



Association For Consumer Rights (Malta)

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ACR Annual General Meeting 2016

Title of Resolution

Addressing Public Transport - an immediate priority

Submitted by the ACR Executive Committee members

Justification and recommendations

Smart planning to address public transport

- The increase in the number of buses for public transport is a step in the right direction; however, the problems relating to timing of schedules and delays, waiting time at the Valletta Terminus, and on stages, in particular at University have not been addressed.
- Some routes are still very long, as buses are going through too many towns and villages which makes travelling extremely long.
- Buses do not have the facility of lowering the exit/entrance, or if they have, they do not make use of it. This is reducing easy access for the elderly, people with physical disabilities and parents with prams/pushchairs etc
- Buses should not leave Valletta terminus already full of commuters seated and standing; as this is resulting in commuters on stages being denied timely access to buses.
- Although there has been a decrease in major road works, the increase in number of cars, lack of parking spaces, bottle necks in roads, lack of adequate alternative modes of travelling for more user-friendly transport have not been addressed
- Recent changing of routes are causing further delays and longer time on buses that are overcrowded
- A number of accidents have taken place, especially when the driver suddenly stops the bus; some commuters have been hospitalized. and nobody knows who is responsible. In such cases, the Public Bus Service should make provision for Insurance services

Better use of night time shifts.

- Although new measures, such as eliminating rubbish collection during the rush hours have been introduced, traffic congestions in different parts of the island during other times of the day are still not being addressed. Effective measures for night time shifts should be introduced for various road services and rubbish collection

Incentives

- Incentives for commuters to make use of public transport are not very effective. The introduction of *Tal-Linja Cards* is not always offering enough options to save on transport expenses

Parking Spaces

- Very little has been done to increase parking spaces. The current system of parking rules should be looked into to ensure the best use of parking spaces. Double yellow lines vary in length, with different distances from the corner. In some cases, two cars could have parked leaving enough safe distance from the corner.
- A revision of yellow boxes which are supposed to be where there are garages in use or for special reasons, is needed as some are marked in wrong places or are in front of houses for sale or are no longer needed.
- Areas which used to be only residential are now also being used by companies and so the restricted parking time along pavements is resulting in parking problems for residents. Parking places for *loading/unloading* should be also accessible to customers who stop to shop in that particular outlet. Such parking is currently being penalised
- Local Councils should not allow normal parking spaces to be blocked for events/kiosks.
- This should apply also to embassies who already have their restricted parking spaces near their official building.
- Government should intervene and stop the multitude of parking penalties being given to those who cannot find parking spaces and especially those who cannot park legally in front of their homes.

Research on attitudes and behaviour of the general public

- The public in general still has no confidence in the public transport; people are still resorting to the frequent use of their own private cars.
- Delays because of traffic congestions are resulting in late arrivals at the workplace to the detriment of businesses as well as increased fuel expenditure for private car owners
- There should be incentives to encourage people going to the workplace to share their car with others as is being done in other Member States . In many major cities in Europe where car sharing is established by law, heavy penalties have also been introduced for those who travel without a passenger
- Effective measures to encourage parents to use school transport rather than opt to take their children to school themselves need to continue to be introduced
- Opening hours and end of school hours need to be negotiated with school transport service providers
- Today, young people have their own car, resulting in a regular yearly increase in cars on the road. However, many University students and personnel are being driven by their parents or relatives.

- Alternative modes of travel as solutions, as well as infrastructure over and above current road infrastructure need to be seriously planned, after an impact assessment is carried out which should include a financial cost effective plan through private-public partnerships.
- Whilst traffic lights are good in controlling traffic, we notice a massive use of these lights in the same street and at times in the wrong places e.g, the traffic lights placed near the the roundabout that leads from Naxxar into Gharghur. There is a traffic light before you come to rounabout and another just as you leave it. You just need one red light in he traffic light leaving the roundabout and you block all the cars going round the roundabout. A roundabout is self regulating and no traffic light is needed for this. Perhaps someone in the Government made a good deal in traffic lights!