



**How McArthur helped  
ensure commuters weren't  
derailed by the  
T3 Bankstown line closure.**



**Transport  
for NSW**

**McArthur**  
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# TfNSW & McArthur: T3 Bankstown line closure

The T3 Bankstown Line between Sydenham and Bankstown was closed in September 2024 to enable the final conversion of the 130-year-old line to modern metro standards.

For a five-week period (18/09 - 20/10) the McArthur Pink Shirt teams were employed across all key hubs informing commuters and answering any queries about the 12 month closure, bus replacements and all other issues and/or concerns.

In addition to providing on-the-ground advice and information to commuters, our teams produced in-depth weekly reports to TfNSW Management covering four key components - Customer Engagement, Customer Sentiment, Lessons Learnt and General Observations/Improvement Suggestions.



## The Challenges

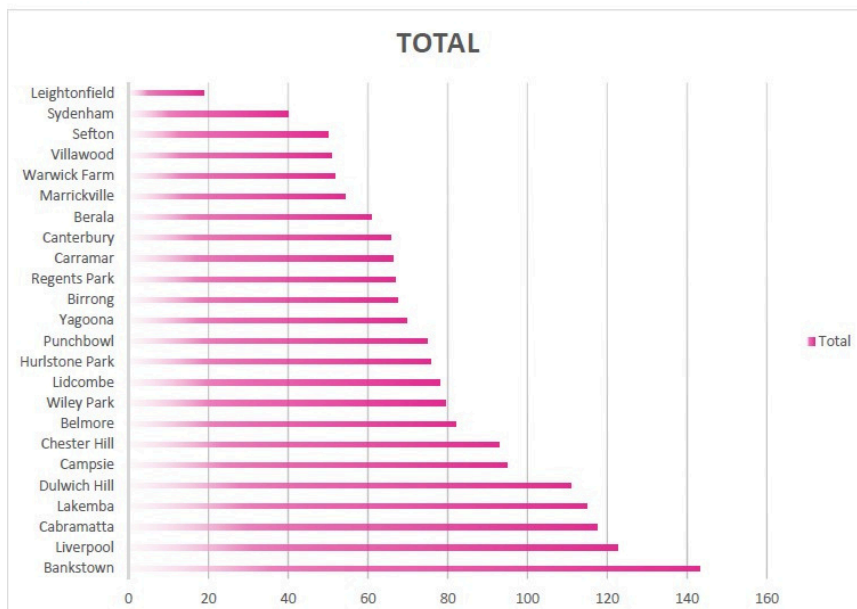
### Managing the challenge of a major disruption

- Effectively managing operations across 24 key stations and transport hubs from Day One.
- Managing disparate customer sentiment.
- Providing multilingual support to Western Sydney's diverse population.
- Ensuring regular and timely reporting.

## Week 1 Hitting the ground running

From Day One, the teams operated across all 24 transport hubs. Throughout the week, our CSO's were asked to record the number of customer interactions in their end-of-shift reports. During the opening week, we encountered a significant volume of customer interactions. Given it was the starting week, we were uncertain about the level of engagement our Customer Service Officers (CSOs) would experience.

Daily customer interaction



### Outcomes & Insights:

#### Delivering positive messages.

Though there was some commuter apprehension about the line closure, The McArthur Pink Shirts kept the narrative positive, highlighting that disruptions were only short term and the advantages of the new service when in operation.



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## Week 2 Dealing with Increasing Engagement Levels

Week 2 saw the teams managing substantially increasing community engagement. Notably, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday proved to be the busiest days for our CSOs with next Monday being the official closure date for the service.



### Outcomes & Insights:

#### Effective communication and reporting

With the large-scale size and critical nature of the operation, the team's 'on the ground' and weekly reporting played an integral role in continuous improvement and keeping TfNSW management across any issues.

#### Managing Expectations During the Transition

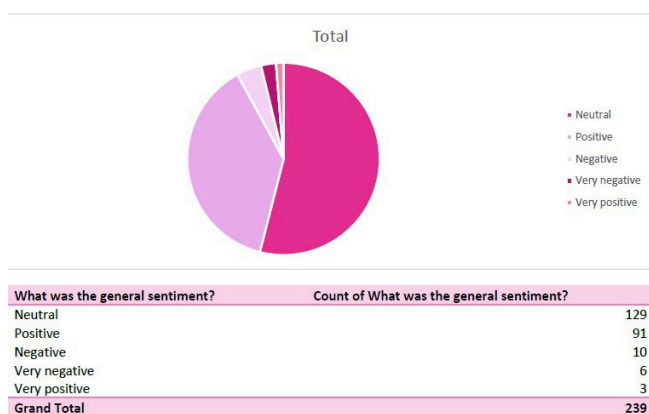
The McArthur teams' narrative helped manage expectations by being transparent about potential disruptions and providing realistic timelines for when commuters can expect smooth operations.

