



4th August,2018.

Committee Secretary,

Transport and Public Works Committee,

Parliament House, George St., BRISBANE Qld 4000.

Submission for the Inquiry in the operations of Toll Roads

Dear Sir,

Please find enclosed the following e-mails:

1. Suspension notice sent to me by Go Via 7th Deember 2016
- 2.E-mail to Chris Whiting MLA sent from Canberra 13th December 2016
- 3.E-mail to Chris Whiting MLA sent from Canberra 14th December 2017

I also would like all members of the Commitee to read the on-line article in the 'The Age' newspaper Melbourne entitled "Transurban the making of a monster" by Royce Miller and Ben Schneiders 14th May 2016...This article details how Transurban has a monopoly on Toll Roads in Victroria and Queensland. Govia/Linkt is owned by a consortium in which Transurban has the controlling interest. I have the view that Transurban is more concrned about shareholders and profits than it is for its customers. (Please note.. I have been unable to download 'the Age' article because it is long ..19 pages on the computer and there are gaps in the printing process).

Committee members should note that I have avoided using toll roads in Brisbane and elsewhere because as █████ acknowledged in e-mail 3, I could be left at the roadside at the age of nearly 79 if police stopped my car because of unpaid tolls and then to face how I would get home and recover the car from the roadside.

I would hope that members will note that at the time (Deember 2016) that I was unable to communicate with Govia in spite of all the notices about phoning to make a payment. I did not get a reponse after trying for two days until I made a complaint on-line.

The problem was that my credit card had expired. I am not computer literate beyond the basics and it was difficult for me to get this problem fixed on-line because it was impossible to communicate by phone.

It is my view that govvia/Linkt makes no provision for the needs of aged people like me. I found out in the complaint process that there is no office in Brisbane, no 'local' call centre. I came back from the Middle East to retire in 2006. I worked with other nationals in a Gulf State. Most have English as a second or third language. Their accent is often dificult to understand. I have the view that overseas call centres are a device to deter inquiries and complaints as well as to save the company money. In the case of the telco I have I was advised recently that I wold have to wait at least 90 minutes!! Aged people like me find this very frustrating...Transurban make great profits.. Why can't there be a local call centre here

in Brisbane with voices that one can understand ???

I am concerned about the arrangement that the Government has with Linkt etc. that the Government debt collection agency will direct police to stop 'toll debtors'. My daughter-in-law who is an officer in the AFP advised me that in the ACT it is a civil matter not a police matter. This should be the case here in Queensland

I am not convinced that neither the LNP or Labor have the political will to change anything. There is no competition. What we have now is a 'Monopoly' and I find it alarming that the Ombudsman is an employee of Linkt/Transurban... is this correct??? How can there be any real change in what appears to be a cosy relationship between government and Transurban.

Lastly before I submitted this, I sent an inquiry off to Linkt/Transurban. I finally got a response by phone by someone called [REDACTED] on the 27th July 2018. He knew about my troubles in December 2016 with the company. They appeared to have updated my credit card which expired in May?? I asked if there was some other way for me to keep my a/c in credit so that the events of December 2016 could not occur again. He advised that Linkt would send me a letter with a bar code that I could use at a Post Office. I am still waiting for the letter from Linkt !!

I hope this is concise ?? I wish the committee all the best in their deliberations.

Yours sincerely,



Gilbert J Linden, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Print window

https://mail.yahoo.com/d/folders/2/messages/2777?.intl=au&.lang=...



Subject: go via account suspension warning. Top up now.

From: DO_NOT_REPLY@GOVIA.COM.AU

To: [REDACTED]

Date: Wednesday, 7 December 2016, 8:31:23 am AEST

Account suspension warning

Dear [REDACTED]
go via account [REDACTED]

Your account balance is at or below \$0. PAY \$54.33* NOW.

What do I need to do?

Your account has a negative balance of \$4.33. Make an immediate payment to avoid your account being suspended.

If you continue to travel on toll roads with insufficient funds to cover your tolls, you will incur additional fees and penalties will apply.

Pay now

**This amount includes a \$50 recommended top-up to help cover future toll travel.*

An automatic top-up can help stop you slipping into
the red

go via network

This email was sent by Queensland Motorways Management Pty Ltd, ABN 86 010 630 921
PO Box 2125 Mansfield QLD 4122

Confidential

Print window



Subject: Fw: go via account suspension warning. Top up now.

