

Buses get the blood boiling

Margaret Rice

DOES the sea air affect bus drivers travelling along Bondi Rd who then drive recklessly to the city – and are they afflicted by the same problem when they head back down the hill?

Tulipanna owner Elizabeth Clark has been worried about bus drivers driving dangerously along the road for some time.

She has seen Sydney buses driving too fast near her shop and hitting awnings.

Tulipanna's awning shadecloth had been hit six times in 12 months, she said.

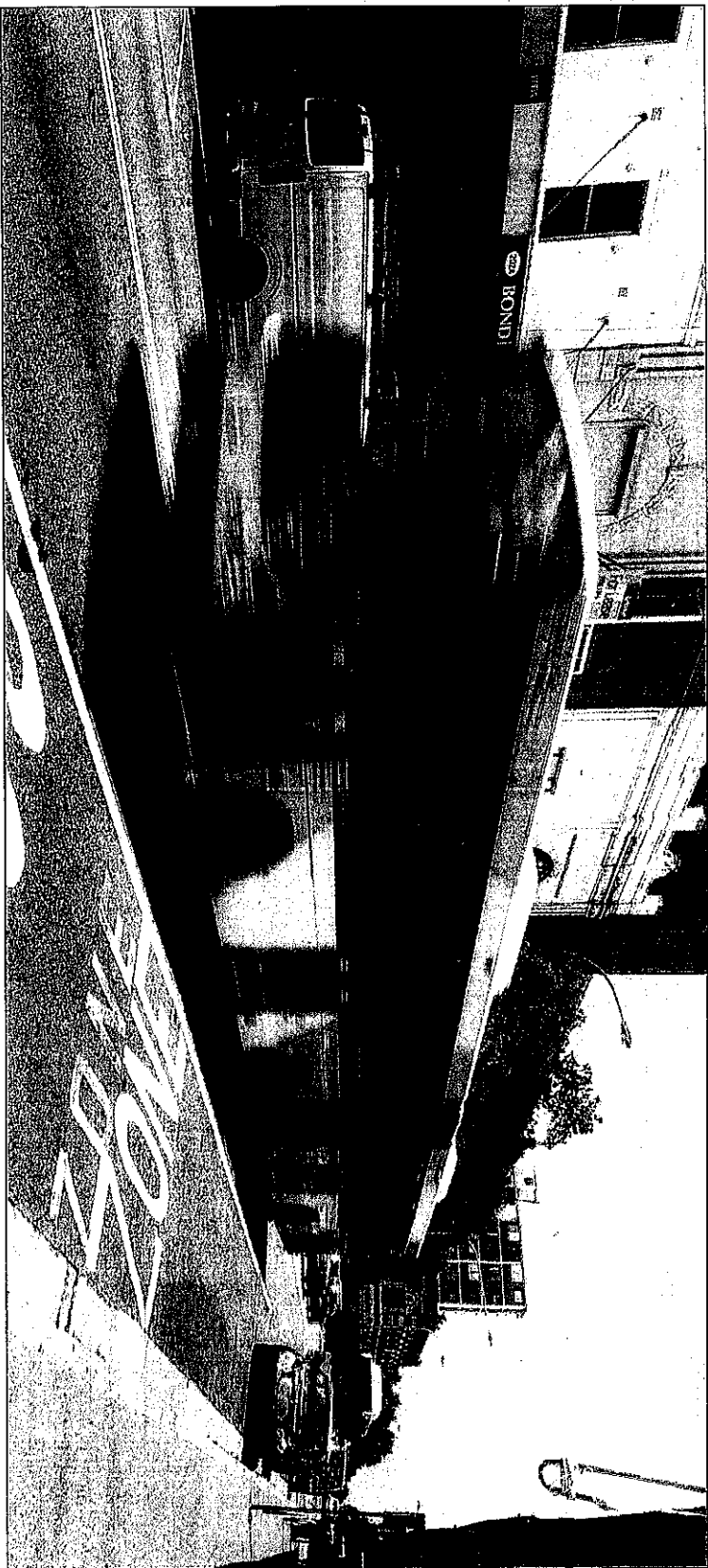
Shopowner George Pizanis said all his awning hooks were crooked because they were repeatedly hit by buses.

Ms Clark claimed to have seen bus drivers react aggressively to women pushing prams as buses drove next to the gutter.

"We witnessed a mother with a dog and pram almost get hit from behind while walking up the street and they were on the footpath where it's meant to be safe," Ms Clark said.

"The driver was so close to the gutter the mirror missed the back of her head by what only must have been a millimetre. She was very shocked and upset."

Both Donna from Russkis Deli and Sam Diasinos from Sam the Butcher said they



Bus drivers have been accused of driving too fast down Bondi Rd, damaging property and putting pedestrians at risk.

