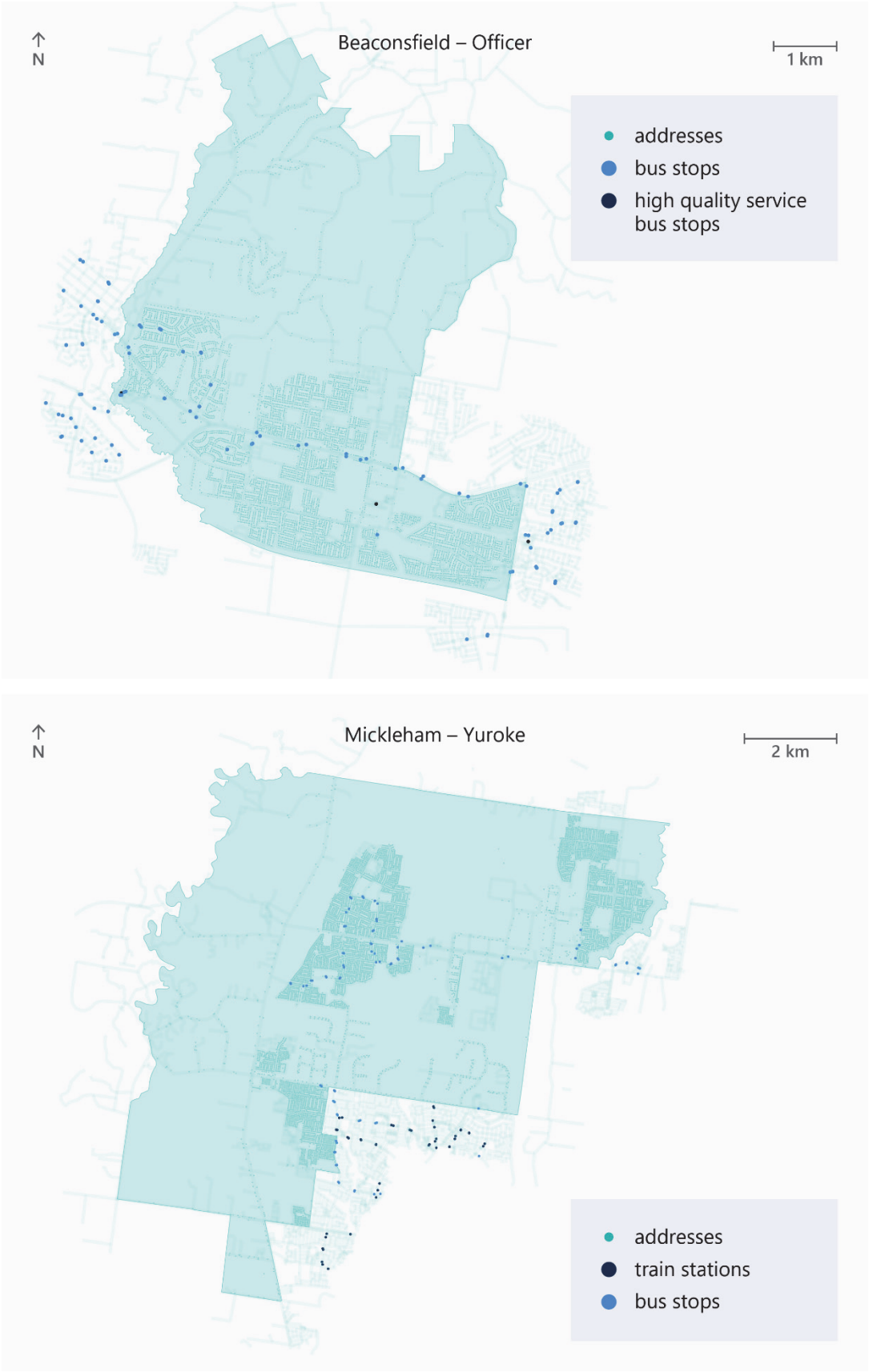
Source: VAGO, based on information from the department.

Communities with limited access to public transport

The Beaconsfield – Officer and Mickleham – Yuroke communities are slightly better served by bus services, as shown in Figure 5.

This is because about half of the population in each area (49 per cent and 53 per cent respectively) has access to a bus service within 400 metres. But there is very little high quality public transport that is easily accessible.

Figure 5: Community access to public transport services in Beaconsfield–Officer and Mickleham – Yuroke



