

# MOVING PEOPLE

➤ *Tasmania*



*Bus and Coach Industry*  
Moving People for a Sustainable Tasmania





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33 Forbes St. Devonport Tasmania 7310

Telephone: +61 3 6423 2611 Email: [admin@tasbus.com.au](mailto:admin@tasbus.com.au)



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**A Moving People Policy for  
a Sustainable Tasmania**





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## Introduction

Passenger transport services are integral to the future of Tasmanian cities, towns and villages. They play a critical role in determining the quality of life across the state, economic growth, and protection of the environment. Passenger transport provides improvements in health, education and other social opportunities through the access it provides to services.

The Tasmanian Bus Association (TasBus) believes Tasmania's passenger transport system should make a positive contribution to the environment, social fabric and economic growth of Tasmania.

We believe the key to achieving these outcomes is through improving the frequency, coverage and priority of Tasmania's bus services.

In advocating for passenger transport in Tasmania, TasBus supports:

- > Bus services that are delivered by modern and environmentally friendly vehicles and fuels
- > Good urban and regional planning practices that encourage connections between bus services and active transport modes, such as walking and cycling
- > Transit oriented development
- > Improved freight networks.

## The Tasmanian Bus Industry

The bus industry in Tasmania encompasses more than 1000 buses and employs almost 800 Tasmanians.

The private bus industry services 501 contracts and moves 30,000 students per day, travelling 8.7 million vehicle kilometres per year.

Government owned Metro Tasmania runs 637,000 timetabled or school services, travelling 10.4 million vehicle kilometres per year.

Contracted services account for 47 per cent of total vehicles with tour and charter services 21 percent, urban General Access (GA) 22 per cent and others 10 per cent.

A vast majority (405 out of 501) of contracted services are performed in rural (272 contracts) and urban fringe GA student (133 contracts) areas.

## The Tasmanian Bus Association (TasBus)

TasBus is the peak body representing the Tasmanian Bus and Coach industry.

The goals of TasBus are to work in cooperation with the community and the Tasmanian Government to:

- > Protect the ongoing viability of the Tasmanian Bus and Coach Industry
- > Develop and implement policies that improve the efficiency and professionalism of Tasmanian bus operators
- > Provide assistance and advice to bus operators on issues which will impact on their business.
- > Promote unity within the industry
- > Promote unity between the industry and the community
- > Promote mobility and accessibility for Tasmanian communities through the use of innovative bus systems
- > Encourage Government investment into mass passenger transport in the form of services, support for modern and safe vehicles, and network infrastructure.





## A Moving People Policy for Tasmania

This policy statement follows on from the Sustainable Transport Policy for Tasmania released by TasBus in 2010.

In the intervening period between the release of the 2010 policy and the release of this policy, TasBus has worked closely with the Bus Industry Confederation (BIC) in aligning our vision for Tasmania's bus services with the suite of Moving People policies produced by the BIC.

The BIC's Moving People policy agenda has been articulated in three key publications produced by the BIC and strategic partners. These policy statements outline a research and evidence based vision for how Australian Governments fund and deliver improved transport across Australia. The BIC's Moving People policies take a strong focus on how Governments achieve reform in transport pricing, strategic land use and planning, and attract more commuters to public transport, walking and cycling.

From our partnership with the BIC, TasBus has developed our Moving People policy for Tasmania which reflects a Tasmanian view of the BIC's broader policy message. This policy statement is targeted at bus services in Tasmania and how they relate to other modes of transport and the people that use them.

This Moving People policy for Tasmania outlines our vision for the development of Tasmania's transport system which encompasses urban, outer urban, rural and regional bus services. In developing this publication TasBus has taken into account the unique nature of passenger transport in Tasmania with a focus on solutions for Tasmanians living in regional areas and on the fringes of our major towns.

## Vision Statement

### To build a sustainable transport future for Tasmania

The future growth of our cities, towns and regions is heavily dependent on quality passenger transport services for Tasmania. The bus industry is the sole provider of public transport for all Tasmanians including in our cities, on the urban fringe, in our towns and rural and regional areas.

Our vision is to deliver high quality passenger transport as a viable alternative to the private motor vehicle for all Tasmanians.

## Our Aim

### Double the share of passenger trips taken by bus by 2020

The rising cost of fuel and increasing awareness of the environmental and social impacts of over-reliance on the car make it critical that high quality bus services are offered to Tasmanians as a genuine and realistic alternative to the car.