Pictures: JOHN APPLEBYARD

SHOPKEEPERS SAY DRIVERS ARE RECKLESS, SELFISH AND DRIVE TOO FAST

had problems driving their vans onto Bondi Rd because of buses.

"The buses will never stop and let us in or out of the lane," Donna said.

Mr Diasinos said the bus zone covered his laneway.

"Obviously they believe they have right of way because it's a bus zone but we also want to get out some times," he said.

"And they regularly knock our signage off the outside. Most of the time we don't notice it happening at the time — we see it afterwards."

This happened every couple of years at least, he said.

Have you seen buses driving too fast? Tell us: wentworthcourier.com.au



Butcher Sam Diasinos.



Donna from Russkis Deli.

STATE TRANSIT: TELL US

A State Transit spokesman said the safety of passengers, road users and drivers was their top priority.

If a bus driver is observed to be driving in an unsafe manner, State Transit encourages the public to call TransportInfo on 131 500 and report the bus number, route and the time of service so that action may be taken immediately," the spokeswoman said.

Conversations

✉ **MAIL:** Letters, Wentworth Courier, 170-180 Bourke Rd, Alexandria✉ **EMAIL:** wentworthcourier@couriernews.com.au

FA

Reason for haste

IF buses are travelling at excessive speeds in the Eastern Suburbs, perhaps they are merely trying to keep to the timetables that are often complained about?

**Gary Frances,
Bexley**

Bus drivers respond

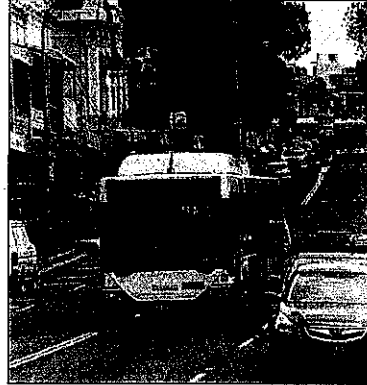
I WRITE in response to the article "Buses get the blood boiling" (*Courier*, Dec 7). I assure people that bus drivers are not "reckless and selfish".

The 400 drivers at Waverley bus depot take exception to being described as such. Every bus driver works Bondi Rd, we carry an average of 70,000 passengers every day and we drive an average of 45 hours each week.

We are disciplined, highly-skilled workers who care about passengers and continue to lobby and consult with State Transit management to improve bus services so locals along Bondi Rd can get on a bus, especially in summer when the tourists pack out the buses at the beach.

The suggestion that buses are hitting shop awnings is false. There have, however, been a few buses colliding with a canvas sun awning. Given the number of buses that work Bondi Rd 24 hours a day, seven days a week, readers can be reassured that bus drivers are skilled and vigilant to avoid accidents.

Further, the observation that drivers are "driving too fast" is subjective, especially to people who



Buses are in the spotlight.

are not professional heavy vehicle drivers, and I question whether any vehicle can drive over the speed limit along Bondi Rd given the traffic conditions and traffic light restrictions.

I can assure readers that every bus driver has at some time had to avoid serious injury/death to pedestrians who stray within 15cm of the kerb, which is the mirror overhang of a bus, and we will continue to do so.

We will also continue to pull into bus zones close and parallel to the kerb, if able, as that is the best way to assist elderly, infirm and disabled passengers. It's our job.

Waverley depot has provided public passenger services to the eastern suburbs for more than 120 years and the workers have always been available, and will continue to be available, to consult with people and businesses to effect improvements for all.

**Wendy Wirth, union rep,
Waverley bus depot**





CONDITIONS

Please keep your letters as short as possible

Upfront

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FIND IT FAST

	Thursday Partly cloudy Top temp: 22C
	Friday Partly cloudy Top temp: 23C
	Saturday Shower or two Top temp: 24C
	Sunday Shower or two Top temp: 24C

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MOVIE GIVEAWAY - PAGE 45

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JAZZING UP
DOUBLE BAY

Property

Dream views

Snap up an eastern suburbs dream home before the end



Discover Local

We've covered everything from eateries to exercise, and in the final instalment of Discover Local for 2011, we



EDITORS DESK

David Mills

EDITOR, WENTWORTH COURIER

SO is it just me . . . or has anybody else noticed fewer Season's Greetings cards in the work postbox this year? A number of organisations I deal with have emailed to say that they're not sending cards this year as an environmental initiative, while others just simply haven't bothered. What's it all mean? Are we getting greener, or Grinchier? I don't know the answer, but I'm sure this lousy summer is adding to the unseasonal vibe. Please Santa, bring the sun back!

NEWS TIPS

Got a hot news tip? Phone us on 8062 2542, email millsd@newslocal.com.au or write to 170-180 Bourke Rd,