



# Bus SA Annual Report to 30 June 2015

**BusSA**  
Bus & Coach Association SA



# WELCOME TO THE BUS AND COACH ASSOCIATION SA ANNUAL REPORT 2015

## **Board**

### President

Jim Scott

(to 04/10/2013)

Tony Townsend

(04/10/2013 - 16/12/2013)

Dean McGinty

(16/12/2013 - present)

### Vice President

Tony Townsend

(to 04/10/2013)

Dean McGinty

(04/10/2013 - 16/12/2013)

Stephen Lucas

(16/12/2013 - present)

## **Board Members**

Don Benbow

(from 16/12/2013)

Mark Dunlop

Stephen Nesbitt

Ben Romanowski

Jim Scott

Peter Stone

Maureen Sullivan

Tony Townsend

(until 16/12/2013)

Philip Walker

## **Executive Director**

Agnes Wong

(to 04/10/2013)

Lauran Huefner

(04/10/2013 – present)

## **SA Councillor to the Bus Industry Confederation (BIC) and the Australian Passenger Transport In- dustrial Association (AP- TIA)**

Dean McGinty

(to 07/04/2014)

Sam Lucas

## **Auditor**

Hayes Knight

## **Address**

Suite 515, 147 Pirie Street

Adelaide SA 5000

Email: [admin@bussa.asn.au](mailto:admin@bussa.asn.au)

**[www.bussa.asn.au](http://www.bussa.asn.au)**



# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Although this President's Report is being written as part of the 2015 Annual Report, it will necessarily focus on the activities from 2013 – 2015, as, under the Constitution changes explained below, the same Board has been in place for this period.

The year ending June 2014 was one of significant development for industry representation in South Australia, with a focus on re-positioning the industry body with a focus on industry development underpinned by strong policy and research.

Changes made to the Rules of Association and approved at the General Meeting in August 2013 came into effect that month, and a new Board commenced in October 2013 to hold office for a period of 2 years. This two year period will end at the AGM for the period this Report covers, and scheduled for late November 2015.

At the October Board Meeting Jim Scott stood down from his caretaker role that was in place since the approval of the new Constitution, and Tony Townsend was elected as President, with Dean McGinty as Vice President. Due to work and health pressures, however, Tony was unable to continue, and resigned from the Board and the Presidency in December. Don Benbow was invited to fill the casual Board vacancy, and Dean McGinty was appointed President with Stephen Lucas as Vice – President.

The Board and I also acknowledge the work of Agnes Wong who was Executive Director until October 2013. Agnes was focussed on progressing the Association during the challenging period in 2012 – 2013 and was always willing to take on the challenges necessary to bring about change. We wish Agnes every success in her future career.

In October 2013 the Board chose to appoint Luran Huefner as Executive

Director. Luran has extensive not-for-profit leadership and strategic planning experience and skills suited to evolving the Association into its next phase. His challenge is to shift the Association into a research and policy driven advocacy space, with a remit that focusses on the sustainability of the industry through growth.

This structure has remained in place through the 2014 and the 2015 year. I would like to sincerely thank Jim Scott and Tony Townsend for their time, effort and dedication to the Association during this transition. Without their input it is likely that the Association would not have been able to survive the changes it was going through.

As a result of the changes to the Constitution, the cycle of meetings was altered to streamline activities. An important change, agreed by the Board, was to make Board Meetings "open". This means that any member can attend as an observer. In practice this also means that a member can comment on any agenda item, but is not able to vote on outcomes. We encourage our members to partake in this active governance, and make their opinions known. To June 2015, we have held meetings in Adelaide, Clare and Murray Bridge, with meetings planned to be held in Melbourne and Naracoorte in the 2016 year.

## State Election and Fallout

The March 2014 State Election delivered a surprise result – in that the Labor Government was returned for its fourth term, now with Jay Weatherill as Premier. This was unexpected and could possibly be interpreted as the first backlash against the Abbott Federal Liberal Government, although the election was prior to their first (and extremely unpopular) budget. Weatherill was able

to form a minority government with the support of the independent Geoff Brock, Member for Frome, who was appointed Minister for Regional Development.

Chloe Fox, Minister for Transport Services, had retired from Cabinet and lost her seat at the the election, and was replaced as Minister for Transport and Infrastructure by new MP, Stephen Mullighan. Stephen was formerly Chief of Staff to former Treasurer Kevin Foley, and is widely considered a potential future Premier.

The Liberal Party also experienced a number of changes. Corey Wingard was elected as the Member for Mitchell and was appointed as Shadow Transport Minister, replacing Vickie Chapman. The complete shock came when Martin Hamilton-Smith, former Opposition Leader, abandoned the Liberal Party and established himself as an Independent Liberal, taking on a Ministry within the Labor Cabinet. This shored up Weatherill's position, and deflated the Liberals further.

