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senate inquiry.doc)
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26 March 2009

The Secretary
Senate Standing Committee
Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Sir

INQUIRY INTO THE INVESTMENT OF COMMONWEALTH AND STATE FUNDS IN PUBLIC PASSENGER TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

On behalf of the Hobart City Council I thank the Senate Committee for the opportunity to present material to this important inquiry.

Hobart 2025 – A Strategic Framework (Attachment 1 & 2)

The Hobart City Council has undertaken a major Community Consultation and 2025 Visioning exercise in order to guide the Council. Future Directions Statements have been produced across the key themes which arose from the community consultation.

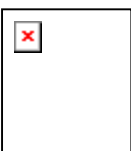
This document is submitted to bring to the committee's attention the desires of the Hobart Community in relation to Transport as expressed in Future Direction 5.

Future Direction 5

"In 2025 Hobart will be a city that is highly accessible through efficient transport systems."

What the Community would like Hobart to be in 2025:

"Offers an increased range of transport options, an integrated multiform transport system between the city and suburbs, better public transport, more use of the river for access and transport, cycle infrastructure and pedestrian access providing linkages."



With regards to the Committees terms of reference we note that many of the submissions already received by the Committee have outlined the credible financial, social, land use and environmental benefits of public passenger transport, cycling and walking initiatives.

It is also noted that the community consultation and visioning process conducted have supported the notion that there exists significant community support for change from the status quo and support for further investment in a diversified transport system.

Hobart City Council –Draft Sustainable Transport Strategy 2008 (Attachment 3)

The Hobart City Council has produced a draft Sustainable Transport Strategy for community consultation and as an initial practical document to begin the process of transforming our transportation system.

This document is included to outline the types of activities Council can pursue to assist its residents and visitors in travelling more sustainably. In particular walking and cycling initiatives which both assist the integration with public passenger transport and create transport options in their own right.

Further it is noted that in general no one transport system or mode completely satisfies an individuals transport needs. An individual's journey does not end at the bus stop, or the bicycle rack. Modes previously considered marginal, such as walking and cycling need to be supported by all tiers of Government if true integrated multimodal transport systems are to be developed in Australia. Though cycling and walking facilities are often considered to be a Local Government responsibility, many Local Governments simply do not have the resources to provide the facilities which would assist individuals in choosing to consider the mode shift from a private car.

In respect of the Committees terms of reference in regards "measures by which the Commonwealth could facilitate improvement in public passenger transport and services", it is noted that measures could include (but are not limited to):

- simple capital items such as support for improved bus stop shelters;
- IT procurement in assisting the State jurisdictions to develop nationally consistent integrated ticketing platforms; and
- targeted programs to assist business and government departments in shifting working hours to spread peak time usage of public transport services and improve utilisation of physical assets outside of peak hours.

It is noted that section 5.6 of the Hobart City Council draft Sustainable Transport Strategy relates to public transport; states the fact that the State Government has prime responsibility for the funding and operation of Metro, the public transport provider in Tasmania and suggests the desire of the Hobart City Council to assist the State in improving public transport in areas where the Council has some influence.

The Western Shore Public Transport Corridor (Attachment 4)

This document, authored by the Planning Institute of Australia (Tasmanian Division), The Australian Institute of Architects (Tasmanian Chapter) and the University of Tasmania's Housing and Community Research Unit is provided to the Committee as another example of the kind of public transport project which could be supported by the Commonwealth. It is provided as a Hobart example, however, the principle of Transit Orientated Development has been previously espoused elsewhere in Australian jurisdictions.

The suggestion to be made is that the Commonwealth has the ability to leverage greater outcomes for Australia if it were to preferentially invest in public transport corridors and services which stimulate private investment in Transit Orientated Developments. Such investments could assist the Commonwealth and State Governments in the provision of affordable housing, urban renewal, greenhouse gas emission reductions and greater transport system and public infrastructure provision efficiencies.

International Examples – TEA-21

International examples abound of best practice public passenger transport services and infrastructure. Also of interest perhaps to the committee are international examples of funding models used to achieve such outcomes.

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, known as the TEA-21 was enacted in 1998 in the United States by then President Clinton and Vice President Gore.

The legislation is worth noting in that it shifted US federal funding arrangements. Commentary on the package produced by the U.S. Department of Transportation notes:

*“TEA-21 gives states and communities an opportunity to select a broad range of transportation facilities and services that best meet local transportation priorities and contribute to making our communities more liveable. Use of Federal funds can be tailored to meet local needs, whether they are for transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, highways, shared-ride programs, safety projects, intermodal connections, or other improvements.”*¹

The broad direction and intent of the statement is worth noting.

Metro in Tasmania (Attachment 5 and 6)

It is worth noting the Tasmanian Government Prices Oversight Commission – Metro Pricing Policies Investigation (GPOC) – Final Report – (May 2006) and the more recent Metro submission to the GPOC 2009 review of Metro's Pricing Policies.

The documents indicate that in relation to the functions and other activities of metro that:

“The Government’s primary objective in funding the contracted services is to mitigate the impact of transport and socio-economic disadvantage and by doing so meet the essential travel needs of the community.”²

The recent bus review process undertaken by the State Government has changed the service delivery model for passenger public transport in Tasmania. It is hoped that these changes will lead to the “primary” role of public transport in Tasmania being seen to be more than simply “mitigating the impact of transport and socio-economic disadvantage”.

Yours faithfully

(Stuart Baird)

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT OFFICER

Attachment(s) 1-6

¹ (<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/tea21/oneyrhl.htm>)

² Pg 10 Metro Submission to GPOC 2009 Review of Metro’s Pricing Policies