Our aim is to double the share of passenger trips being taken by bus by 2020.



## Why Double by 2020?

Tasmania's unique lifestyle and beautiful environment provides one of the most liveable places on the planet. TasBus wishes to see this preserved and built upon. TasBus believe that alternative travel choices to the car, such as convenient and reliable bus services, is a vital element in the maintenance of living standards and lifestyles of Tasmanians.

The achievement of our target will:

- > Prevent traffic congestion in major centres
- > Buffer Tasmanians against oil price vulnerability (increase in fuel costs)
- > Reduce greenhouse gas and pollutant emissions related to vehicle use
- > Make our major centres more viable and the urban form of our town and cities friendlier
- > Improve community mobility and access
- > Build a more active population and bring with it improvements in health and reductions in health care costs to Government and the community
- > Help address social isolation.

## Our Principles

The principles in this Policy Statement reflect those articulated in the Urban Passenger Transport Framework from the Tasmanian Department of Infrastructure Energy and Resources (DIER). TasBus agrees broadly with its aims.

We present three core principles for our Moving People Policy for Tasmania; these have been modified from DIER's Urban Passenger Transport Framework to reflect the bus service focus of our policy.

- > Information - Encouraging the use of buses as an alternative to private vehicles through increased public awareness, acceptance and usage of buses and building

partnerships between key stakeholders.

- > Quality - Achieving the provision of high frequency bus services delivered with high quality infrastructure that enhances the attractiveness, efficiency and utility of bus services.
- > Strategy - Working with the Tasmanian Government and community to develop a long term approach to integrated land use and transport planning which will grow the population around designated transit corridors.

## Urgent Transport Issues for Tasmania

### A Growing and Ageing Population

The Tasmanian population at the 2012 Census was measured at 512,400 with a median age of 40. This median age was the highest of all states and territories.

Greater Hobart grew by 18,000 people between June 2001 and June 2011, while the remainder of state grew by 21,400 people.<sup>1</sup> The percentage of Tasmanians aged 65 and over grew from 15 percent to 16.3 per cent between 2006 and 2011.

Based on Department of Treasury and Finance figures the National Demographic Advisory Council (2008) forecasts:

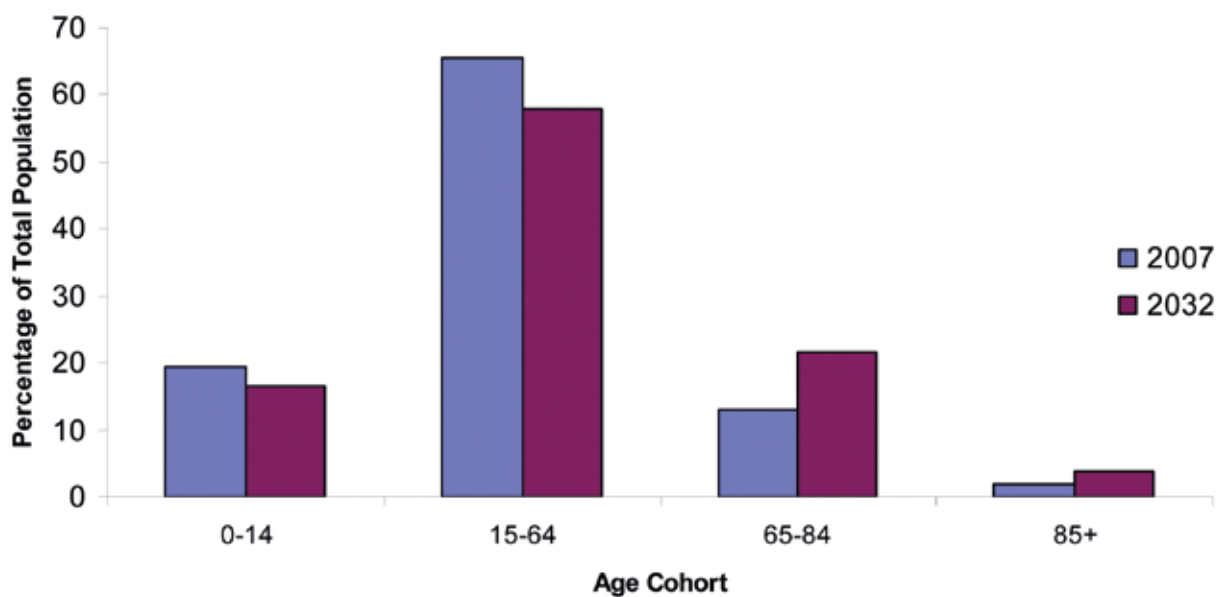
- > The total population of Tasmania (medium series forecast) will exceed 520,000 by 2020 and could be almost as high as 550,000 (high series forecast).
- > The percentage of Tasmania's population aged 65 and over is expected to increase from 16 per cent of the population in 2007 to more than 23 per cent of the population in 2032. (see Figure 1)

