

**WRITTEN QUESTION TO THE MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND TECHNICAL
SERVICES BY DEPUTY J.A. MARTIN OF ST. HELIER
ANSWER TO BE TABLED ON TUESDAY 24th SEPTEMBER 2013**

Question

Further to indications, following some 2,000 complaints, that the Transport and Technical Services Department has been closely monitoring the bus operator during an initial probation period with a view to assessing the competency of Liberty Bus, would the Minister advise on the company's performance record over the first six months of 2013 and, in particular, would the Minister detail how many services ran more than 10 minutes late and, of those services –

- (i) how many ran more than 15 minutes late
- (ii) how many ran more than 20 minutes late?

Additionally, would the Minister indicate how many scheduled services did not run at all, or failed to complete their planned route?

Further, would the Minister either confirm or deny reports that –

- (a) one or more Liberty Bus employees resigned from their position/s at the Customer Information desk;
- (b) whether those resignations, if they occurred, resulted in internal transfer or departure from bus company employment; and
- (c) whether the resignations were linked in any way to the huge volume of complaints being received by Liberty Bus, some of which apparently subjected the information staff to unpleasant abuse?

Answer

2487 communications were logged by Libertybus in the first 6 months of this year. 1156 were general enquires and 1321 were complaints or suggestions.

Recorded complaints for the first 6 months are as follows: -

Jan	789
Feb	176
Mar	141
Apr	97
May	67
Jun	51

Any service operating within 5 minutes of the departure time is classed as on time. Although Libertybus does not currently provide specific data for the number of vehicles running 10, 15 and 20 minutes late it does have data on services that operate outside of the 5 minute window.

In the early days of the new contract, it is acknowledged that operational issues resulted in significant punctuality problems with the service. In particular the linked route 15 (airport) and 18 Les Marais services and the town area route 20 were unable to run as timetabled. This was recognised as unsatisfactory by Libertybus and TTS and revised timetables and routes were introduced. This has significantly improved the service as can be seen from the figures for the last 3 months as shown below.

- June 85.7% of services operated on time
- July 86% of services operated on time
- August 90.7% of services operated on time.

The monitoring technology that Libertybus in conjunction with TTS are finalising will provide a more extensive automatic reporting system and this will be able to identify services that operate between 5 minutes late and 10 minutes late, and then over 20 minutes late. This should be fully operational before the end of the year.

With regard to services not running at all, this information is monitored daily by Libertybus. In the summer schedule Liberty bus operate 2250 journeys per week which equates to 43,382 miles per week. The average number of journeys which did not run over the last 16 weeks is 3.62 per week, which is 37 miles per week. This includes Battle of Britain day and Battle of flowers day where the previous operator did not operate services for over 3 hours on each of these days. Whilst TTS will be liaising with Libertybus to see that improvements continue, it should be noted that the number of additional services such as relief buses to meet demand and special services to events such as Jersey Live and Jersey Rugby matches far outweigh the number of failed services.

With regard to parts a, b and c of the question, I understand that since Libertybus took over the bus contract in January, one Customer Service member of staff has retired and one resigned. Both have now returned to the employment of Libertybus.

I can further advise that one has taken up a short term position as a Customer Service Agent and the other has become a Driver.

I am unaware of the reasons for any Libertybus staff resignations as this is a private matter between the Employee and their Employer which I am not privy to.