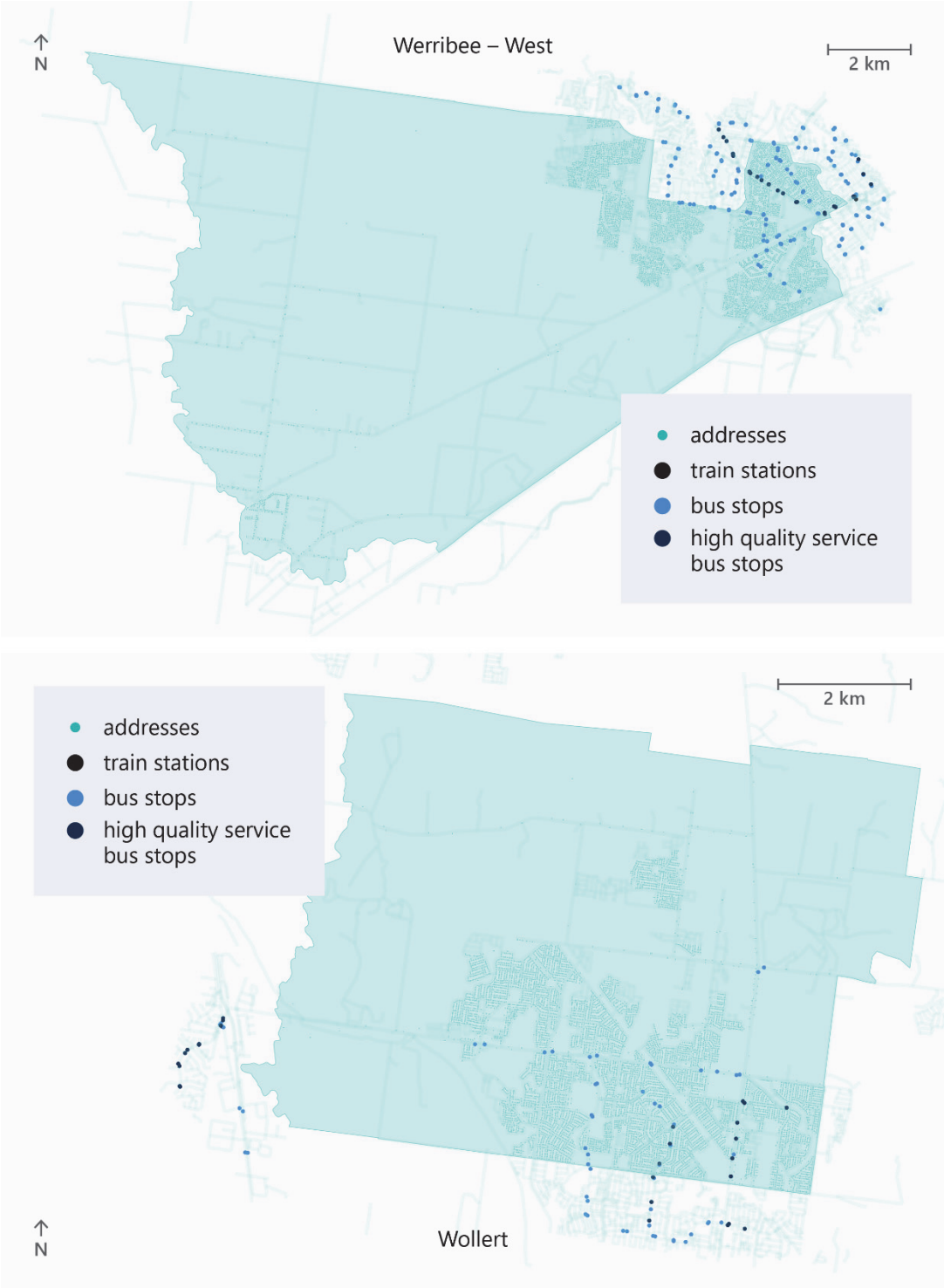
Source: VAGO, based on information from the department.

Communities with poor access to public transport

The Werribee – West and Wollert communities have some access to public transport, as shown in Figure 6. About half of the population in each community (49 per cent and 59 per cent respectively) has access to a bus service within 400 metres.

But less than 10 per cent of the population have access to high quality bus services or public transport services (7 per cent and 10 per cent respectively).

Figure 6: Community access to public transport services in Werribee – West and Wollert



Source: VAGO, based on information from the department.

5.
Delivering the Bus Plan

The department has started work on some actions but has not been transparent with the community about its progress on other actions.

Some key actions cannot be delivered without further decisions from the Victorian Government.

Covered in this section:

- The department has taken some actions to deliver the Bus Plan
- The department is making progress, but not enough to deliver the Bus Plan on time
- The department has not been transparent about its progress