<sup>1</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012, "1305.6 - Tasmania at a Glance, 2011", Australian Government, Canberra.





**Figure 1: Projected Population Change by Age Range (Proportions 2007 to 2032)**



Source: Department of Treasury and Finance Tasmania, 2008

An ageing and expanding population will bring with it new challenges for Tasmania's passenger transport network as the number of Tasmanians who do not hold a license (under 17) grows and the number of Tasmanians who are no longer able to drive, due to ageing related factors, grows.



## A Geographically Diverse Population, Social Isolation and Transport Disadvantage

Tasmania was the only state or territory where population growth in the capital city was smaller than in the rest of the state. Tasmania has a highly dispersed population.

Analysis of ABS 1996 and 2001 census data indicates that 80 per cent of Tasmania's 99 settlements have a population below 2,000 while Tasmania had the lowest percentage of its total population, out of any state or territory living in the capital city (Hobart). This rate of urbanisation at 27 per cent of the total population in the capital city was below the national average of 54 per cent.

The total split between rural and urban population in Tasmania has been identified as 53 per cent urban and 47 per cent rural (this is based on 2001 census data).<sup>2</sup>

Recent research suggests a further dispersion of the Tasmanian population, with most people living outside the major metropolitan centers of Hobart, Launceston, Devonport and Burnie. Tasbus agrees with TASCOS's assertion that transport is fundamental to connecting people to opportunity.

Social isolation and transport disadvantage are consequences of the spatially disparate population makeup of the state. TASCOS indicates a lack of, or inadequate, local services are common to all types of disadvantaged areas. These include "health services, affordable retail shopping, childcare and transport services, local or accessible opportunities for education, training, employment and recreation. Some rural and urban fringe areas also lack basic infrastructure such as adequate and affordable drinking water, telephones and broadband internet connection."<sup>3</sup>

The research shows that not everyone has the same opportunities and capacity to access the goods and services they need to effectively participate in their communities. Data illustrates the differential access to transport experienced by groups such as sole parents, people on low incomes and people with a disability. Across Tasmania there are areas where people experience disadvantage in relation to accessing goods and services – in some areas the disadvantage is related to low income, in others it is related to being small and geographically isolated.

"Tasmania's highly dispersed population is also an issue in terms of social inclusion. While rural communities may be well-connected, they often lack basic services. Young people, particularly those from diverse groups, can be very isolated, and further exacerbated by lack of access to support services, education, recreational activities and transport. Plentiful and affordable food and child care, health and education services may also be limited".<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Department of Justice Tasmania, 2003, "State of the Environment Tasmania", Tasmanian Government, Hobart, accessible online at: <http://soer.justice.tas.gov.au/2003/set/5/issue/79/ataglance.php>

<sup>3</sup> TasCOSS, 2009, "Just Scraping By: Conversations with Tasmanians Living on Low Incomes", TasCOSS, Sandy Bay.

<sup>4</sup> TasCOSS, 2009, "Just Scraping By: Conversations with Tasmanians Living on Low Incomes", TasCOSS, Sandy Bay.



## A Car Dependent Population and Growing Cost of Transport

According to figures from the Department of Environment, there are more than 295,000 cars in Tasmania with approximately 80 per cent of all trips being taken in a car.

2006 Census data indicates 52 per cent of all households in Tasmania have access to two or more cars. In Tasmania's rural communities 37,255 households have access to one or more cars.

