

# View from Canberra



17 January 2020

2020 is up and running and will be another year of transport challenge and change for all levels of government, BIC and bus operators I predict.

The BIC course is pretty well set as we continue the focus of our work program to advocate the federal government to play its role in our cities and regions, in urban and regional connectivity, accessibility and ensuring our villages, towns, regional centers and cities are connected by transport passenger services.

The recent horrendous bushfires highlight how fragile our transport infrastructure really is when it comes to keeping us connected and able to travel when single access highways and roads are cut. At the same time, it shows how important passenger transport services are to keep the country moving.

This will be highlighted in early 2020 when BIC releases its “Snapshot of the Industry” report providing the most comprehensive insight ever into the role and contribution of the Australian bus and coach Industry to the economy, environment and society. We are working on finalising the report right now, and it is looking good and will form an important part in our advocacy efforts and telling the Industry story to politicians and decision makers.

As I said in my final column last year, bus and coach operators are part of the fabric of their communities and pretty much operate in every community in Australia. The Snapshot of the Industry report is something everyone in the Industry should have a copy of and make sure your local Member of Parliament - state and federal, has it as well.

The BIC is always getting in the face of federal and state/territory governments and you should as well.

And don't think we stop our industry story at the bus operators. We are equally vocal about our bus manufacturing and supply sector.

I can't say it enough, the federal government has a vital leadership and strategic policy role in public transport and increasingly it is becoming evident that the government has a direct role in helping state and local governments ensure our cities and regions of the future are economic, liveable and sustainable.

It is evident that PT services need to be scaled up not down and this will be the key focus of the BIC's core strategic message to governments in 2020. The aim is to grow operator businesses through increased number and frequency of services, as well as opening up opportunities to provide and be part of new mobility service offerings and in turn increase demand for new buses and coaches which directly impacts the sustainability and growth of our manufacturers and supplier members.

Modern transit means greater convenience to compete with the car which means transport service offerings that connect public transport bus services with other mobility options. Multi-modal trip planning that includes timely information about service options, service alerts, real time arrival information, on demand technology to reserve a space or make last minute bookings are the new requirement, not a wish list.



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Convenient mobility is NOW, and this means, more than ever, that public transport authority collaboration is a core requirement with organisations like the BIC. This is our new association paradigm and is reflected in the BIC membership of these PT Government authorities. Mobility collaboration is at the core of co-constructing mobility solutions in partnership with governments and operators.

This is the challenge for Industry in 2020 and beyond. This will be a core focus of the 2020 BIC Conference in Rotorua October 27-30 where we have invited the Transport and Infrastructure Council, made up of all Transport and Infrastructure Ministers to meet and join us to plan a “Collaborative PT Future”.

### Bus Australia Network