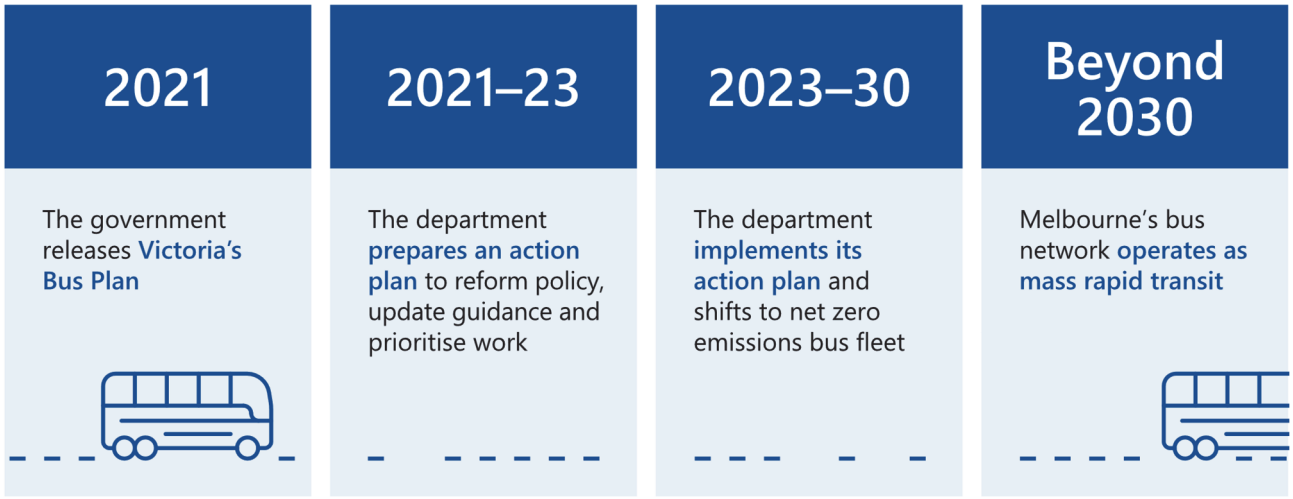
The department has taken some actions to deliver the Bus Plan

The Bus Plan

Between 2021 and 2023, the department laid the groundwork for the Bus Plan. The first action of the Bus Plan was the department's Bus Reform Implementation Plan (the action plan). This includes objectives, actions, performance targets and guidelines to inform bus network planning and reform. It also outlines 3 phases for delivering these actions between 2021 and 2030 onwards.

Figure 7 shows these phases and the department's intended focus of each phase.

Figure 7: The Bus Plan implementation phases



Source: VAGO.

Completed early work

Since 2023, the department has started work on the 48 actions in the action plan that will deliver the Bus Plan reforms. This work has included:

- reforming bus contracts to deliver better value for money
- introducing a zero emissions bus fleet
- gradual upgrade of real time information displays
- on-road priority for buses to improve performance.

We considered this when assessing the department's performance in implementing its action plan.

The department is making progress, but not enough to deliver the Bus Plan on time

Progress on the action plan

We assessed the department's progress in delivering its action plan. For this audit, 36 of 48 actions are in scope. We excluded actions for school bus reform, the regional bus network and communications.

If the action ...	then we assessed it as ...
requires government decision-making	further action required.
is being implemented through routine planning and management	in progress.
has been completed according to its description in the action plan	completed.

Figure 8 shows the progress the department is making in delivering these 36 actions.

Figure 8: The department's action plan delivery progress

Further action required	In progress	Completed
• network design • planning guidance • pilot projects • investment and infrastructure pipelines • evaluation.	• local government consultation • zero emissions bus fleet • planning provisions • growth areas investment pipeline • network and on road optimisation • bus stop and information upgrades • data quality improvement.	• customer research • contract reform • governance • some project options • updated fleet requirements.

Source: VAGO.

Action plan's progress

The department's 'in progress' or 'completed' actions are not enough to deliver the Bus Plan. This is because the impact of each action is not equal.

The department still needs to complete several substantial actions, including network design, planning guidance and infrastructure, so it can deliver the objectives of the Bus Plan.

The department's action plan recognises that small scale changes to the bus network are necessary but not enough. The department knows these changes cannot improve the network itself or deliver the service frequency to meet community needs.

Key issue: Additional government decision-making for key actions

There are key actions to address the Bus Plan's objectives that need additional government decision-making because of the proposed scale of change.

For example:

- updating the metropolitan network design guidance notes, based on network reform pilot projects
- feasibility studies for rapid routes
- implementing network reform pilot projects
- infrastructure investment pipeline for expanding the network.

These key actions must be completed before other actions can be.

The department has not been transparent about its progress

Community consultations

In September 2022, the department used the Engage Victoria platform to consult communities in Melbourne's northern and northeastern suburbs about what they needed from bus reform.

After this initial consultation, the department has not transparently reported on or updated Victorians about the Bus Plan delivery progress.

The Victorian Parliament's Legislative Council ordered the public release of the Bus Plan documents in March 2024. The department released some documents about the Bus Plan in September 2025. But the government claimed executive privilege over other documents, including the department's action plan, and these were not released.

This was another opportunity for the department to explain the lack of implementation progress, but it did not take it up.

Case study 1: Network reform pilot projects

Network reform pilot projects: Northern and northeastern Melbourne

The department used Engage Victoria to conduct community consultation to inform pilot projects for these areas. Consultation was open from 14 September to 16 October 2022.

The consultation website informed communities about the Bus Plan and explained that a 'key' to bus reform will be new bus network categories. These categories would define the role, purpose and function of a route within a network.

These categories were:

- **rapid routes**: high-speed routes with faster and more frequent services
- **connector routes**: a grid of interconnected bus corridors, linking suburbs to key transport hubs, employment and education precincts, and shopping centres
- **local routes**: access to nearby shops and services
- **school routes**: meeting the demand for high school students travelling to and from school.

In early 2023, the department published consultation summaries that said it was told that Victorians want frequent and reliable buses that connect to other transport modes.

