

BIC Column July 2012

The View from Canberra

As the ice begins to thaw on what has been the coldest winter in Canberra for more than three decades, we expect Capital Hill to heat up with the return of Parliament at the end of this month.

It is timely then that the BIC is finalising preparations for the National Conference, October 28-31, which will be in the thick of the action here in Canberra. This month's column will focus on the Conference Program; what it will offer you as a delegate and why the industry needs you to attend.

BIC National Conference

Last month's ABC Magazine carried a copy of the full registration brochure for the 2012 BIC National Conference.

This Conference is about sending a unified message about the importance of our industry to Australia's prosperity and wellbeing at the right time and in the right place.

The sessions at this year's Conference are designed to pave the way to achieving this goal and capture a balance between the broader BIC Moving People policy agenda and industry specific sessions which will take your business forward.

I will outline some of the key themes for the Conference and how sessions fit into these themes.

The Passenger Task, Planning and the National Agenda

The opening sessions of the Conference will feature a Keynote Address from the Federal Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP.

The Minister, who is a strong supporter of public transport and the BIC will look at the policies in progress that impact on the bus industry and outline what the future holds for transport policy leading into the election and beyond.

This will be followed by Director Generals of Transport from each State and Territory who will outline the "State of Play" for public transport in a candid question and answer session.

As part of this theme we will take a look at "Industry Trends and Future Implications" from an operators and manufacturers perspective. This session will examine the expected growth of the industry and our slice of the public transport pie and how this will shape our future.

The Passenger Task, Operations and Technology

The second half the opening day of the Conference takes a deep breath and looks at operational and technological challenges for the industry.

In a session on "New Clean and Efficient Bus Technologies" we will hear from international expert Dr Edward Jobson about the experience with hybrid vehicles in Europe and what this means for the Australian bus fleet.

The following session will outline the key impacts of the Carbon Tax on operators and manufacturers and what future challenges may arise as we develop a domestic carbon market.

The National Agenda Public Transport and Industry Standards

On the Tuesday of the Conference we return to high level policy and will hear from four of Australia's most senior transport officials; Mike Mrdak, Secretary of the Federal Department of Infrastructure and Transport, Nick Dimopoulos CEO of the National Transport Commission, Richard Hancock Project Director of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator and Michael Deegan Infrastructure Coordinator at Infrastructure Australia.

The afternoon session will return to an operational focus and look at where we are headed in relation to vehicle standards and accessible transport standards.

Moving People Today and in the Future

We will kick off this theme and the final day of the Conference with a not to be missed session on the "Fair Work Act and Awards Review".

The final session of the Conference will tie everything together in an industry forum which will look at progress on the outcomes of the 2011 BIC National Conference.

Canberra may not be Fiji but Industry unity is the key to a bigger and brighter future, which is why your voice as a representative of the bus industry in your community is vital in the 2012 BIC National Conference being a success.

The full Conference registration brochure, which contains details of the guest speakers, social events and partners' program, is available at the BIC website, www.ozebus.com.au, I look forward to seeing you in Canberra.