

Federal Bass Strait equalisation funding is not providing effective public transport between Victoria and Tasmania.

It is a basic transport and access issue about the entire Tasmanian community and its relationship and access to other states". Martin Ferguson - Media Release, dated 16th February 2000

The BSPVES is not reaching its full capacity to provide basic transport over the Victorian-Tasmanian border as do all other interstate inter-capital transport corridors.

It is encouraging:

1. The application of interstate ferries over the longest route,
2. Too wider and inefficient choice of application of BSPVES funding
3. Additional costs of travel through emphasis on sleeping accommodation,
4. The inefficient use of public funding by offering no bus fare or rail alternative, or an incentive to fill cars,
5. Undue emphasis on holiday packages only servicing part of the travel tourism market
6. The wrong type of ferry to deliver effective public transport
7. Under utilised ferries through higher than necessary total costs of crossing,
8. Unnecessarily higher carbon emissions per person carried when numbers of travellers are reduced per sailing,
9. Lack of sea or air based competition,
10. Undue emphasis on the transport of cars in a way not available on bitumen,
11. Higher than necessary fuel costs over longer routes,
12. An incentive to use the now indexed BSPVES to value add, and with tourist targeting, offers an incentive to move access costs away from bitumen equivalence, not towards it.

The Commonwealth could easily attach conditions to the BSPVES to require any operator using the scheme to offer a reasonable number of bitumen or highway equivalent options. It could do this now.

The benefits of this approach will be to remove the single greatest impediment to population, investment and jobs for Tasmania and also drive the Victorian economy.

Also the effectiveness of the existing land-based public transport and road corridors will be improved.

Australia will then be linked with a fully integrated surface transport system that is truly national.

Barriers to access, referred to in the Nixon Report, will then be removed.