On the website, the department committed to 'consider consultation feedback and develop network reform ideas and themes'. This action is not marked as completed.

Source: VAGO, using Engage Victoria information.

6.
Appendices

There are 5 appendices covering responses from audited agencies, information about how we perform our work and technical notes about our analysis.

Appendix A:
Submissions and comments

We consulted with the department, CDC, Dysons, Kinetic and Ventura, and we considered their views when reaching our audit conclusions. As required by the *Audit Act 1994*, we gave a draft copy of this report, or relevant extracts, to those agencies and asked for their submissions and comments.

We also provided a copy of the report to the Department of Treasury and Finance and the Department of Premier and Cabinet for their information.

Responsibility for the accuracy, fairness and balance of those comments rests solely with the relevant agency head.

Responses received

Response provided by the Secretary, Department of Transport and Planning

Department of Transport and Planning

GPO Box 2392
Melbourne, Victoria 3001 Australia

Ref: BSEC-1-26-1947

Mr Andrew Greaves
Auditor-General of Victoria
Victorian Auditor-General's Office
Level 31, 35 Collins Street
MELBOURNE VIC 3000

Dear Mr Greaves

Victorian Auditor-General's Office - Improving bus services - Proposed report

Thank you for your letter of 8 May 2026 inviting the Department of Transport and Planning (the Department) to respond to the *Improving bus services* proposed report (the Report).

Metropolitan bus services in Melbourne operate within a complex and highly variable road-based transport environment, with the majority of services operating in mixed traffic conditions alongside private vehicles, freight, cyclists and other road users.

On behalf of the Department, I acknowledge the work undertaken by your office and recognise the inherent challenges associated with auditing a complex, highly dynamic and operationally variable transport system. While the Report raises a number of constructive observations, aspects of the analysis are based on incomplete or flawed assumptions that do not adequately account for the variability and constraints associated with the bus network. The Report does not appropriately recognise the significant progress that has been made in delivering the Bus Plan and improving access to high quality public transport for Victorian communities.

The Department follows industry practice in assessing punctuality, consistent with similar domestic and international jurisdictions. Punctuality for metropolitan buses in 2024-25 was 89.6 per cent, significantly higher than the analysis in the Report and above the benchmark of 86 per cent. The Report's analysis of punctuality does not fully account for the operational, customer and safety considerations of the metropolitan bus environment, or the intent and limitations of the underlying performance framework. We are not aware of any major jurisdiction that assesses bus service performance using the methodology applied in the Report.

Planning for bus services within growth areas requires a balance of coverage and directness, with the ultimate alignment often dictated by the availability of bus capable infrastructure. Road networks in growth areas typically evolve over time as the developments are delivered, meaning the road networks are not always complete or bus capable when there is demand for bus services by new residents.

VICTORIA State Government

Through the 2025-26 State Budget, the Victorian Government invested $162 million in new and improved bus services, with a focus on connecting communities in Melbourne's growing suburbs to key local destinations including train stations, schools, universities, health services, shops and employment. This includes new services in Tarneit, Rockbank, Thornhill Park, Beveridge, Werribee, Aintree and Wollert. These services have either been introduced since VAGO's assessment was completed in June 2025 or are in progress to be delivered later in 2026 and early 2027. These new services provide approximately 300,000 Melbournians with improved bus services, with almost 40,000 of them receiving public transport for the first time. An additional almost $100 million in investment is being provided through the 2026-27 State Budget to continue uplifting bus services.

Significant progress has been made in delivering Victoria's Bus Plan, and the Department has transparently reported on these activities including:

- Awarding the Metropolitan Zero Emission Bus Franchises contracts, delivering around 600 Zero Emissions Buses (ZEB) over the next 10 years.
- As part of the wider ZEB transition, there are already 96 operating in the network including two Hydrogen buses in the regions.
- Launching the first all-electric depots in Ivanhoe and Preston. Major electrification works have commenced at several other major depots including Bundoora, Sunshine and Heatherton.
- Real time information displays installed at over 30 sites across the state. Live e-ink displays have been deployed at over 60 locations with more to come.
- Commenced deployment of Automatic Passenger Counters, to understand how people use the existing bus network to inform network design, and to evaluate bus planning and reform activities.

Since launching Victoria's Bus Plan in June 2021, more than 129 local bus networks have also been improved, giving Victorian communities access to more than 11,000 extra services each week. Improvements to local bus networks have also seen significant and sustained uplifts in patronage, meeting the needs of more Victorians, including examples such as:

- The Route 800 service uplift resulted in over 200 per cent patronage uplift on Saturdays after 12 months.
- The Route 505 service uplift resulted in over 75 per cent patronage uplift on weekdays after 12 months.
- A package of changes to support Deakin University resulted in 30 per cent patronage uplift on weekdays, 20 per cent on Saturdays and 25 per cent on Sundays.

The Department has prepared responses to each of the Report's recommendations which are enclosed with this letter.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Report.