#### An unexpected visitor!

The teams had an unexpected visitor when Joy Haylen, NSW Minister for Transport dropped by to see how things were going.

## Week 3 Managing differing customer sentiment

Week 3 saw the first week of actual closure of the line and the anticipated increase in commuter engagement. It also gave the McArthur team their first exposure to 'real-life' issues and enquiries from commuters.



The customer sentiment surrounding the closure of the line was predominantly neutral, with fluctuations between positive and negative responses across various stations.

Many commuters appreciate the provision of free replacement bus services, although they express frustrations regarding delays, accessibility issues, and the overall inconvenience of adapting to new travel arrangements during this extended disruption.

### Outcomes & Insights:

#### Maintaining and improving communication

Maintaining and continuously improving communication was quickly identified by the team as being integral to effective management of the project and was reflected in the quality, insight and timeliness of the team's reporting.

#### The importance of multi-cultural/lingual communication capabilities

The McArthur team conducted nearly 900 multi-lingual engagements during the week. Key to effective communication was the team's ability to engage in 24 different languages/dialects.

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## Week 4 Adapting & Staying Flexible

Like most projects involving a community-facing major disruption, outcomes and scenarios can be unpredictable and a moveable feast. A major challenge for our teams was having to contend with and react to frequent schedule and timetable changes.



### Outcomes & Insights:

#### Flexibility is critical

Our team has once again highlighted its ability to remain flexible and adaptive in the face of last-minute schedule changes. We understand that some degree of flexibility is inherent in any dynamic project, and our team remains committed to adjusting as needed.

#### Managing fluctuating demand and activity

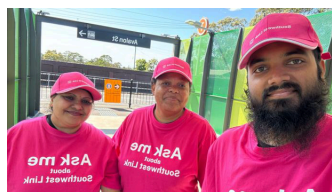
After four weeks of operations, there was a significant drop in customer interactions. While last week the team exceeded 3,000 interactions on some days, this week's highest count did not exceed the 2,000 marks.

This decrease was anticipated, as most commuters have now been informed about the train closure. Over the three days we were operational, the team engaged with just over 5,000 commuters.



## Week 5 Managing differing customer sentiment

The final week of the project saw the teams focused on stations west of Bankstown, specifically 13 stations from Yagoona to Liverpool. The teams were also responsible for managing the launch of the new T6 Lidcombe & Bankstown line. This required guiding regular train commuters through these changes.



### Outcomes & Insights:

#### Supporting Local Communities

We have successfully recruited extra team members by locally sourcing from postcode-specific areas, ensuring they are not only familiar with the community but also have an easier commute to their shifts. This approach allows our team to navigate and serve the neighbourhoods with an understanding of the local dynamics and developing stronger connections with the residents.

#### The Importance of Contingency Cover MCC)

McArthur ensured full attendance at all 24/13 locations over the six-week period by supporting any sickness or absenteeism through the deployment of MCC staff. If an MCC was not utilized during a shift, McArthur would cover the associated costs. Typically, MCC staff were stationed at either Sydenham or Bankstown, ready to be deployed to any required location along the line.



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## Key project metrics, outcomes and achievements:

### KEY PROJECT METRICS



100%

Shift fulfillment across all weeks



54,500+

Customer interactions



12,558

Hours completed across all shifts



24

Stations covered by McArthur teams



2,891

Multilingual interactions

### Results and Takeaways

#### Successfully managing the challenge of a major disruption

The closure of the T3 service represented a major rail disruption for Sydney commuters in the area with constantly changing timelines also adding to the challenge for the McArthur Pink Shirts.

#### Feedback and Reporting for continuous improvement

The comprehensive, proactive reporting and feedback provided by the McArthur teams were integral to delivering continuous improvement and managing real-time issues across the five-week project.

#### Delivering positive messages

Although there was some commuter apprehension about the line closure, The McArthur Pink Shirts kept the narrative positive, highlighting that disruptions were only short term and the advantages of the new service when in operation.

#### Supporting Multi-Cultural Communities

The presence of multilingual McArthur staff significantly enhanced customer experience, especially in the more diverse communities. Over the five weeks, the team recorded nearly 3,000 multilingual interactions over the 5 weeks.