

MOVING PEOPLE

➤ *South Australia*



Bus and Coach Industry
Keep South Australians mobile in 2030

BusSA 
Bus & Coach Association SA



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A Plan to keep South Australians mobile in 2030

A Moving People Policy for SA

In developing this policy Bus SA has worked closely with the Bus Industry Confederation (BIC) in aligning our vision for SA'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 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, Bus SA has developed our Moving People policy for SA which reflects a local view of the BIC's broader policy message. This policy statement is targeted at bus services in SA and how they relate to other modes of transport and the people that use them.



Bus SA - Who We Are

Bus SA is the voice of the bus and coach industry in South Australia. Our members vary in size from small single bus operators, through to large urban operators. Our members operate the majority of route services, school bus services, trunk routes, community services, tours and charters across South Australia.

Across South Australia, public transport patronage figures from 2012 indicate over 50 million boardings to network services in Adelaide and in major regional centres, with over 80% of these services delivered by buses. Coach operators, underpinning tourism activities, move over 100,000 tourists around the State annually, making a significant contribution to GDP. Our operators deliver around 400 school bus services daily, a combination of free government services and others for the private school sector.

The overarching aims of Bus SA are to:

- > work in partnership with Government and stakeholders for increased investment in the use of buses and public transport as part of the development of more sustainable transport systems
- > advocate the cost effectiveness and demand responsive capability benefits of buses as an alternative to the private motor vehicle
- > highlight the positive impact of public transport on social inclusion, public health, energy conservation and urban congestion
- > ensure that buses and coaches operate safely and effectively.

This document outlines the priority issues that Bus SA believes will support the development of South Australian mobility opportunities, encompassing urban, outer urban and regional services. This acknowledges our necessary focus on Adelaide, but anticipates the growing needs of regional South Australia.

Our Vision

The future growth of Adelaide, major regions and towns is heavily dependent on quality passenger transport services for South Australia. The South Australian Bus and Coach Industry is the primary provider of passenger transport services for South Australians.

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

Our Principles

We present three core principles for Moving South Australia in 2030:

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 South Australian Government and community to develop a long term approach to integrated land use and transport planning which will grow the population of South Australia around good public transport services.



SA in 2030: The Transport Challenge

The next 20 years will present government with significant transport challenges throughout South Australia

The demand for travel will increase as a result of population and employment growth in the Adelaide CBD. Population is expected to double in the CBD by 2031 and this will increase demand for travel alternatives. The major drivers of this increased travel demand will be the construction of new dwellings, around 450 per year, growth of the visitor population and increased employment.

For regional South Australia, travel needs in major regions and towns will be much different, with different challenges related to an ageing and growing population.

As larger regional communities grow, there will be increased pressure to deliver services. The research of Graeme Hugo anticipates there will be more than 40,000 additional residents, primarily baby boomers, outside metropolitan Adelaide by 2026 which will place greater demands on transport services. South Australia has Australia's oldest population and more and more people will be looking to government to support their mobility needs.

In 2011 the population of South Australia was 1.64 million with 380,000 residents living outside Greater Adelaide. In the 10 years to 2011 the population of regional South Australia grew by 18,300 people (5.1 per cent) while the population of Greater Adelaide grew by 108,200 people (9.4 per cent).¹ South Australia contains six provincial cities, five of which are located alongside or near the coastline. The populations of the provincial cities range from 12,000 to 23,000. Interspersed throughout the broad-acre and livestock grazing part of the State is a relatively high number of small towns and communities, of which only eleven have more than 3,000 residents. The majority of the remaining communities have populations of less than 1,000.²

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2012, "Regional Population Growth, Australia 2011", Australian Government, Canberra.

² Saunders, P., White, B., Spagnoletti, M. 2004, "Integrated Passenger Transport – A Model for Success in Regional South Australia", 27th Australian Transport

In 2000, there were approximately 62,000 people aged over 65, 18,000 unemployed persons, 47,000 primary school children and 26,000 secondary school children living in regional South Australia. In addition, there were approximately 300 people with a neurological or physical disability, 240 with brain injury and 1,000 with an intellectual disability spread through the regional areas.³

Regional connectivity and social inclusion will continue to challenge Governments to meet the needs of those in the country who cannot afford a car, can no longer drive a car or are too young or unable to drive a car. This will require agreed minimum service levels for passenger bus services to ensure that the mobility needs of regional South Australians are met in and around where they live and to connect them to Adelaide for health, education and other services.

As congestion adds to urban travel times, solutions that provide reliable and efficient alternatives that help people go about their day-to-day activities will need to be provided. The cost to the South Australian economy of lost productivity from urban congestion is estimated to be \$1 billion by 2020.⁴

Building more roads alone does not solve congestion. Adding capacity to public transport services and protected cycling lanes in conjunction with additional road capacity is an important part of the solution.

