

Text of letter sent to Metrorail by Byron Bothman et al.

Metrorail Western Cape Commuter Grievances – Southern Line

- Lack of physical trains
 - o We understand that there are not enough trains due to ageing infrastructure, and burning of trains by frustrated commuters.
 - o But this is causing overcrowding and stampeding that is unsafe, going to cause injury and yesterday (16 August) almost caused fatalities at all stations.
 - o It is causing constant delays on the line.
 - o Children, mothers with infants, and the elderly and disabled are being physically endangered, particularly during peak hours.
 - o People are being fired from their jobs and students miss tests & exams.
 - o How can a public transport system provide 1 train every hour during PEAK hours?
 - o 5-carriage trains are simply not the answer. And if there are more Plus than Metro carriages, people cannot rightly be fined for being in Plus.
- § If that is the only solution, then they must run more frequently than hourly.

- No timetables
 - o The trains no longer run according to a timetable.
 - o The timetable is obsolete and announcements are inadequate.
 - o A cornerstone of train public transport is the timetable.
 - o Students are missing exams, we miss meetings and important engagements because of the poor scheduling of the trains.

- Lack of communication to commuters
 - o There is a dire lack of communication to commuters when trains are cancelled, broken down or withdrawn.
 - o The staff at the stations are simply clueless, no fault of their own.
- § They are unable to assist.
- § The call centre number is as useless.

- They have no current information of what is happening on the tracks.
 - o Those electric boards on the stations are equally uninformative and mostly incorrect or displaying nothing.
 - o Lack of communication when commuters are stuck on trains between stations is another major problem. People start jumping off, which is extremely dangerous, but they risk it because they HAVE to get to work/home/appointment.

- Security
 - o This is a big issue for Metrorail, we get that, but it is secondary to the fact that there are no trains.
 - o It must be addressed.

- o Commuters stuck on trains between stations are sitting ducks and especially vulnerable to mugging, assault & worse.

- o The most dangerous station is Steenberg station.

§ Commuters are being robbed there on a regular basis and the assailants simply jump off there after mugging commuters.

- o Then when there is security, be it PRASA actual train police, they stand around in groups instead of having 1 in every carriage as the train moves through stations.

§ If they are grouping together for their safety, imagine how commuters feel?

- o Commuters stuck on trains between stations are sitting ducks and especially vulnerable to mugging, assault & worse.

- o What if a medical emergency occurs on a train stuck between stations, eg heart attack/stroke/early labour? What if someone can't get home to take their medication on time because they have been sitting on a train between stations for hours?

- o Returning home late due to train delays is very dangerous in many areas, especially for women, school children and the elderly or disabled.

- Missing funds

- o As informed citizens, we are aware of the corruption at PRASA/TransNet.

- o We know about the tender fraud and missing monies – to the tune of R50 BILLION!!!.

- o Where is the new rolling stock??? Where is the accountability? This is a criminal matter.

- o If SAA can apply for bailouts from Treasury, surely so can PRASA/TransNet/MetroRail

- o This is **AN EMERGENCY!**

- o Over **400 000** commuters are being adversely affected by the current disservice Metrorail is providing.

- o We note the press releases on your plans which will take up to 2 years to complete.

- o We say NOT ENOUGH is being done!

- o **You have to do more.**

- o **More effort has to be brought to bear.**

- No alternatives provided

- o Metrorail suggests that commuters use alternative transport.

- o At whose cost?

- o What alternative?

- o Metrorail must provide busses when they know that their service is not running.

- o How is it that a commuter has to ditch the train because of delays or signalling problems, to have to take a taxi and or bus to reach their destination?

- No refunds

- o Metrorail does not refund commuters for failed trips.

- o When a commuter has to cough up taxi fare, they are not refunded for their trip money.
- o This is particularly harsh for monthly ticket holders.

- Albertyn crossing causing constant delays
 - o How can it be that trains on the southern line are delayed by 60 minutes plus for over 8 months?
 - o We were promised that the Albertyn crossing would be fixed this month.
 - o Clearly that is not going to happen.
 - o And the dysfunctional crossings are putting people's lives at risk.
 - o How can Metrorail be so flippant about this serious problem?
 - o We see almost daily the close calls between motorists and trains.
 - o The crossing accident was no fault of Metrorail's, but is causing perpetual delays with no end in sight.
 - o And why can Metrorail just not inform the commuters as to progress?
 - o To us it looks like it is getting worse and not better.
 - o I put it to you that this lack of apparent action is criminal.

- Lost faith
 - o Commuters have lost faith in the train system.
 - o Commuters don't trust the excuses any longer.
 - o Commuters are concerned about losing their livelihood due to the current situation.
 - o We feel robbed, left out in the cold, to fend for ourselves.
 - o Stop lying to us...