**Nationa Assembly**

**Question 1760**

**Mr C H H Hunsinger (DA) to ask the Minister of Transport:**

1. Whether, with reference to the reply to question 898 on 20 April 2018, his department has communicated the final warning to the City of Ekurhuleni (CoE) Bus Rapid Transport (BRT) project team in March 2019 with an ultimatum of six months to rebalance costs and revenues and move to viability (details furnished); if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, whether he will furnish Mr C H Hunsinger with (a) a copy of the warning communication to the CoE and (b) their responses thereto;
2. whether he has found that the operating costs are based on a very limited curbside pre-pilot service with six operational buses initially and while this would have been palatable if scaled up to a Phase 1-like 40 buses and then 80 buses carrying over 20 000 average weekday passenger trips within six months to a year, this did not happen and hence the current scale of costs and ridership is unbalanced and unviable, and that despite two years of appeals by his department, the city has proven incapable of correcting this; if not, what is the position in this regard; if so, what are the relevant details?

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1. **REPLY**
2. The NDoT has met with the City several times in bilateral meetings in 2019 to 2022 and has communicated the same consistent message during the period viz. the city needs to scale up to 20 000 passengers a day, reduce costs and increase revenues.

The City has acknowledged the NDoT’s position and indicates it is doing its best to make the required corrections to the project. It is hoping to achieve a turnaround by 2023/24.

Documents capturing the bilateral engagements and correspondence with the City of Ekurhuleni are attached for further details.

1. While progress is not as speedy as desired, the City has been taking incremental turnaround steps to improve the situation. Progress has been made based on the availability of buses and to date the fleet size increased from 8 buses in 2017 to 40 buses during the 2020/21 financial year.

A steady increase in passenger trips has been realised since the services were improved and the network extended to Bartlett Industrial area in 20/21. During the current financial year 1 172 507 passenger trips have been carried by the system with a monthly average of 117 251 passenger trips and approximately 6 000 average weekday passenger trips.

The next challenge is to expand to 10 000 and then 20 000 passenger trips per weekday, to conclude minibus negotiations, compensation and vehicle removal and to start reducing operating unit costs.

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