An analysis of the election would indicate that the outcome is likely attributable to a couple of factors – the success of the ALP in marginal city seats and how the Liberals were perceived by the electorate to not offer a comprehensive and viable alternative.



The election result surprised many, including the Labor Party. In many ways they were not expecting to retain office, but they did move quickly to kick-start their activities, especially in Transport. Both Fred Hanson (CEO of Renewal SA) and Rod Hook (CEO of DPTI) were removed within 3 months of the election, with Hanson replaced by John Hanlon (from DPTI) and Michael Deegan taking up the role in DPTI.

The appointment of Deegan could be considered a bonus for the Government as he is a very experienced senior government executive, including a stint as Coordinator General of Infrastructure Australia, and in the RMS in NSW. He is widely considered a tough but fair operator.

Deegan initiated considerable changes within DPTI, including the removal of quite a few officers. He has publicly stated that his intent has been to have DPTI more directly engage with the community and with industry to sort out the issues that exist within the department, and initial indications are that he is delivering on this model. Our meetings with him have reinforced this view that he is accessible, interested and engaged – provided we present a sensible case.

The Education Minister, Jennifer Rankine, retained her position after the election, but resigned in early 2015. She was replaced by Susan Close, the Member for Port Adelaide, who replaced Kevin Foley



on his retirement. Minister Rankine had dealt with extensive challenges in child protection, an issue that dogs Families SA, which is part of the DECD portfolio.

Minister Close has been very approachable and interested in the sector, and has responded well to the policy opportunities we have put to her. The Minister was kind enough to speak at our conference in May 2015, and the operators present were pleased to be able to put questions to her that might not have been easy in years previous.

The appointment of Geoff Brock as Minister for Regional Development has also been valuable for Bus SA, as we had engaged well with him prior to the election, and his awareness of our policies in relation to regional transport is very high. This knowledge can only be useful when in Cabinet.

This bodes well for the coming year – a new approach, a government that is interested in reform, and hopefully a set of policies that Government feels is approachable and sensible.

At the same time, the Liberal Opposition appointed Corey Wingard as Shadow Minister for Transport. We have formed a good relationship with Corey and keep him informed of our policy positions and developments as a matter of course. He is very approachable and has taken time to attend various bus industry events,

both local and national, to develop his knowledge about good bus policy.

Over this time our aim has been to deliver calm, professional, approachable representation of your business. We have cemented our links within the Bus Australia Network, enhanced our relationship with the Australian Passenger Transport Industrial Association, re-engaged with our supplier friends, run a successful conference, re-located our office and set our Association on a solid financial footing. We have introduced Moving People SA – a policy platform for the industry's future – and contributed to a number of Government inquiries. We have regular worthwhile conversations with Government about the future of transport in our State.

The work of the Association will be covered in more detail in the Executive Director's Report below.

It is important to note the contribution of the Board over this time, providing input and guidance on the key topics that lead to the outcomes we are seeking. I thank the Board for their commitment to the Association, and particularly want to thank Jim Scott for taking on the challenge of leading the Association through its change, and to Tony Townsend for providing a steady hand on the Association right through to his resignation from the Board.



**Dean McGinty**  
**President**  
**June 2015**

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Since joining the Bus and Coach Association (SA) Inc in October 2013, I have focused on implementing the Board's desire to build a professional Association with a primary focus on building business sustainability for operators. The broad view is that sustainability will come from developing business opportunities as well as finding ways to improve operating efficiency through services and increased knowledge.

As part of this renewal of the Bus and Coach Association SA (Inc), the Board agreed to trade the Association under the banner of Bus SA. This simplification of the name has been well received by members, government and stakeholders, and we made sure the new Bus SA logo reflects the link to our history by retaining the full name.

The Association also moved premises from Enfield into the city during 2014, finally settling at offices on Hindmarsh Square in Suite 515, 147 Pirie Street. The small office leased provides the Association with city access to key decision makers, including Government agencies, other not for profits and local government representatives. As a result, the office at Enfield has been fully leased to the Multiple Sclerosis Society of SA & NT, providing Bus SA with a worthwhile income.

## Membership

It would be fair to say that membership growth remains a great challenge for the Association. The industry has been fragmented for some years, and this has not made it easy to maintain our membership base.

Membership can be perceived as costly and we must focus on the value for money equation when attempting to grow the membership base.

Over the course of the 2015 year, our number of members was 35. This number, although just sustainable and significantly down from earlier years as result of changes particularly in the school bus sector, will grow over the coming years as we increase our effectiveness and capabilities in delivering effective policy for operators.

