

INFRASTRUCTURE

**8. TT 2020 –
Increasing bus capacity for Ronaldsway**

The Hon. Member for Onchan (Mr Callister) to ask the Minister for Infrastructure:

What plan his Department has to increase bus capacity to and from Ronaldsway for TT 2020 to cope with the increased volume of travellers?

The President: Question 8. Hon. Member for Onchan, Mr Callister.

Mr Callister: Thank you, Mr President.

Can I ask the Minister for the Department of Infrastructure: what plans do his Department have to increase bus capacity to and from Ronaldsway for TT 2020 to cope with the increased volume in travellers?

The President: I call on the Minister for Infrastructure, Mr Harmer.

The Minister for Infrastructure (Mr Harmer): Thank you, Mr President.

My Department plans the details of TT services towards the end of the preceding calendar year, but I can assure the Hon. Member that the Department is committed to carrying as many TT visitors as possible around the Island.

Of course we want our visitors to enjoy their stay, but we also want them to travel about safely and to contribute to the local economy. Last year, Bus Vannin carried 232,200 passengers in TT, and if the TT continues to attract increasing numbers of visitors I very much hope to see higher passenger numbers in 2020. Our record year was 2018, when 234,411 passengers were carried.

The President: Supplementary, Mr Callister.

Mr Callister: Yes, thank you, Mr President.

I thank the Minister for his detailed response. The first question is if maybe the Minister can clarify that he has seen the latest passenger survey, which highlights an increase in passengers coming by air, towards 1,300 since 2016 and over 7,000 more passengers travelling by air for the TT since 2010.

Can I ask the Minister how many extra buses he put on last year to cope with the increase from the previous year and how many will he be putting on this year to cope with the increase expected this year?

The President: Mr Harmer.

The Minister: Thank you, Mr President.

I will come back to you on the previous year, but obviously this year for the following year we are still in that planning phase and will come back on that.

The President: Mr Speaker.

The Speaker: Is it the Minister's plan that there will be a new fleet or at least some new buses with modern facilities in terms of air conditioning, WiFi capacity and USB charging points by next summer?

And would the Minister care to comment on the success or otherwise of the 15-minute frequency to the Airport that now exists?

The President: Minister to reply.

The Minister: Thank you.

We will be looking at certain things, such as capacity in terms of TT – and I think you are talking about TT here – using single-deck vehicles that are actually better for passengers travelling with luggage.

We have had some trials with WiFi and so forth and obviously there is WiFi on buses at the moment, but we have trialled some other facilities. Again, I come back to how much of that will be for next year.