

Session 4



Ross Treadwell
*Department for Education and
Child Development*



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DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Bus SA Annual Conference

Moving People: Unlocking SA's Mobility

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Government of South Australia

Department for Education and
Child Development

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Key Messages

- DECD context and priorities
- 2015 Transport Review – outcomes and recommendations
- Student Safety
- Communication and Relationships



DECD Business Services / Transport Services Team Attending Today

- Darryl Nissen – School Bus Fleet Manager
- Karen Osborn – Contract Manager
- Lindsay Pitkin – Manager, Business Services Assurance



DECD – Context and Priorities

- 171,016 children and students
- 29,793 staff (current from June 2015)
- 926 sites
- 407 preschools
- 356 primary schools
- 65 secondary schools
- 998 R-12 schools and area schools
(includes special & other schools)



Strategic Plan 2014 – 2017

Six Priorities

- Higher Standards of Learning Achievement
- Improve Health and Wellbeing
- Improve and Integrate Child Safety
- Engage Children, Families and Communities
- Right Service at the Right Time
- Build a Better System

Building a High Performing System (BHPS)





Strategic Priorities

1. Advanced diagnostics, communication and learning
2. Secure, reliable access anywhere, anytime
3. Integration of care and protection services
4. Digital central systems and infrastructure

Asset master plan

- Capital Works planning framework to target capital investment funds to sites and areas where there is *demonstrated educational need*
- *Higher quality education and care facilities* in the right places, raising the profile of public education and leading to increased market share
- from existing and new assets *better utilisation and productivity*
- Better balance of *proactive versus reactive maintenance* reducing overall spend
- *Better educational outcomes* for the young people of South Australia
- *Safer and healthier environments* for students, staff and the community



2015 Transport Review

- Safety
- Travel Times
- Preschool access to buses and eligibility
- Level of services
- School bus stop locations
- School of right or school of choice?
- Relaxation of 5km rule
- Musical instruments and sports equipment
- Buses and small schools – minimum numbers



Stakeholder Issues

- Locating bus drivers in rural locations
- Principals – Delays in bus drivers obtaining Driver Accreditation, which includes a DCSI Criminal History Screening Check.
- Unions – Concerns raised in relation to the amount of time spent by Principals and School Staff in administering buses
- Opportunity for improved regional services and provision of contracted services



Recommendations

- The current school transport policy meets the aim of providing an efficient free school transport service
- Any significant changes to the policy (eligibility, distance, travel time etc) could only be achieved through additional resourcing or introducing charging for the service
- Opportunities exist for integration of services to benefit rural communities and achieve improved efficiencies
- That DECD and DPTI work together with local government to facilitate regional community use of transport services



Student Safety

- Since 2010, DECD has purchased 122 new buses, with 2 new buses awaiting delivery
- All new buses are fitted with GPS & CCTV
- All vehicles have flashing lights & safety signage
- Approval to travel is managed by the school
- It is necessary to have a record of who is travelling on the buses
- This information is held by the school in case of emergencies as well as overall duty of care
- In addition to the rural school bus services, DECD administers around 390 school runs which cater for students with a disability



Communication and Relationships

- Speak to the Principal – if there is a problem they will want to know
- Provide information to the Governing Council – make sure that they are informed



Communication and Relationships

- The size of buses are determined by the number of eligible students
- In cases where buses are not full to capacity, ineligible students (i.e. those within 5kms or otherwise ineligible) may have access to the remaining spare seats, subject to approval from the Principal who has local management of the school bus.
- Parents of ineligible students must be prepared to sign that they are aware of the conditions of approval (ineligible students may be removed from bus if bus fills with eligible students).



Communication and Relationships

- Transport Review Officers will review bus routes in line with policy criteria
- Should a contracted bus route be unviable or need amendment, officers will negotiate with the provider



Conclusion

- DECD provides 459 school bus services, which operate primarily in rural South Australia.
- Of the 459 school bus services, 194 are DECD owned & 265 are operated by private school bus operators under contract with DECD.
- The mix of owned & contracted services allow a level of flexibility to the school bus system to meet the changing demographic of students.



Conclusion

- 16 000 students are transported daily
- The safety of students is paramount
- DECD will work with DPTI and local government to improve opportunities for integrated services

