

29 July 2003

The Ministers of Finance and Transport  
Parliament Buildings  
WELLINGTON

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Greater Wellington is the promotional  
name of the Wellington Regional Council

Dear Ministers

### **Tranz Metro (Wellington)**

It will be no surprise to you that the Greater Wellington Regional Council is becoming very concerned about the condition of some of the passenger rolling stock (English electric units and the Wairarapa passenger cars) and we now formally request the Government's assistance in resolving this issue.

About three years ago Tranz Rail announced that it intended to sell Tranz Metro (Wellington) as it no longer saw passenger rail services as part of its core business. However, for various reasons a sale has not been concluded. In that hiatus there has been little, if any, reinvestment into rolling stock. As you know the Regional Council is currently precluded by law from owning any transport infrastructure.

The Council's immediate concern relates to the condition of some of the rolling stock and the very real possibility that the English electric units and Wairarapa passenger cars may start being withdrawn from service for safety reasons by Tranz Rail, prior to the commencement of any refurbishment programme. Such an action to withdraw rolling stock from active service will, in our view, further undermine the faith of the travelling public about the future of the service and should therefore be avoided if at all possible.

Unfortunately, the current problem will exist until a new long term owner of Tranz Metro (Wellington) is found. However, we believe that the Government could help provide a solution in the interim, by purchasing at minimal cost from Tranz Rail that rolling stock in most urgent need of refurbishment. This would enable a refurbishment programme, similar to the Ganz Mavag refurbishment programme, to start within the next few months rather than waiting for the outcome of the Tranz Rail ownership situation and any subsequent sale of Tranz Metro (Wellington).

I would greatly appreciate an early opportunity to discuss this with you to ascertain whether or not such an approach finds favour with the Government.

I will have my PA, Helen Plant, contact your respective offices in the next few days to see what can be arranged.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely

**Margaret Shields**  
Chairperson