

BRIEFING NOTE: NUMBER 3 BUS ROUTE



ISSUE

The ANU Postgraduate and Research Students' Association (PARSA) has significant concerns about the 2019 removal of the number 3 bus route by the ACT Government.

BACKGROUND

On Tuesday the 16th of October, the ACT Government released the finalised bus routes for 2019 and, despite 45% of students expressing concerns with the proposed new network in the consultation stage, has removed the number 3 route.

On the 24th of October, PARSA released a media statement outlining the difficulties of this loss for postgraduate students, particularly those tackling extra challenges, such as international students, low SES students and students with disabilities.

CURRENT STATUS

PARSA met with representatives from Transport Canberra on Tuesday the 6th of November. As it stands, Transport Canberra is committed to the decision to remove the number 3 bus route.

PARSA also met with the territory Opposition, the ANU and has engaged in further correspondence with Transport Canberra.

Transport Canberra has stated the following reasons for not extending the lifetime of the bus route:

1. There are not enough people who use the route
2. That other routes are adequate to service the community
3. The roads at the ANU are "too hard" for the wheels of the bus

PARSA believes that all of these reasons are thoroughly insufficient to justify the negative impact on the student community, and that our concerns have not been addressed.



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KEY CONSIDERATIONS

- Students who rely on public transport for running basic errands such as grocery shopping or a late-night chemist will have to walk up to a kilometre further to access these basic services.
- The lack of accessible transport is a particular issue for students needing to access medical care, especially for those with a disability or chronic illness who need to travel to one of the two major Canberra hospitals, both of which lie on the current number 3 bus route.
- The Australian Human Rights Commission report into sexual assault and sexual harassment found in 2016 that 3.5% of respondents were sexually assaulted on campus (double the national average), and more than a third of respondents were sexually harassed on campus.
- The number 3 route serves students who live in other town centres such as Woden and Belconnen, students who would otherwise have a half-hour walk from the City Bus Station to their classes on campus.



OPTIONS

PARSA recommends the following possible solutions:

1. Reinstate the number 3 bus route in the 2019 plan
2. Divert either the 53 or another route to travel through the ANU campus via Daley Rd, thus servicing the western portion of the ANU
3. For the ACT Government to work with the ANU to provide funding for a mooted shuttle bus running within the ANU to the city bus interchange

CONCLUSION

PARSA believes that in order to support a vulnerable portion of the Canberra community, the ANU campus must be adequately serviced by the number 3 bus route or a suitable, accessible alternative.

PARSA will be continuing to advocate on this issue with the ACT Government and the University into the New Year.