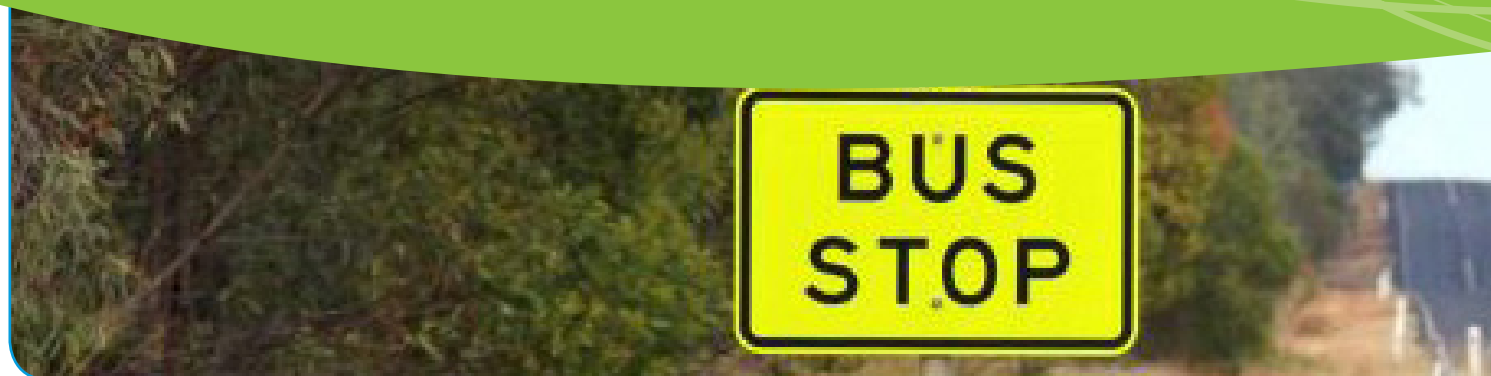
Buses in 2010 accounted for 77% of passenger boarding by mode in the Adelaide CBD and bus will continue to be the workhorse of the South Australian public transport system in the future, in the Adelaide CBD and in the regions. With expected travel demand to increase to 2030, investment in passenger bus transport infrastructure and services in the city and in the country will be required to keep pace with the need and demand

The knock on benefits of these types of initiatives for health (and the health budget), emissions and pollution reduction, improved energy security and social inclusion is well documented.

Research Forum, Adelaide, 29 September – 1 October 2004.

³ Ibid.,

⁴ Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics, 2007, "Working Paper 71", Australian Government, Canberra.



Policy Solutions: Bus SA Recommendations

Bus SA calls for all political parties to work with the bus industry on sustainable transport strategies for SA that anticipate the transport needs of South Australians.

1 Establish Regional Access Committees to deliver Total Transport in regional areas

The Total Transport Model is one that is gaining significant impetus across the globe and Australia. At present there are various proposals and trials in place with State Governments (NSW, Tas, Vic) to develop this in some form. The model creates a governance and management structure, often referred to as a Regional Access Committees (RACs), that enable local mobility outcomes.

RACs are place based entities that provide tailored approaches to differences in demographics and asset availability according to that area. The broad work of Regional Access Committees is essentially the same, however each Committee will apply assets and deliver solutions based on their specific local needs.

A RAC would establish a central point to coordinate transport delivery and disseminate information about services available within its geographic region. It would also gather information about transport gaps from potential customers and use this to assess whether a particular demand can be met, perhaps from within existing services.

The work of RACs would broadly include:

- > Drawing together representatives of community transport, route bus operators, school bus operators, taxi services, local government, state government and other relevant transport stakeholders within an aggregated geographic area;
- > Encouraging the sharing of assets within the region by the local asset owner;
- > Collaborating with regulatory stakeholders to coalesce funding pots;
- > Assessing local transport demand and supply – including met, unmet and future demand;
- > Facilitating the establishment and on-going oversight of an integrated transport service to meet this demand.

To achieve desired outcomes, governments (local, state and federal) and other stakeholders will need to commit to pooling resources and funds from various sources to achieve an efficient model and facilitate further integration.

As well as pooling of resources RACs require assistance from government in unlocking transport infrastructure and services to ensure knock on benefits from assets. This can be achieved through both regulatory and policy changes. For example, in the South Australian context, a large number of school bus services, operated using State owned infrastructure, are run by the Department of Education and Child Development. To unlock their potential in regional and remote transport these operating arrangements will need to change to facilitate integrated transport through policy amendments within Education and through regulatory reform. (See recommendation 2 on next page).



Photo: Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure

2 Privatised operation of DECD owned buses (yellow fleet)

At present school transport services in South Australia are delivered by a combination of private contractor fleets and a government owned and operated fleet of over 200 vehicles. At this time South Australia is the only state in Australia that operates school bus services, an activity that is highly operational and increasingly difficult to deliver on without expert knowledge and experience.

Bus SA is of the view that the majority of those government operated vehicles can be run more efficiently in support of local communities by the local bus operator.

