



Office of Transport Safety Investigations

BUS SAFETY INVESTIGATION

INTERIM FACTUAL STATEMENT

BUS WHEEL SEPARATION

MACQUARIE PARK

22 OCTOBER 2014



THE OFFICE OF TRANSPORT SAFETY INVESTIGATIONS

The Office of Transport Safety Investigations (OTSI) is an independent NSW agency whose purpose is to improve transport safety through the investigation of accidents and incidents in the rail, bus and ferry industries. OTSI investigations are independent of regulatory, operator or other external entities.

Established on 1 January 2004 by the Transport Administration Act 1988, and confirmed by amending legislation as an independent statutory office on 1 July 2005, OTSI is responsible for determining the causes and contributing factors of accidents and to make recommendations for the implementation of remedial safety action to prevent recurrence. Importantly, however, OTSI does not confine itself to the consideration of just those matters that caused or contributed to a particular accident; it also seeks to identify any transport safety matters which, if left unaddressed, might contribute to other accidents.

OTSI's investigations are conducted under powers conferred by the Transport Administration Act 1988 and the Passenger Transport Act 1990. OTSI investigators normally seek to obtain information cooperatively when conducting an accident investigation. However, where it is necessary to do so, OTSI investigators may exercise statutory powers to interview persons, enter premises and examine and retain physical and documentary evidence.

It is not within OTSI's jurisdiction, nor an object of its investigations, to apportion blame or determine liability. At all times, OTSI's investigation reports strive to reflect a "Just Culture" approach to the investigative process by balancing the presentation of potentially judgemental material in a manner that properly explains what happened, and why, in a fair and unbiased manner.

Once OTSI has completed an investigation, its report is provided to the NSW Minister for Transport for tabling in Parliament. The Minister is required to table the report in both Houses of the NSW Parliament within seven days of receiving it. Following tabling, the report is published on OTSI's website at www.otsi.nsw.gov.au.

OTSI cannot compel any party to implement its recommendations and its investigative responsibilities do not extend to overseeing the implementation of recommendations it makes in its investigation reports. However, OTSI takes a close interest in the extent to which its recommendations have been accepted and acted upon.

Incident Overview

At 0616 on 22 October 2014 a Sydney Buses Mercedes-Benz bus left Chatswood Station on a Route 545 service to Parramatta Station. While travelling through Macquarie Park, the driver noticed some irregularities in the behaviour of the bus, culminating in rough riding and shaking. The driver stopped the bus on Balaclava Road just before reaching Epping Road, where he found that the bus had lost its left rear outer wheel. The inner wheel was no longer secured to the hub although it was still supporting the weight of the bus. The broken ends of wheel studs could be seen through the stud holes of this wheel.

At this stage there was only one passenger on the bus.

The path taken by the bus and its stopping position are shown in *Figure 1* below.

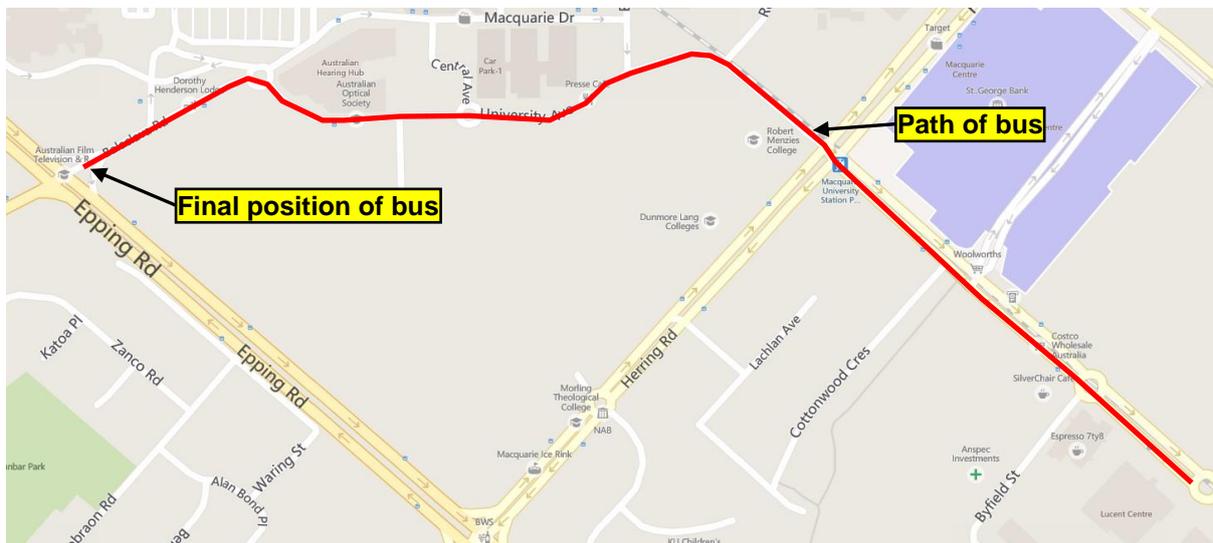


Figure 1: Incident location

The bus was rendered drivable by replacement of the broken studs, and was taken to the operator's Leichhardt depot, where it was inspected by two Office of Transport Safety Investigations investigating officers. Examples of the broken studs can be seen in *Photograph 1*, and typical damage around the stud holes of the outer wheel in *Photograph 2*.



Photograph 2: Broken wheel studs



Photograph 2: Damage around stud hole in wheel

On reviewing the preliminary incident information the Acting Chief Investigator determined that the incident warranted formal investigation pursuant to *Section 46BA* of the *NSW Passenger Transport Act 1990*.

Once completed, OTSI's investigation report will be tabled in both Houses of the NSW Parliament by the Minister for Transport in accordance with *Section 46D* of the *NSW Passenger Transport Act 1990*. When the Report has been tabled, it will be published on OTSI's website and will replace this Interim Factual Statement.

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference established by the Chief Investigator require OTSI's Investigating Officer to:

- a. identify the factors, both primary and contributory, which led to the incident;
- b. advise whether the incident might have been anticipated and the effectiveness of any strategies that were in place to manage the related risks;
and
- c. advise on any matters arising from the investigation that would enhance the safety of bus operations.

Status of the Investigation

OTSI's investigation has commenced. During the course of the investigation, all Directly Involved Parties (DIPs) will be consulted and will be afforded the opportunity to comment on the Draft report before it is finalised.