

VIEW FROM CANBERRA



June 2018

Landmark Industry Summits

Thank you for all of those who attended the Travel to Learn and School Bus Summit and Coach Connections Summit in Canberra on June 27. It was a great turn up for the Summits and with over 200 people at Dinner it was a good message to the Federal Government, Opposition and Greens that we are a committed and united Industry.

The Summits are important because they bring a focus to specific sectors of Industry.

In the case of the Coach Connections Summit it was agreed to produce a Long Distance, Tour and Charter policy document that includes a 10 year plan to 2028 with the aim to double the number of trips taken by Coach.

This is already under development and will feature as part of the program at the Australasia Bus Conference in Cairns from October 7 to 10. If you have not booked you accommodation get on to that right now.

The Travel to Learn and School Bus Summit was a first time event and the numbers attending was great from every State and Territory. Yes even our friends from the Northern Territory braved the Canberra winter and made the trip.

Some of the key questions discussed were:

1. Where does school bus travel fit in the total transport network?
2. Why are school bus networks exclusionary and disparate?
3. Are our current operating and contracting models right for tomorrow's needs and are they fair?
4. What are the barriers to the proliferation of the school bus and what are the impacts of alternative modes on congestion, the environment and our social setting?
5. Can and should we integrate school bus networks with mainstream public transport networks?

Overall, there were not many answers to the questions asked, but the presentations stimulated plenty of thought as to how things could improve.

Many of the delegates in the room were wanting to know what the future might look like from a governmental perspective; it was suggested that a more open and "look forward" view could be presented in future, as the speakers and presenters from government tended to focus on each jurisdiction's current 'state of affairs'. However, having said that, it was the first time, as far as I am aware, that such a national forum had been held bringing together all jurisdictions and Industry, and in that sense, was a good start to the conversation.

The BIC will next develop an outcomes document from the school bus summit and then determine what the next steps will be.

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The Industry Dinner was great with Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack, Anthony Albanese Shadow Minister for Infrastructure Transport, Regional Development, Cities and Tourism and Senator Janet Rice the Greens spokesperson for Transport, all speaking and all very positive about Industry and its importance and how they want to work with us. Must be an election in the air. The reality is we have developed very good relationships with all of the political parties and in my view it showed on the night that we are taken seriously in Canberra.

My own presentation at the dinner was focused on a few key themes.

- > The important contribution Industry makes to every community and the economy and our diversity in the context of the variety of types of services we provide across Australia.
- > The importance of the Federal Government investing in public transport infrastructure and specifically Bus Rapid Transit and bus priority and that all Federally funded roads include the condition that State, Territory and Local Government integrate public transport and bus priority into the project.
- > Future transport and the future role of the bus and coach sector in being at the core of future public transport and personalised passenger services in an emerging era of Mobility as a Service (MaaS).
- > Not forgetting the role the bus industry plays in connecting villages, towns, regional centres and cities and the importance of this to regional tourism and the success of decentralisation to help alleviate the population pressure of our growing cities.

So having said all of that, the next big thing is the Australasia Bus Conference in Cairns. I hope to see you there to play your part in the development and future of your Industry. Go to movingpeople.com.au for full details about the conference.

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