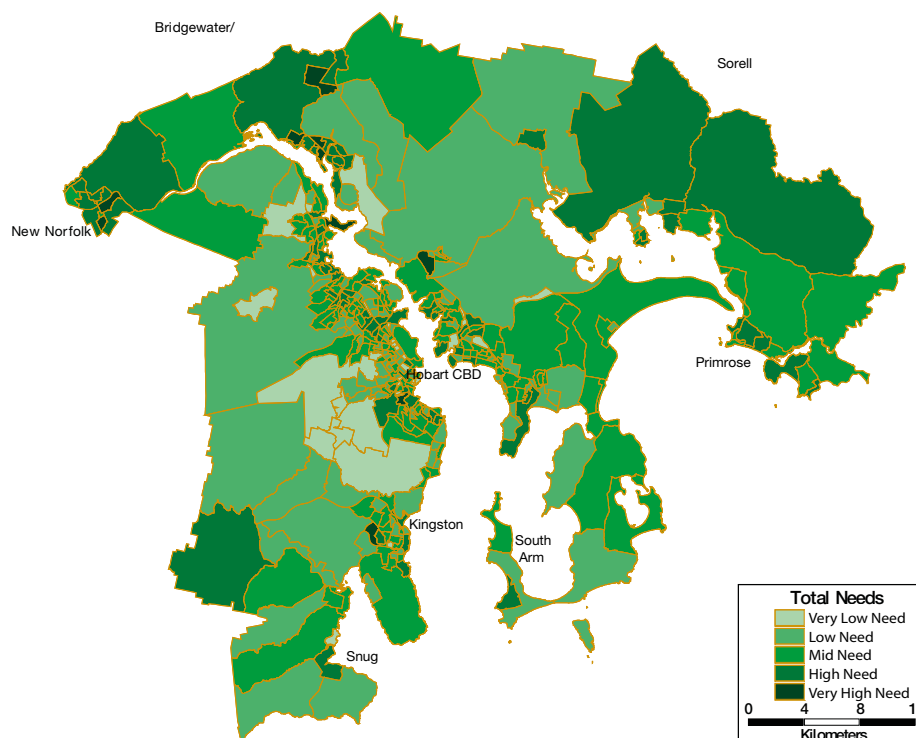
This high level of car ownership has impacts on the people

who are forced into car ownership, those who are unable to drive and on the wider Tasmanian economy through traffic congestion.

The cost of traffic congestion in Hobart was estimated at \$60 million in 2013 and is expected to cost the Tasmanian economy \$70 million by 2020. The specific projects proposed in this policy statement can play a significant role in addressing congestion in our urban centres.

There is an identified link between high rates of car ownership, location of suburbs, low incomes and a lack of passenger transport services. Currie and Sernberg (2007) identified that lower income households in outer suburban areas were more likely to own more than one car and had the lowest accessibility

**Figure 2: Transport Gaps Analysis for Hobart**



Source: Currie, 2003





to passenger transport. The researchers found that this in turn led to "Transport Poverty" a concept which suggests that the higher the transport costs as a factor of the household budget, the more vulnerable people are to changes in fuel prices and other costs related to driving.

Similarly research by Currie (2003) demonstrated that in Hobart the gap between demand for bus services and the provision of bus services was highest in the outer suburbs.<sup>5</sup> (See Figure 2) The research found that 19% of identified zones in the A.M. Peak had no service and this increased up to 35% on Sundays. The researchers concluded that for Hobart "in fringe localities, persons most vulnerable to transport disadvantage live in areas where passenger transport is more likely to be limited relative to inner city areas."<sup>6</sup>

## Climate Change and Pollution

Road transport is responsible for 92 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions with cars being the major contributor.<sup>7</sup>

The challenges of increased population, climate change, pollution and crowded cities will make the use of cars in the future a more and more difficult proposition; buses need to be a frontline solution and supported by the Tasmanian Government to address transport related carbon emissions and air pollution.

## Energy Security

While research into oil price vulnerability in Australian cities does not focus on Hobart, recent results indicate that every capital city in Australia has experienced significant increases in oil price vulnerability, which in turn impacts on the ability of householders to meet mortgage repayments. Transport related costs are between 15% to 20% of total household expenditure depending on where a person lives and is the third largest household expenditure item.

Oil prices are predicted to continue rising. The provision of alternative travel choices and investment in alternative fuel and vehicle technology for buses is part of the solution to minimizing the impact of rising fuel prices and depleting oil resources. All of these trends indicate that a continuation of over-reliance on cars (80 per cent of all trips) is not a long term option for Tasmania.

