

VICTORIA ROAD SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA

MOVEABLE BARRIER FOR MANAGED LANES
BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) LANE



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BUS RAPID TRANSIT PROGRAM MEETS TRAVEL TIME GOALS ON OPENING DAY

In Sydney, Australia, road authorities have recently completed construction of the \$175 million "Inner West Busway" project on Victoria Road. This arterial is the most congested road in Sydney, with approximately 75,000 vehicles per day. Before construction, the road provided three lanes of traffic in and out of Sydney. Cars were allowed to park in the outside lanes to access businesses, bringing usable lanes down to two in each direction for much of the road. The road also had a permanent concrete median to prevent crossover accidents and to keep pedestrians from crossing except at approved locations. The RTA had already successfully raised bus traffic to 42% of total traffic during peak travel times, but they wanted to push the number higher, and bus travel times were long and unreliable. The RTA, Hyder Consulting and Baulderstone (the contractor) created the Bridge to Bay Alliance to address these concerns. The goal was to improve bus transit times and bus schedule reliability in the AM without further impacting motorists and reducing existing capacity for passenger vehicle commuters.

This ambitious project included duplicating the Iron Cove Bridge to relieve the major congestion chokepoint. On Victoria Road, the Alliance reviewed several options before choosing to install a moveable concrete median barrier that could reconfigure the roadway to add a lane

to the peak morning direction, giving the peak direction four lanes instead of three. The plan was to remove the permanent median barrier and deploy about 1km of moveable concrete barrier over a length of about 1.3 km, with breaks at four intersections and a new pedestrian walkway. The outside lane would then be converted to a "Bus Only" lane from 5:30 am to 9:45 am. After the morning peak traffic subsided, the barrier would be returned to the 3/3 configuration. One important reason for selecting the moveable barrier was that this system would continue to provide the existing positive protection of concrete barrier between opposing lanes of traffic, as opposed to using signal lights and paint to alert motorists to changes in the road configuration.

The RTA set a goal of saving 18 minutes off of the average bus trip on Victoria Road into Sydney during the morning peak, and this goal was realized on the first day of operation. The Bus-Only lane has successfully increased bus schedule reliability and reduced transit times without any negative impact on vehicle traffic. Along with the duplication of the Iron Cove Bridge and the moveable concrete median, the RTA also implemented virtual "green light corridors" to minimize the amount of time that busses would spend stopped for cross traffic. Total bus services have been increased by 1300 per week for a total of 6,000 services per week.

