

Buses can't keep up with demand

MORE bus services are needed to meet the increasing demand in South and West Gippsland, the Parliamentary Secretary for Transport Edward O'Donohue was told recently. Representatives of the South West Transport Group met with Mr O'Donohue to discuss

The South Gippsland Sentinel Times 14 February 2012

improvements to the frequency and distribution of bus services in the region.

Chair of the group Andrew McEwen said the demand had grown steadily in the past two years since the system was overhauled.

"The improvements in bus services two years ago have been welcomed and the services are being well patronised, but frequently need additional back up services because of over demand."

"An innovative approach to improving bus services for South and West Gippsland is needed and we believe we have a proposal to meet the demand."

Mr McEwen said the group recognises the pressure placed on government through the need to meet the increasing need for public transport services and service needs of the rapidly growing outer suburbs.

"The proposal is a

mixture of changing the routes for services and expansion of frequency and addition of some new services at minimum or no cost.

"Rarely do you genuinely achieve efficiencies and improve service outcomes.

"To a large measure these improvements to bus services would be self financing through a better use of existing resources rather than demanding new resources."

The South West Transport Group is concerned with increasing congestion on the Monash Freeway that is slowing down and will continue to slow down bus traffic.

Afternoon services are increasingly being delayed.

"The proposed rerouting of buses into Pakenham and Cranbourne is a sensible and cost effective way to improve frequency of services and address increasing congestion issues on the Monash free-



Chair of the South West Transport Group Andrew McEwen.

way.
"There is growing recognition that expansion of freeways leads only to more congestion and is

not a sufficient solution.
"Using public rail transport deals with issues of congestion, rising fuel costs and takes vehicles off the Monash Freeway.

"We are in the process of arranging discussion with key stakeholders to improve transport services for South West Gippsland and will be making representation to Hon Peter Ryan at mutually convenient date."

Present at the deputation with Mr McEwen, who's from Meeniyah, were Max Semken from Leongatha, Cr Jeannette Harding from Toora and Gwen Lengersdorf from Koo We Rup.