From: [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED]

Date: Tuesday, 13 December 2016, 8:39:23 pm AEST

Chris Whiting..Happy Christmas and New year to you, your family and all the staff. I enclose this e-mail from Govia which I opened after I arrived in Canberra by car for Christmas. I tried to phone the number late on Wednesday ...no answer..the next day and into Friday I tried to contact them from Canberra..close to 20 calls...one I hung-on for 30 minutes before a voice message advised me to ring later...the same thing happened repeatedly..finally I went on-line and paid with my current credit card..even then I was advised by the chat room that this did not change the original credit card which apparently had expired.. I then sent an e-mail advising them to phone me and confirm that my credit card expiry date had been changed. Finally today they phoned through [REDACTED].. I asked why could Govia not answer a call for over two days.....no answer. I asked why they did not advise that my credit card date had expired as other providers do for me...no answer. I asked why they did not understand that older people had limited computer skills...no answer. I asked where their office was in Brisbane. She said they did not have one.. All this disappoints me. How does anyone communicate with this company when they send out terse e-mails like the one enclosed. My son now has an e-tag with another company because they did the same thing with him when his credit card expired. I have only sent this e-mail because a friend in Brisbane advise that GoVia had been the subject of similar complaints on ABC612 when people tried to phone them to no avail. I was also advised by my friend that GoVia's principal is the Ombudsman for toll complaints? Is this true re. discussion on the ABC about this. Also that GoVia has some arrangement with the State government about debt collection..Is that true or not ? I find this of some concern re. conflict of interest.I hope there is no truth in these allegations aired on the ABC???

I will return to Brisbane after Christmas...sorry to trouble you about this. Also [REDACTED] advised me I only needed to pay a top-up of \$25 and not the \$50 demanded in the e-mail....!!!

Yours sincerely..Gil Linden.. [REDACTED]

On Wednesday, 7 December 2016, 8:31, "DO_NOT_REPLY@GOVIA.COM.AU"
<DO_NOT_REPLY@GOVIA.COM.AU> wrote:

Account suspension warning

7/07/2018 4:08 pm

Print window

3

Subject: Re: go via account suspension warning. Top up now.

From: [REDACTED]

To: [REDACTED]

Date: Wednesday, 14 December 2016, 4:19:06 pm AEST

Chris Whiting/Ged....I have had another call from GoVia. This time I was from [REDACTED] (A Resolution Officer) I went through the same Q&A. I do not know if you managed to contact them. She could not give answer as to why they could not answer their phone for two days last week. She did agree that GoVia would consider advising customers that their credit card was about to expire. She reiterated that GoVia has no Brisbane office now. How do you get to have a face to face meeting? She agreed that aged people with limited computer skills were at a disadvantage. If one cannot contact them by phone...well how then?? No office etc...?? The two questions that concerned me were the the role of the Ombudsman to settle disputes. She said he was independent and represented several toll companies . I also discovered that GoVia is a susidiary of Trans-Urban which owns several toll companies. [REDACTED] needs to explore then ..Is there then any real competition ??? Also, she agreed there had been adverse publicity on the ABC about GoVia. I asked her about the relationship between GoVia and the State Government re. collection of toll debts. She agreed that is the case. I then advised her of a case recently within the electorate where the teenage daughter of a neighbour was stopped by police. He license was suspended. She phoned me sobbing. I went about a kilometre away and collected her where she had been left at 10pm at night. The police did say they would drive her home etc...I went back and drove her car home. [REDACTED] agreed this could happen. I then said what would happen if I could not contact GoVia to pay or did not have access to a computer...Could the same thing happen to me if on my return from Canberra and be left at the roadside aged 77 with a wife who can't drive? She agreed it could.

Ged there are .lots of pensioners in the electorate who could be in that same boat? There is an election coming up. My daughter-in-law who is an AFP Police Officer advised me that police in the ACT cannot act like the Qld. police because it is regarded as a 'civil matter'. Of course there are those who are toll payment evaders...but not all of us. Chris/Ged over to you..I hope Labor is a party that supports the powerless and poor.....Regards.... Gil Linden in Caberra until Dec. 28th

On Wednesday, 14 December 2016, 9:14, Murrumba Electorate Office
[REDACTED]

Hi Gil

Thanks for your email to Chris. Chris has asked if I could reply on his behalf.

I am sorry to hear about the troubles you are having with GoVia, especially during your holiday.

I will make some enquiries on your behalf and hopefully receive some answers to your queries quickly.

I will be back in touch as soon as I get a response.