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26th September 2022

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Dear Deputy

I am writing to you concerning the matter you raised in Parliamentary Question No 141 on 14 September last which has been referred to the National Transport Authority (NTA) for reply.

The Authority is aware of occasional issues with the Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) Displays where buses were not being tracked accurately or were identified as running when, in fact, they may have been cancelled. When a service is cancelled (for example, due to driver shortages, as is currently a concern), the real time information should be updated by Dublin Bus so that the bus no longer appears on the RTPI Displays or the mobile app. However, on occasion the RTPI Displays do not receive, or do not correctly process the cancellation notification, whereas the mobile application is updated. In that scenario because the Displays are not receiving real-time updates they revert to the scheduled timetable for that bus, when in fact the bus is not operating. This results in the bus not appearing at a stop when the Displays say it should.

The Authority is aware of and is currently investigating the root causes of these issues. The two systems (Displays, mobile app) are provided and operated by different suppliers and we are investigating if there are any differences in how each system processes the data. In addition, the two systems consume different data sources, which are structured differently, and this could account for inconsistencies even though the underlying data originates from the one Dublin Bus Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) system. Finally, there are, from time to time, both planned and unplanned outages, which might impact one system but not the other, thus creating discrepancies.

In addition to the current investigations, the Authority is currently conducting a procurement competition to replace the current Dublin Bus AVL system. The intention is to standardise the data sources across all bus operators in order to improve data consistency and provide other improvements to RTPI across bus services nationwide.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Graham', is written over a horizontal line.

Anne Graham
Chief Executive