This change can provide Government a number of beneficial knock on effects, including utilising assets to:

- > deliver community services (education, health, elderly) under the guidance of Regional Access Committees (see Policy Solution 1 above);
- > lower involvement by school principals in bus operations, meaning principals can focus on educational outcomes at their school rather than bus operational issues, and;
- > ensure continuity of quality service that the private sector can provide more easily than a Government department.

3 Establish a Ministerial Passenger Transport Forum

Bus SA recommends that the Government establish a Ministerial Passenger Forum to bring together users, operators, the Department of Planning transport and Infrastructure, representatives of workers and industry, and local government, to consider and advise on opportunities to improve South Australia's public transport systems and networks, including bus networks.



Urban mobility strategies – throw away the timetable

4 Support the 20 Minute Neighbourhood Policy and apply it in the SA context

A '20 minute city' is one in which most people are able to undertake most activities needed for a good life within a 20 minute walk, cycle or public transport trip from where they live. Transport is a very important lever for taking action to achieve a metropolitan area that consists of a series of smaller 20 minute cities, each of which might comprise one or more neighbourhoods. The Bus Industry Confederation has developed a paper focused mainly on the roles of density, supportive public transport requirements and walking in achievement of the 20 minute city.

This Policy Paper puts forward that a neighbourhood structure embedded in a 20 minute city, with good local and regional transport choices, is likely to promote many positive outcomes in terms of personal and societal wellbeing, enhance liveability (which is already a strong international brand for our cities), as well as being cost effective to service and supportive of increased economic productivity. Flowon effects will include lower traffic congestion levels, improved health outcomes, lower accident costs, reduced emissions (greenhouse gases and air pollutants) and greater social inclusion.

In the short term, Government can focus on delivering existing services effectively and efficiently, building confidence in the safety, reliability and quality of the public transport network. This can include improvements in bus priority and feeder networks to decrease congestion and make PT a viable alternative to the car.

5 Establish Tour SA By Coach strategy

In conjunction with the South Australian Tourism Industry Council, Bus SA calls for the South Australian government to develop a dedicated tour SA by coach strategy.

The State Government has established strong goals (\$8B by 2020) for the tourism sector as part of its drive to grow the South Australian economy. It is the view of Bus SA that delivering excellent experiences in seeing and visiting South Australia are a key driver in achieving those goals. Any strategy related to developing tourism will require goals around destination infrastructure, including bus parking and stopping points.

A tour bus can be one of the best ways to see these sights, and it can be the pivot-point for a tourist's total spend at a destination. We believe strongly that a tri-partite approach to tour and coach market development (SATC, SATIC and Bus SA) will have a strong and positive influence on this goal.





6 Introduce Bus Safety Standards in SA

This Policy Recommendation suggests that Government can work with industry to deliver a safe bus industry through introducing operator accreditation modules and allowing private business to be accredited as bus inspectors.

It is our position that the bus industry must become Safety First businesses and we must be prepared to prove our safety standards on an ongoing basis. Achieving accreditation should mean operators are required to meet a high enough standard across all levels of the business that provides a better level of safety and surety for everyone that procures bus services in this State.

A key tenet of mass transit is that it is fundamentally a safe means by which to move large numbers of people quickly and efficiently. This safety is often assumed by the traveller, based on a belief that there are appropriate government regulations and standards in place that allow an operator to set up and operate their business.

To draw an analogy, it is not possible to setup and operate an airline and transport passengers without passing standards and regulations as proscribed by the Civil Aviation Regulations, and no airline business expects to continue to carry people without ongoing monitoring of those standards. People will select an airline with confidence that there are systems and procedures in place that ensure the service operator is running their business and aircraft appropriately and that there is regular monitoring of both by the regulatory authorities.

The bus industry needs to have the correct balance between regulating and monitoring the vehicle and regulating and

monitoring the operator. There is a reasonable likelihood that the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) will introduce standards nationally that will force the State Government to move on this issue at some time.

It is our view that industry, with Government, can introduce a system that can achieve high safety standards that meet the NHVR regulations earlier than might be required by the NHVR. It will lift SA standards to within a reasonable level of the rest of Australia in a relatively short time. Bus SA proposes the introduction of agreed minimum standards, including a model to provide for ongoing monitoring. This will assist government achieve governance of the sector in ways that are cost effective and covers all bus operators, not simply those that hold State Government contracts.

The corollary of accrediting the operator through regulatory systems and standards is to create a mandatory vehicle inspection regime that gives Government confidence that the vehicles delivering services are in roadworthy condition at all times in any circumstance.

It is our view that there are benefits to be achieved for Government by deregulating the inspection regime that currently exists, and allowing private inspections to be undertaken by suitably authorised entities.

This approach has been successfully applied in other jurisdictions such as Victoria for the past 20 years and Tasmania for the past 10 years. This model affords benefits to Government by relieving them of the administrative burden of these processes and enabling them to better monitor and police the regulatory environment. This is a case of industry and Government working together to the benefit of both.





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