Yours sincerely

Jeroen Weimar
Secretary

Date: 22 May 2026

Encl: Improving bus services - DTP action plan

DTP action plan

Improving bus services

The Department of Transport and Planning (DTP) action plan to address the recommendations from *Improving bus services*:

No	VAGO recommendation	DTP response	Due date
1	To enable the department to accurately understand and respond to users' needs: – review its data collection practices to ensure its data can be used to fully understand user demand and service delivery experiences – review and update its public reporting of service delivery to more closely reflect users' experience, including but not limited to: – punctuality – reliability – transfer to train services – distance from bus services.	**Partially accepted** DTP considers its data collection practices fit for purpose to understand user demand and service delivery experience. Automated Passenger Counters are being rolled out across the network and DTP is reviewing its patronage estimation methodologies accordingly. DTP reports its performance in compliance with the Department of Treasury and Finance's *Resource Management Framework*. The existing punctuality and reliability performance measures are fit for purpose. DTP will consider the report's findings in the development of performance measures for 2027-28.	31 January 2027
2	To achieve the Bus Plan's objectives: – confirm its aspirational standard for households' proximity to high quality bus services – assess the gap between existing households' proximity to high quality bus services and its aspirational standard – use this information to inform bus network design, planning and resourcing, and to guide its contribution to any reviews of planning and land use provisions.	**Partially accepted** DTP already uses analysis of coverage gaps (households outside the extent of the existing public transport network) to inform the prioritisation of new and extended services. The 2025-26 and 2026-27 State Budgets funded a significant number of new and extended services within Melbourne's growth areas, as a direct result of this approach. However, DTP does not currently plan to a specific coverage target, as there is nuance required to balance coverage and directness of bus services. Purely planning for coverage leads to indirect, inefficient routes. Through development activities associated with Plan for Victoria Action 7, DTP is committed to developing and releasing a map of key strategic bus corridors with the aim of ensuring most people in Melbourne live within a 10-minute walk (800m) of public transport.	31 December 2028

No	VAGO recommendation	DTP response	Due date
		DTP will assess the gap between the aspirational strategic bus corridors and the existing bus services. The findings of this exercise will be used to inform a pipeline of investment for bus.	
3	Publicly report progress on the Bus Plan's progress.	**Accepted in principle** DTP will continue to publicly report on the delivery of the Bus Plan in its Annual Report, State Budget Papers and on the Engage Victoria website.	Completed

Appendix B:
Abbreviations, acronyms and glossary

Abbreviations

We use the following abbreviations in this report:

Abbreviation	Full spelling
the Bus Plan	*Victoria's Bus Plan*
the action plan	Bus Reform Implementation Plan
CDC	CDC Victoria
Dysons	Dysons Group
the department	Department of Transport and Planning

Acronyms

We use the following acronyms in this report:

Acronym	Full spelling
APC	automated passenger counter
LGA	local government area
SA2	Statistical Areas Level 2
VAGO	Victorian Auditor-General's Office

Glossary

The following terms are included in or relevant to this report:

Term	Explanation
Level of assurance	This is a measure of the confidence we have in our conclusions. The quality and quantity of evidence we obtain affects our level of assurance. We design our work programs with the information needs of our report users in mind. We consider if we need to provide them with reasonable assurance or if a lower level of assurance may be appropriate.
Limited assurance	We obtain less assurance when we rely primarily on an agency's representations and other evidence generated by that agency. However, we aim to have enough confidence in our conclusion for it to be meaningful. We call these types of engagements **assurance reviews** and typically express our opinions in negative terms. For example, 'nothing has come to our attention to indicate there is a problem'. See our assurance services fact sheet for more information.
Reasonable assurance	We achieve reasonable assurance by obtaining and verifying direct evidence from a variety of internal and external sources about an agency's performance. This enables us to draw a conclusion against an objective with a high level of assurance. We call these **performance audits**. See our assurance services fact sheet for more information.

Appendix C:
Audit scope and method

Scope of this audit

Who we examined

We examined the following agencies:

Agency	Their key responsibilities
the department	Planning, building and maintaining the bus network, including managing contracts for the delivery of bus services
CDC	Delivering contracted bus services
Dysons	Delivering contracted bus services
Kinetic	Delivering contracted bus services
Ventura	Delivering contracted bus services

Our audit objective

Are Melbourne's bus services meeting the needs of transport users?

What we examined

We examined:

- the department's planning and delivery of *Victoria's Bus Plan*
- if Melbourne's bus services are meeting the needs of transport users.

Aspects of performance examined

Our mandate for performance audits and reviews includes the assessment of economy, effectiveness, efficiency and compliance (often referred to as the '3Es + C').

In this audit we focused on the following aspects:

Economy	Effectiveness	Efficiency	Compliance
○	●	○	○

Key:

- ● Primary focus
- ◐ Secondary focus
- ○ Not assessed

Conducting this audit

Assessing performance

To form a conclusion against our objective we used the following lines of inquiry and associated evaluation criteria.