We have been approached by a number of operators to join the Association, and we remain hopeful that these operators will see the merit in presenting a unified presence and accessing our key services, such as the industrial advice offered by APTIA (the Australian Passenger Transport Industrial Association).

## Policy

At the Bus Industry Confederation Conference, held in Adelaide in October 2013, Bus SA launched Moving People SA. This document was prepared as a Government and stakeholder briefing tool that articulates clearly the mobility challenge for South Australia and provides a number of recommendations for developing the industry over the coming years. The launch was timed to take advantage of the election due in March of the next year, and Moving People SA was duly sent to all politicians of all political parties.

The original recommendations were refined in early 2015, and reduced to 7 simpler key outcomes that will be reflected in an updated Moving People SA:

1. Establish Regional Access Committees
2. Establish a Ministerial Passenger Transport Forum
3. Support the 20 Minute Neighbourhood Policy and apply it in the SA context

4. Privatise operation of DECD owned buses (yellow fleet)
5. Establish Tour SA By Coach strategy
6. Introduce Operator Accreditation Program
7. Privatise bus inspections currently carried out by DPTI and DECD

At the time of this report, some movement has occurred:

- Government is working on "Regional Access Committees", a cut through policy proposed by Bus SA for improving integration of regional mobility options.
- Bus lane use in city bus lanes has been ratified. Bus lights can be used by all bus operators. Further opportunities are in the pipeline.
- The School Transport Policy has been reviewed, although Bus SA was critical of the terms of reference of the review at the time. Since then the new Minister, Susan Close, has requested further work be completed on the report before it is released.
- Bus parking has been somewhat clarified, including the identification of additional coach parking space around Adelaide.
- The consideration by Government of introducing operator accreditation and private bus inspection as a result of a "Bus Safety in SA" paper provided by Bus SA. We have iterated to Government often that a set of minimum standards that apply to all bus operators is essential to ensure that we maintain a very good safety record.

The key to delivering on these outcomes is to remember that the wheels of Government are slow. We must be patient and consistent and be prepared to provide the Government with supporting evidence as to why the policy direction proposed is

the right way for them to progress.

Moving People SA will be reviewed in soft copy before the end of 2015, with a refinement of key outcomes included.

## **C**ommunications

As part of our branding changes, Bus SA has chosen to gradually increase focus on electronic communications. The Member Alert, an e-newsletter can be sent more regularly with more direct material included. It is planned for this service to be upgraded and improved in the 2016 year, providing a higher quality easily printable newsletter that will be sent at least monthly. We aim also to improve content with regular material from business advisers, including industrial, legal and financial advice.

Our website was renewed to a new domain name in late 2014 ([www.bussa.asn.au](http://www.bussa.asn.au)) that includes policies from Moving People SA, lists of our sponsors/partners, and a trip planner that lists our members by their category of service. The website will continue to be upgraded as Bus SA's key communications hub.

We also commenced a social media strategy, introducing a Twitter and Facebook feed. Twitter is a key tool for informing politicians about policy developments around the world, and Bus SA was an early mover in providing bus and public transport feeds within the bus industry in Australia. Early in 2015, BIC and BusVic agreed to fund Bus SA to manage their social media feeds as a trial that runs into 2016. We believe we are making useful inroads into this new technology.

## **F**inancials

Our focus on the financials of the Association has been to create a sustainable business model that allows for quality, modern representation. We have worked on managing expense lines, and developed a plan for revenue growth. Our financial management has been enhanced by engaging a professional financial officer

to deal with our accounts.

During 2014/2015 Bus SA sought advice relating to our tax status, as a result of which the Board agreed to assess the Association as tax exempt, as we are a not for profit with a primary goal of industry development. This is a beneficial outcome for our position.

With an acknowledgement that membership revenue growth will be difficult in the coming years, Bus SA has also moved to diversify income. We have experienced excellent support from suppliers and we are grateful for their renewed interest in South Australia.

As mentioned above, we have been engaged to work on a social media trial for the industry that we hope will become an ongoing activity. We receive worthwhile income from leasing Enfield.

At the same time, we have carefully removed the Association from agreements and activities that cost us time or money for little or no return. It is this pragmatic approach to our operation that underpins our financial goals.

## **B**us Industry Confederation National Conference, October 2013

The Bus Industry Confederation Conference was held in Adelaide in October 2013, with main sessions held at the Adelaide Convention Centre.

The Conference was an opportunity to showcase South Australia on the national stage, and many delegates were able to enjoy uniquely South Australian experiences such as the O-Bahn and the newly completed Adelaide Oval, as well as fine Adelaide food and wine.

The conference had a focus on planning and land use, with speakers from local and state government, academia and policy bodies. There was a focus on "future proofing your business" and regulation developments from around Australia.

