**Equitable bus service capacity for schools**

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| This practice paper aims to present a review of methodology used to measure school bus capacity in Auckland. It will identify limitations in the current methodology that might have resulted in service deficiencies for some school routes. A new methodology is proposed which is expected to improve capacity analytics and lead to a more equitable outcome specifically for school children.  School bus services in Auckland only account for 3% of the overall bus services. According to the current methodology for school bus analytics, there are only three school bus trips out of 474 which have a persistent capacity issue. However, 10% of all bus capacity complaints are related to school bus services. This relatively significant number of complaints has led to a review of methods used to identify when a bus service reaches “real” full capacity from a child’s point of view.  Certificate of loading (COL) is a key metric to identify the number of passengers allowed on a bus before it is considered at full capacity. The NZTA has different COLs for primary, intermediate and secondary students. This is different again for adult passengers on urban route services as only one COL is considered.  This paper will present analysis of school service covering, trip performance, reliability, models of bus and their COLs, observations around passengers and their behaviour, bus driver behaviour, safety, new insights, revised methodology and impacts of the revised methodology.  It is expected that this revised methodology would lead to identifying genuine capacity issues among school services, that will more accurately reflect genuine passenger satisfaction and feedback. |