Line of inquiry		Criteria	
1.	Does the department, through its Bus Plan, ensure that Melbourne's bus network is planned and delivered in a way that meets transport users' needs?	1.1	Does the department, through its Bus Plan, ensure that Melbourne's bus network is planned and delivered in a way that meets transport users' needs?
		1.2	The department (1) monitors and reports on bus service performance and progress against Bus Plan objectives, (2) collates and uses data to inform future planning and decision-making.
2.	Are Melbourne's bus services meeting the needs of transport users?	2.1	Bus services are punctual and reliable.
		2.2	Bus services are integrated with other transport modes.
		2.3	Bus services are accessible to all transport users.
		2.4	Users are satisfied with bus services.

Our methods

As part of the audit we:

- reviewed documents
- analysed operational data provided by the department and bus operators.

Level of assurance

In an assurance review, we primarily rely on the agency's representations and internally generated information to form our conclusions. By contrast, in a performance audit, we typically gather evidence from an array of internal and external sources, which we analyse and substantiate using various methods. Therefore, an assurance review obtains a lower level of assurance than a performance audit (meaning we have slightly less confidence in the accuracy of our conclusion).

Compliance

We conducted our audit in accordance with the *Audit Act 1994* and ASAE 3500 *Performance Engagements* to obtain reasonable assurance to provide a basis for our conclusion.

We complied with the independence and other relevant ethical requirements related to assurance engagements.

Cost and time

The full cost of the auditand preparation of this report was $720,000.

The duration of the audit was 11 months from initiation to tabling.

Appendix D: Methodology

This section outlines the methodology used for the complex data analysis in bus and train timetable integration and households' distance from bus and public transport services.

Benchmarks for bus and train timetable integration

Data sources

We use daily timetable data for metropolitan buses and trains. Timetable data is provided by the department and used by VAGO to evaluate the transfer window between connecting services arriving and departing.

We use a list of priority connections provided by the department to select high priority bus route to train station connections. Bus to bus connections, bus to school bell connections, and bus to V/Line connections are out of scope for this analysis. This data includes the parent route and direction of buses, but not the connecting bus stop ID or name. We use bus stop name data from daily timetables to identify bus stops named after connecting stations.

Sampling method

We select a small representative sample of 12 bus–train connections to evaluate for a 2-year period from July 2023 to June 2025. We evaluate a larger sample of more than 200 bus to train connections over 4 weeks in June 2025.

The larger sample includes only high priority connections and we have been able to confirm a bus stop connecting to the train station using bus stop name. We further filter the sample of connections to bus routes and stations which connect in both the morning and the evening so we have the same number of connection points for each test.

The small sample of 12 is extracted from the larger connections sample using random sampling with 6 strata. It includes 2 parent routes from each of the main 4 bus operators (CDC, Dysons, Kinetic and Ventura) and 2 parent routes from each of the 6 metro regions (Eastern, Inner Metro, Inner South East, Southern, Northern and Western).

Figure D1: The sample of 12 representative bus–train connections

Region	Bus operator	Parent route	Train stations
Eastern	Kinetic	270	Box Hill
Eastern	Kinetic	370	Mitcham
Inner Metro	Dysons	504	Clifton Hill
Inner Metro	Dysons	505	Royal Park
Inner South East	CDC	612	Glen Iris
Inner South East	Kinetic	603	Elsternwick
Northern	Dysons	570	Thomastown
Northern	Ventura	551	Heidelberg
Southern	Ventura	699	Tecoma
Southern	Ventura	825	Moorabbin
Western	CDC	461	Watergardens
Western	CDC	412	Laverton

Source: VAGO.

Analysis method

A connection between buses and trains is within the transfer window if:

in the morning ...	in the evening ...
an inbound train departs 5 or more minutes later than a bus arrives but not more than 10 minutes later.	an outbound train arrives 5 or more minutes earlier than a bus departs but not more than 10 minutes earlier.

Note: For Laverton station, the times are 7 and 12 minutes instead of 5 and 10 minutes.

We analyse connections for both morning and evening and for both weekdays and weekends.

Morning connections are bus services of the identified parent route arriving at a train station at or after 5am but before 3pm and connecting to any train departing inbound toward the city.

Afternoon connections are outbound train arrivals connecting to bus services of the identified parent route that depart at or after 3pm until 5am the next morning.

Both weekdays and weekends have the same definition for morning and afternoon services. Night bus services will also be categorised as morning or afternoon according to this definition.

We do not have data on train outages. We instead infer blocks of time when trains services are not running, to prevent planned train outages unfairly reducing the proportion of bus services that connect to trains.

We exclude 6-hour blocks of time where there are zero train services, or the number of train services drops significantly below usual service numbers, for a train station.

For each bus service arriving at or departing from a train station, we identify whether any train meets the conditions for a connection. Our results return the proportion of connections made per the number of bus services.

Households' distance from bus and public transport services

Data sources

We use publicly available information from DataVic for addresses, roads and trails data, and public transport stops to generate distances between residences and nearby public transport services.

We filter roads to exclude non-walkable roads, for example freeways, ferry routes and planned roads. We do not consider other road accessibility features such as road-crossing points or terrain.

We filter address data to reduce the number of locations that are not accessible by road, non-residential or still being developed in June 2025. We also exclude address data with features that indicate lower quality source data or duplicated addresses. Public transport stops included are metro bus, metro tram and metro train.

