



Bus Driver Safety Initiative and School Transport Assistance Scheme – What is happening in Queensland

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Bus Driver Safety Initiative

Background:

In 2010 the Queensland government initiated the Bus Safety Forum, comprised of Industry groups, Unions, P&C's, Police, Academics, Department Heads TMR and Education, Workplace Health & Safety representatives.

On the 28th of October 2016 our Industry in Queensland experienced an absolutely traumatic event. That was the day that Manmeet Sharma lost his life whilst driving his bus, burnt alive at the wheel by a mentally disturbed individual.

As a result of this tragedy, Driver safety become a primary focus of this forum.



Bus Driver Safety Initiative (cont)

In 2018 Government announced the Bus Driver Safety Initiative, for implementation in urban environments only.

Objective: To provide greater safety to our Bus Drivers, urban environments only.
To co fund (50/50) with contracted Service Providers the following safety measures:

- Driver barriers, and
- Anti shatter film.

To be eligible to apply for this funding, Service Providers had to undertake the following:

- Complete risk assessments on high risk routes,
- Consult with Employees on the type of barrier,
- Obtain quotes from Suppliers to retrofit the safety measures, and
- Complete the funding application by a specified date.



Bus Driver Safety Initiative (cont)

Unfortunately uptake of initiative was poor, mainly due to a lack of engagement and understanding of Industry. Why?

- 4th generation SEQ urban contracts had just been negotiated and executed, Regional Urban contracts were 80% negotiated and executed and as such there was mechanism within the contract framework to offset or recover this expenditure,
- The safety measures can be introduced into a fleet through the fleet replacement program which is costed within the contract framework,
- There is no cost recovery mechanism for the ongoing operational expenditure that would be incurred to maintain and or replace the anti shatter film,
- The funding caps were significantly lower than the quotes Service Providers received from Suppliers,
- There was no mandate on full or partial barriers,
- There was no clarity from the State as to what defines a high risk route, and
- Restricted a Service Providers scheduling and efficiency due limited fitment.



School Transport Assistance Scheme (STAS)

STAS background:

- Delivers 1,150 bus routes (contracts),
- Connects 130,000 eligible students to schools daily (16% of school students),
- 600 Service Providers,
- 1,847 buses,
- Attracts \$180m of State Government funding,
- Longest single route, 223kms, Texas QLD,
- Most remote route, north east of Cape York – Murray Island route 180kms, and
- Been operating for 100 years.



School Transport Assistance Scheme (STAS) (cont)

STAS background:

- No common contract expiry,
- Contracts are not negotiated with the Service Provider or Industry body,
- Normal tenure is 5 years,
- Tenure can be less due to Optimisation,
- Early Contract termination due to Optimisation etc attracts no compensation,
- Payment model is:
 - ❖ outdated,
 - ❖ has not kept pace with operational costs,
 - ❖ is not transparent,
 - ❖ incorrectly indexed, and
 - ❖ does not provide for different operating environments.



School Transport Assistance Scheme (STAS) (cont)

What QBIC is pursuing:

- A complete review and overhaul of the payment model,
- A payment model that has the capacity to remain current across multiple years,
- A payment model that captures all price movements and operational expenditure within the School Service contract environment,
- A payment model that is easy to understand, and
- A payment model that provides appropriate remuneration and is transparent.



School Transport Assistance Scheme (STAS) (cont)

How has the State responded?

They have agreed and are now committed to a three stage review:

- Stage 1: a review of the indexation methodology,
- Stage 2: a review of base rate payments, and
- Stage 3: a review of the contract construct.

The review will involve:

- A State wide roadshow to engage and consult directly with Service Providers,
- Engagement with Industry bodies,
- Analysis of the input/feedback provided,
- An agreed reform position, and
- Updated policy.



Thank you for your time

Any questions?

