

VIEW FROM CANBERRA

Another Year - Another Prime Minister?

January 2019

So did we all have a merry Christmas and a happy new year? I did.

Returning to Canberra in January after sunning and surfing on the Gold Coast is like walking into a galactic landscape of seemingly nothingness. The capital empties out as public servants and tradie's move to the South Coast of NSW from Boxing Day to Australia Day. You should make a visit to Canberra in this quiet time and experience the Capital – our own little Trumpless Washington.

It is hot though, high 30's low 40's, so don't bring your jumper, budgie smugglers will suffice.

On second thoughts bus operators in speedos is a bit disturbing....

Anyway Canberra will have life breathed back into it soon when public servants return to their posts and our "pollies" bring a small town of staff back to the "Berra" for the start of a new parliamentary year in early February.

Oh the joy of working toward a federal election when a dysfunctional parliament is in action. Yes I know you wish you were here!

Well, I tell you this much. Much excitement or consternation is at hand as we move to a federal election likely in May and what that means no matter what the result or you own personal politics.

It would seem that another year, another Prime Minister is a reality but I reckon Scott Morrison might make it a real race, but I cannot see the Libs getting over the line, largely due to their own internal dysfunctional (the Canberra word of 2018) anxiety and loss of party identity.

Nevertheless I would like to say one thing for certain, whoever wins government in the next federal election, public transport and how we move people in our cities and regions will be on the policy and program agendas of the government.

This a far cry from Australia being one of the few Western developed economies where its national government had no direct role in public transport just over a decade ago to today where we have all of the political parties in agreement that public transport is critical to the future of our cities and regions, cost of living and our living standards.

Some in the bus Industry are skeptical, cynical and question the role that the BIC plays and its value to Industry.

The fact that PT is on the political agenda at a federal level is a major achievement that operators and suppliers should be rightly proud to have achieved. Some can't see past the specific benefits that they want delivered to their businesses directly. Like the federal government is going to prop up your contract with some extra cash or fund services. Remember pink batts? The federal government should not have a role in service delivery.

Bus Australia Network



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The federal government is about creating an environment where state, territory and local governments can grow public transport patronage through investment in infrastructure and services, new technology, business incentives, intelligent transport systems and provide the opportunity for public transport businesses to grow, for bus businesses to grow. This is what the BIC is about in my view and we have been a success as a united team of State Associations, bus operators and suppliers.

You only have to listen to Albo when he says “your Industry was ahead of the game on cities and public transport and the federal government’s role” - to realise the value that solid Industry representation in Canberra brings Industry. PT and buses are on the agenda in Canberra and there is more to come in 2019 through to the federal election in 2022. It will be interesting government times and your ongoing support is needed.

Bus Australia Network