## Personal Health

Bus use and health benefits from increased activity are linked. The Bus Association of Victoria recently showed that people who used passenger transport undertook five times more physical activity than commuters who drive; 41 minutes a day compared to 8 minutes a day.<sup>8</sup>

People who used passenger transport, because they walked or cycled to catch the bus or train met their daily requirements for physical activity while people who drove would have to make additional time to get the exercise they needed.<sup>9</sup> Research from the New Zealand Government indicates that the annual health benefits of walking and cycling are almost \$2000 per person per annum and other research indicates passenger transport users are more likely to walk in between using passenger transport systems.

According to the Tasmanian Government submission to the House of Representatives 2008 Inquiry into Obesity in Australia almost 49 per cent of Tasmanians reported being overweight or obese in 2004. Projections showed this percentage was on the rise. ABS figures for 2007-08 reported that 64 per cent of Tasmanians aged 18 or over were overweight or obese, representing a 15 per cent increase across the adult population over those 4 years.

While the Tasmania Together Plan focuses on increasing the physical activity of children aged between 5 and 14 years old and the dietary requirements of adults, no consideration is given to increasing the activity of adults through coincidental means, such as travel behaviour change.

<sup>5</sup> Currie, G, et al, 2003, "Quantitative Approaches to Needs Based Assessment of Public Transport Services: The Hobart Transport Needs Gap Study", 26th ATRF Conference, Wellington, 1-3rd Oct. 2003.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.,

<sup>7</sup> Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources, 2010, "Tasmanian Urban Passenger Transport Network", Tasmanian Government.

<sup>8</sup> Bus Association of Victoria, 2010, "Public Transport Use a Ticket to Health", Bus Association of Victoria, Melbourne.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.,<sup>^</sup>

## Policy Solutions and Specific Measures

TasBus has identified a number of steps which would deliver high quality bus services in Tasmania. We commend these to the Tasmanian State Government for consideration.

### Create a Central Transport Authority

TasBus proposes the creation of TransportTas, a central authority to regulate and oversee the delivery of bus services across the state.

We propose the adoption of the four key results areas.

- > One ticket – by delivering integrated ticketing and standardised fares, zones and concessions
- > One network – by centrally planning and coordinating all major passenger transport routes, services, connections and infrastructure
- > One system – by marketing the system through consistent branding and passenger information
- > New contracts – by negotiating and managing contracts with passenger transport operators.

### Conduct an Audit of Existing Transport Services

The first and most critical step in building a better and more sustainable transport system for Tasmania is an assessment of what we have. TasBus supports a whole bus system audit which will be tasked with:

- Identifying existing transport services
- Accounting for all bus rolling stock
- Identifying transport infrastructure already in place
- Measuring transport needs across the network

through a transport needs analysis

- Undertaking a gaps analysis to identify efficiencies and inefficiencies in bus services
- Using the gaps analysis to identify potential for improvements in bus services.

This audit should form the basis of an Action Plan for Tasmania's bus services which would identify where investment is needed for increased and more frequent services, new infrastructure and where resources and funding can be better utilised.

### Improve Transport Mobility and Accessibility Co-ordination

Following on from an audit, the plan described above should seek to deliver better coordination and integration of regional, urban fringe and metropolitan services to increase coverage and service frequencies.

This coordination should be focused on increased service coverage and frequency in areas identified as being “transport poor” by the audit. This should be coordinated through Mobility and Accessibility Committees established between the State and Local Governments.

TasBus believes a future transport plan for Tasmania should include increased and improved services for rural and urban-fringe outside the morning and afternoon peak periods through a coordinated effort to measure where “transport poverty” exists.

### Establish a Consultative stakeholder group

TasBus proposes the Government establishes a permanent consultative stakeholder group with a membership that represents the key stakeholders within the passenger transport sector.

This group would include representatives from the Tasmanian bus sector both privately contracted operators and representatives of Metro Tasmania.



## Alternative Technology and Intelligent Transport Systems

TasBus believes that a whole of passenger transport network assessment be undertaken into alternative technologies and intelligent transport systems (ITS) to improve the system from an operational and user perspective.

A study into ITS such as commuter real time information, integrated ticketing, operations software etc. and alternative fuel technologies and how they will drive efficiencies in both the metropolitan and regional fleet should be undertaken as a starting point to developing a long term Investment strategy for the Tasmanian public transport network.