The conference was well supported and we

look forward to the National Conference returning to SA in a few years.

## **F**atigue Management, February 2014

Around 15 operators attended a training session on fatigue management held by Transport Training Solutions. This was quite topical at the time due to changes to the work diary as instigated under National Heavy Vehicle Law.

Operators were taken through the legislative and regulatory environment, followed by practical sessions on how the law actually applied to operations.

## **B**us SA State Conference, May 2015

The Association re-introduced the annual Bus SA State Conference in May 2015 after a few year's hiatus. The conference, held at Crowne Plaza Adelaide, attracted over 70 registrations, and featured a staged program that was aimed at providing useful information for operators.

We are grateful to Susan Close, Minister for Education and representing Stephen Mullighan, Minister for Transport, for providing remarks just after lunch. Corey Wingard, MP, Shadow Minister for Transport, providing some excellent opening remarks that highlighted how access to mobility choices is important to young and old.

Representatives of government, Paul Gelston of DPTI and Ross Treadwell of DECD, provided approachable insight into how Government is viewing the link with industry, and how we as industry can engage effectively with Government.

The professional advisory sessions – legal, industrial, strategic – were provided by Peter Dwyer of Piper Alderman, Ian MacDonald of APTIA, and Matthew Wilson of Pitcher Partners. These sessions were aimed at revealing the current situation and offering some thoughts for the future.

The policy discussions in the afternoon



segued from those talks. Ward Tilbrook of the South Australian Tourism Industry Council provided his highly knowledgeable view on the state of tourism promotion in SA, whilst Chris Lowe of BusVic spoke to his valuable research that shows the social benefits delivered by bus services.

John Stanley brought the 20 minute city concept to the attention of delegates, explaining how connecting neighbourhoods and regions has significant benefits for communities when properly planned for.

Michael Apps of BIC updated the conference on national issues and the day finished with a panel discussion looking at the future of mobility, that covered regional access committees, taxis and what activities operators may undertake in future years.

Our thanks to speakers and our sponsors, who made significant contribution to the conference both financially and in their attendance.

## **N**ational

Our links to our colleagues interstate are very strong, and have been enhanced by the national "Bus Australia Network" branding. This branding pulls together the state associations and BIC under one banner, and has been used as common branding during 2015.

What this does is indicate to governments that the industry in Australia is connected and that we share common goals and policies. Although policy necessarily must be locally focused, most associations actually advocate a similar set of regulatory and contractual settings that help operators to perform at their best.

Our membership of BIC and APTIA give Bus SA and our members access to excellent policy and advice. Our relationship with our interstate cousins provide us with a wealth of experience in relation to how to solve some key challenges in our state. I

particularly thank Geoff Lewis of TasBus, and Chris Lowe of BusVic for facilitating access to a number of excellent procedural material that we have reworked into documents that we have presented to our Government. To have created much of this from scratch would have been a challenging and time consuming activity.

## **K**ey Events Attended

Over the course of the year, Bus SA represented you at a number of activities and events, including:

- BusVic Maintenance Conference and Expo, Melbourne, July 2013
- BIC Council, Canberra Lobbying Day and Annual Dinner, March 2014
- TasBus Conference, Hobart, May 2014
- BusVic Maintenance Conference, Melbourne, July 2014
- Association Presidents and ED's Meeting, Melbourne, November 2014
- Bus Australia Network, ED's Meeting, Adelaide, January 2015
- BIC Council, National IR and Supplier Summit, National Industry Dinner March 2015

## **F**uture activities- 2015/2016

It would be nice to say that change will happen quickly, but unfortunately that is not the case. The key policy outcomes described above take time to get into the mindset of government, and take even more time to eventually be turned into public policy that works. It is our role to continue to "sing the same hymn" day in day out until we have achieved traction.

It is this consistency from industry that will finally lead to the reform we know we need. We will continue to offer our help to Government to find the solutions to the challenge of Moving People in our State. Once the policy is agreed, Bus SA will move quickly to be a primary support mechanism to support the introduction of policy – and

we are hopeful that some of our proposed initiatives – RACs and Bus Safety – might be genuinely in play during the 2016 year. We will continue to update you on these matters.

Finally, some thanks for the people who support the Association. I would like to thank Renae Sullivan for her excellent work in developing our website, starting social media, and getting our renewed Conference to fruition. Renae has been a great asset to the Association during this period of reinvention. I would also like to thank the Board for their support and input over the past year. They have provided invaluable feedback on the initiatives we are leading.



**Lauran Huefner**  
**Executive Director**  
**June 2015**

# WE ACKNOWLEDGE OUR PARTNERS FOR 2014/2015

## GOLD PARTNERS



## SILVER PARTNERS



## BRONZE PARTNERS

