

Approved Resolutions for Association for Consumer Rights AGM 2014

Resolution: The future of public transport in Malta

Individual submitting resolution

Grace Attard General Secretary

Justification

- There is a rising concern about the future of public transport in Malta and a feeling of uncertainty amongst commuters, especially those who absolutely depend on public transport
- The ACR is also concerned by the fact that the use of private cars has once again increased resulting in increased waiting time in long queues which result in commuters arriving late at the workplace or for appointments
- ACR supports the continued efforts of Transport Malta not only in the conditions issued in the call for expression of interest which will soon reach its deadline by the first week in April, but also in its efforts to modify routes albeit during a transition period
- The ACR realises that this is no easy task and that financial constraints may well be the heaviest burden

Recommendations

In its support to consumer complaints and expectations, the ACR urges government to ensure that in the new system:

- The buses will be EU compliant, low floor and air-conditioned (not leaking) as already stated in the call for expression of interest by Transport Malta
- while agreeing that preferential rates for the elderly, students and the disabled should be retained, in the new systems, all other commuters should not pay higher fares than what the Arriva system offered, as this will not only be a financial burden in particular on low income earners and unemployed commuters, but will also jeopardise all efforts to encourage more use of public transport
- that the number of buses and innovative route planning and schedules be such that they serve as an incentive for more use of public transport, rather than private transport, thus reducing pollution and time in travelling
- that incentives including different types of pre-paid weekly/monthly tickets (which in themselves offer a reduction of costs) are attractive and at all costs eliminate the sale of tickets on buses
- that at all times drivers of buses abide by a dress code with appropriate winter/summer uniforms and
- that they treat commuters with respect in all circumstances
- that the new operators put in place an electronic or otherwise system of receiving genuine complaints and that consumers rights to a reply and/or just solution be given within a stipulated time frame
- that the infrastructure of other forms of transport in particular across the Grand Harbour, to and from the Three Cities will be improved to alleviate the burden on transport by bus
- That the new transport system will provide electronic arrival time and time of departure notification