

TAKING THE 'R' OUT OF INTEGRATED RAPID PUBLIC TRANSPORT NETWORKS

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ABSTRACT

The 2007 Public Transport Strategy was based on two pillars. The first was Modal Upgrading – improving each of the individual transport modes (bus, rail, taxi), and the second was, 'where possible', Integrated Rapid Public Transport Networks. In practice, almost all the attention has been given to the second pillar (IRPTNs). These, though, are proving very slow to reach implementation. The result is that, in the near-decade since the approval by Cabinet of the Strategy, there has been only the most nominal improvement in public transport. It is time to revert to the first pillar, Modal Upgrading. The mode which requires the greatest attention is the minibus-taxi, since this carries by far the majority of public transport users, and will continue to do so for many years to come. The key lies in the Operating Licence system. Government must (a) administer fairly and (b) enforce firmly, the relevant provisions of the National Land Transport Act. The more orderly taxi mode which emerges will be an important step towards Integrated (though not necessarily Rapid) Public Transport Networks