We use the department's daily timetable data to determine bus services' quality at bus stops during June 2025.

A bus stop is considered to have a high quality service if there is at least one bus route meeting the high quality service conditions at that specific location for a majority of the month. Only metropolitan bus routes are considered.

Special bus services and FlexiRide services in the metropolitan area are out of scope.

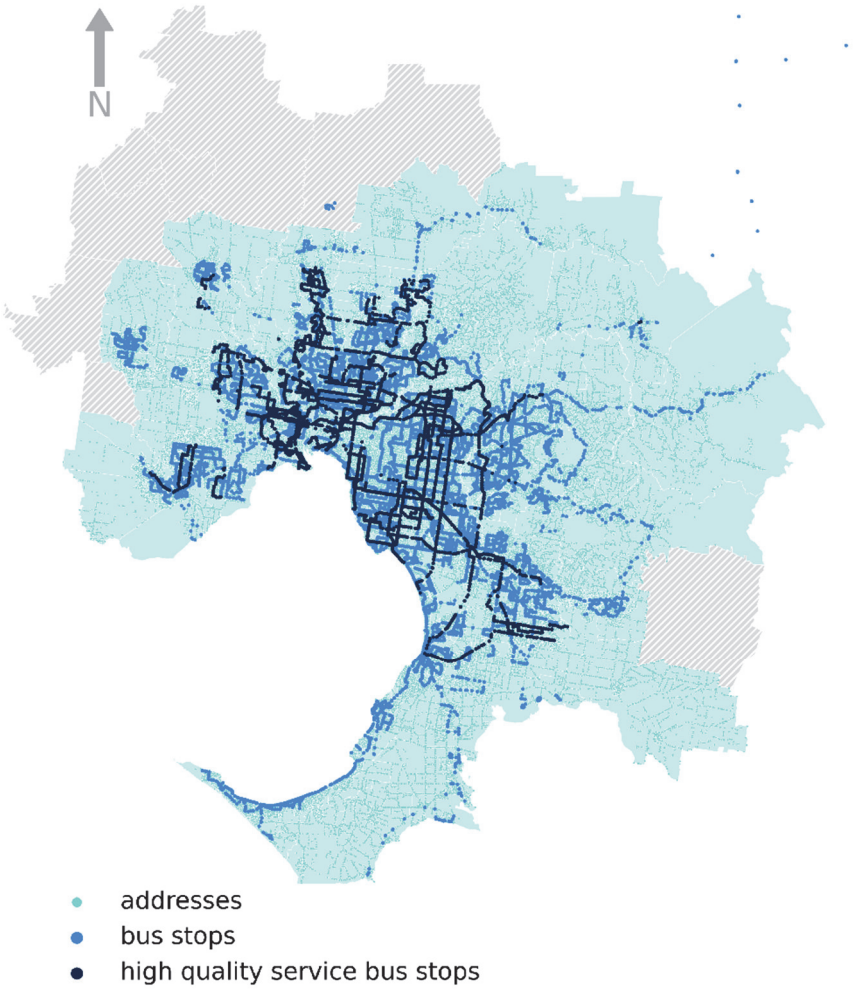
We found 31 per cent of bus stops had at least one out of 366 for metropolitan bus service routes that met these conditions in June 2025. Tram and train stops are all considered have a high quality service for this analysis.

We use projected population and number of households from Victoria in Future data to aggregate data from Statistical Areas Level 2 (SA2) into local government areas and the greater Melbourne region.

Analysis method

Spatial data for addresses, public transport stops and roads is filtered to SA2 regions within greater Melbourne. For each area, we also include roads and public transport stops within a buffer zone of one kilometre outside the area boundary. Seven SA2 regions with no public metropolitan public transport, and one region (Wallan) served more by regional bus services than metropolitan bus services, have been excluded from our analysis. The extent of the addresses within the region and the public transport network is shown in Figure D2.

Figure D2: Addresses within the greater Melbourne area covered by metropolitan public transport services



Source: VAGO.

Within each region, we randomly sample 20 per cent of addresses. For each of the selected addresses, we identify the 10 closest stops in a straight line for:

- nearby metropolitan public transport stops
- nearby metropolitan public transport stops with a high quality service
- nearby metropolitan bus stops
- nearby metropolitan bus stops with a high quality service.

The sample of 20 per cent of addresses is a large enough number to be representative. The selection of the closest 10 stops in a straight line across different criteria is enough to provide confidence that the closest stops along the road network are in the selected address-stop pairs.

For each unique address-stop pair, we find the distance along the road network Dijkstra's algorithm.

Our method first requires a calculation of the distance from an address to the nearest midpoint on the nearest road and preparation of the network so that the nearest midpoint is converted into a vertex for accurate routing.

The routing algorithm for each address-stop pair is solved independently of other address-stop pairs.

We use parallel processing, with batches of 1,000 addresses, for each SA2.