## Specific Measures

As an accompaniment to the improvement and better utilisation of services, TasBus has identified a range of “ready to go” measures that can be implemented to encourage sustainable transport choices amongst Tasmanians:

1. Minimum service levels – the adoption of agreed minimum service levels according to identified areas of need and demand in the network audit in cooperation with bus operators.
2. Free aged pension travel – an incentive scheme for free aged pensioners travel during weekdays and on holidays similar to the schemes adopted by the Western Australian and South Australian Governments.
3. Extend incentive systems for Government employees – extend the allowance of long-term passenger transport ticket salary packaging arrangements for Tasmanian public servants currently being offered on the Metro network to the whole bus network.
4. Improved Ticketing – the introduction of electronic ticketing by Metro Tasmania (Green CARD) is a good and supported initiative. TasBus believes a better integration of ticketing between metropolitan and non-metropolitan services, and other modes is necessary to maximise sustainable transport outcomes. This will provide efficiencies in the system and encourage use of passenger transport within

metropolitan areas amongst commuters travelling into CBDs from urban fringe areas. Such integration could be done by extending the Go CARD system through the current provider to encompass all passenger transport systems in Tasmania.

TasBus proposes investment in the following infrastructure:

1. Bus priority measures – extend existing and create new bus priority lanes and other measures such as priority signaling through traffic lights.
2. State Government to assist Local Governments meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act in on-street accessibility infrastructure.
3. Rural school stops – improve the safety and amenity of school bus stops in rural areas.
4. City interchanges – improve city interchange facilities allowing for seamless transfer of passengers between regional and urban services

TasBus believes long term planning for bus services is required across the State that provides increased confidence and certainty for private operators through the service contracts determination process and provide for investment to lower the average age of the bus fleet.

1. Improved contract certainty – the contract agreement between the Government and Operators should be improved to provide, at the end of the current 5+5 year contract terms in 2018, the incumbent operator having first rights on option for renewal if they have met agreed performance criteria. This will create greater incentives to perform and give stronger investment certainty resulting in better long-term service delivery outcomes.
2. Average fleet age – reduction in the overall average age of the fleet to 12 years by 2020. This age profile would deliver a bus fleet at a standard commensurate with other Australian states and represent a major step in delivering a sustainable passenger transport system and a better passenger experience.
3. Disability Discrimination Act – TasBus calls for a review of the current state-wide fleet to determine what action needs to be taken to ensure that all operators are meeting





the requirements of the Accessible Transport Standards. The review of DDA compliance would be in accord with the undertakings made by the Government, under the Disability Framework for Action. Implementation of the actions arising from the review would help in delivering better mobility outcomes for people with disabilities, as well as serving to lower the average age of the fleet across Tasmania.

include developing a comprehensive single website for all Tasmanian services, a 'one stop shop' overseen by DIER which would for example, provide information about connecting services between metropolitan, outer-metropolitan and regional Tasmania.

4. New school buses – following a risk analysis of all school bus routes, State Government to provide sufficient capital to selected school bus routes to enable bus replacements with new seat belt equipped buses.

Improving awareness of alternative transport choices has proven to deliver benefits, not only in patronage increases and accessibility to the system, but also in safety. The implementation of trip planning systems and travel behaviour change initiatives has proven successful in other states. TasBus believes the following simple measures could be adopted in Tasmania:

1. Travel behaviour change initiatives – develop a 'Travel Smart' program similar to that undertaken in other States that will deliver real travel behaviour change outcomes for Tasmania in. In Victoria, Travel Smart has shifted from individualised marketing to travel planning and is now mainly delivered in partnership with Local Government. Under the program Councils and other organisations are funded to develop and implement travel plans using the Travel Smart travel planning methodology. This has expanded delivery capability to produce over 100 travel plans (at schools, workplaces, tertiary institutions, hospitals, activity centres) affecting more than 300,000 people.
2. Implement a campaign to promote passenger transport safety on and off and around the bus focused on boarding and alighting buses particularly school buses, targeted at passenger transport users and motorists.
3. The presence of trip planning, cost savings and emissions reduction data in relation to passenger transport use has been adopted by several States on State Government public transport websites. The availability of this information demonstrates clear economic and environmental benefits to use public transport. This would



33 Forbes St  
Devonport Tasmania 7310

Tel: 03 6423 2611

Fax: 03 6423 2614

Email: [admin@tasbus.com.au](mailto:admin@tasbus.com.au)