We sum the distance from an address to the nearest road and the distance along the road to the nearby stop to get the distance from an address to the nearby stop. For each address, we create flags to indicate whether there is at least one nearby stop that is:

- within 400 metres and provides access to a metropolitan bus service
- within 400 metres and provides access to a metropolitan bus, train or tram service
- within 800 metres and provides access to a high quality metropolitan bus service
- within 800 metres and provides access to a high quality metropolitan bus service, train service or tram service.

Our results show the percentage of addresses for each SA2 that have accessible public transport. We use projected population in 2025 to weight SA2 data when aggregating to larger areas.

Appendix E:
Dashboard data statement

Provision of data

We have made available the data we used to build this report's dashboard in a CSV file. It accompanies the dashboard and may be downloaded. The volume of data means that it is impractical to include as its own appendix within this report. The dashboard can be accessed at audit.vic.gov.au.

We describe here the contents of that spreadsheet.

Data sources

We use publicly available information from DataVic for addresses, roads and trails data, and public transport stops to generate distances between residences and nearby public transport services.

We use the department's daily and actual timetable data to calculate service punctuality and reliability. The same data is used to determine bus services' quality at stops during June 2025.

We use projected population and number of households from Victoria in Future data to aggregate data from Statistical Areas Level 2 (SA2) into local government areas and the greater Melbourne region.

Figure E1: Description of dashboard data in CSV file

Tab name	Data description	Data volume
Bus punctuality and reliability	Timetable data: bus route number, stop identification, count of instances of bus stopping for each stop, punctuality description, index of punctuality	Columns: A–H Rows: 1–198,416
Area (SA2) spatial analysis	Australian Bureau of Statistics Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2) code, SA2 name, % of dwellings within 400 metres and 800 metres of any public transport, % of dwellings within 400 metres and 800 metres of high quality public transport, population count, dwelling count, Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas score and decile	Columns: A–R Rows: 1–354
LGA spatial analysis	Australian Bureau of Statistics Local Government Area (LGA) code, LGA name Other data as for area spatial analysis	Columns: A–R Rows: 1–32
Suburb spatial analysis	Suburb name and code Other data as for area spatial analysis	Columns: A–R Rows: 1–544
Postcode spatial analysis	Australian Bureau of Statistics postal area code Other data as for area spatial analysis	Columns: A–R Rows: 1–271
Bus stop locations	Bus stop identification number, name, mode of transport, longitude, latitude, community (SA2) name and code, LGA name and code, suburb name and code, postal area code, metropolitan region flag	Columns: A–N Rows: 1–18,688
Stop route indicators	Stop route key and identification number, parent route number, flags for: service frequency, 7 days, late, high quality, weekdays, quality of services, route description and name	Columns: A–Q Rows: 1–27,607

Source: VAGO

Auditor-General's reports tabled in 2025–26

Report title	Tabled
Delivering Savings Under the COVID Debt Repayment Plan (2025–26: 1)	July 2025
Planned Surgery in Victoria (2025–26: 2)	August 2025
Financial Management of Local Councils (2025–26: 3)	August 2025
Responses to Performance Engagement Recommendations: Annual Status Update 2025 (2025–26: 4)	September 2025
Relief and Recovery Funding for the 2022 Floods (2025–26: 5)	October 2025
Cybersecurity of IT Servers (2025–26: 6)	October 2025
Accessibility of Tram Services: Follow-up (2025–26: 7)	November 2025
Auditor-General's Report on the Annual Financial Report of the State of Victoria: 2024–25 (2025–26: 8)	November 2025
Service Delivery Performance 2025 (2025–26: 9)	December 2025
Managing the Transition to Renewable Energy (2025–26: 10)	December 2025
Ravenhall Correctional Centre: Rehabilitating and Reintegrating Prisoners – Part 2 (2025–26: 11)	February 2026
Major Projects Performance Reporting 2025 (2025–26: 12)	March 2026
Modernising myki (2025–26: 13)	March 2026
Timely Payments Performance (2025–26: 14)	March 2026
Results of 2024–25 Audits: Local Government (2025–26: 15)	March 2026
Supporting the Transition from Native Timber Harvesting (2025–26: 16)	April 2026
Enhanced Maternal and Child Health Program Performance (2025–26: 17)	April 2026
Free TAFE (2025–26: 18)	May 2026
Responses to Performance Engagement Recommendations 2026 (2025–26: 19)	May 2026
Sustainability Reporting by Water Corporations (2025–26: 20)	May 2026
Out-of-Home Care Services (2025–26: 21)	June 2026
Results of 2025 Audits: TAFEs and Universities (2025–26: 22)	June 2026
Reducing the Harm Caused by Distracted Drivers (2025–26: 23)	June 2026
Follow-up: Reducing Bushfire Risks (2025–26: 24)	June 2026
Delivering School Upgrade Projects (2025–26: 25)	June 2026
Improving Bus Services (2025–26: 26)	June 2026

All reports are available for download in PDF and HTML format on our website at www.audit.vic.gov.au.

Our role and contact details

The Auditor-General's role

For information about the Auditor-General's role and VAGO's work, please see our online fact sheet About VAGO.

Our assurance services

Our online fact sheet Our assurance services details the nature and levels of assurance that we provide to Parliament and public sector agencies through our work program.

Contact details

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