

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

Thursday March 26th, 2009.

Dear Senate,

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Inquiry into the investment of Commonwealth and State funds into public passenger transport infrastructure and services in Australia.

I am writing as founder of a carpooling website, Cool Pool Tas, and we will respond with a major recommendation that during the interim development towards improved public transportation and infrastructure, we grow together a healthy carpooling culture. Further to this we add 3 major points of reference specific to carpooling before addressing the Senate's terms of reference directly.

Our Perspective in Brief: Cool Pool Tas has created a resource online to allow passengers and drivers to connect in Tasmania. We are www.coolpooltas.com.au. It is free to register, offers information about the person you might share a ride with, whilst also observing etiquette and privacy policy. Currently we list 320 active members.

Support is needed for CAR POOLING in particular in the following areas

- 1. GROWING THE CULTURE:** Whilst audits and new public transport and transport infrastructure is being implemented, instant reduction in car congestion, emissions, parking pressures and personal costs to commuters can be achieved through carpooling.

We can grow the culture with the support of

- a. EDUCATION in communities (how to carpool, use of internet)**
- b. ADVERTISING**
- c. MARKETING**
- d. INTERIM CALL IN CENTRE- to register journey and find rides (based on allo-stop, Quebecois (Canadian) model).**

2. FUTURE INCENTIVES

- Free parking for those with 3 or more in their vehicle
- Carpooling only allotted car parking area
- Express lanes for carpoolers

- Safe areas for pick up and drop off marked as carpool pick up and drop off zones with shelters

3. CONNECTIVITY

- **We must link our carpooling resources, not isolate them.** E.G University Carpooling System, Government Carpooling System, Cool Pool Tas. These all need to be interlinked! There are numerous examples around Australia of sites that are not interlinked or obviously belonging to one particular community.
- **Car sharing future-** develop base model for local communities to car share. Interest has been shown for Cool Pool Tas to develop this at an informal level as our decentralised and low density population cannot support car shares such as Go Get (Sydney).

4. TECHNOLOGY

- Supporting developing the online resource further through SMS technologies.

Cool Pool Tas's direct response to part of the Senate Inquiries' Terms of Reference:

An audit of the state of public passenger transport in Australia;

- We know what we have; an insufficient level of public transportation. We need to research the best alternative transportation to implement and adapt to our lifestyles and environments.

- While auditing we can be working on **CULTURAL CHANGE**. This can be achieved by encouraging change through ride sharing. We have the infrastructure in Tasmania- we need support for this to grow.

- We already know that Tasmania has the **second highest** (after Western Australia) level of vehicle ownership in the Country per head of 1,000 population; representing 2.6% of Australia's vehicle fleet when it has only 2.4% of the country's total population (Southern Region Background Report).

Current and historical levels of public investment in private vehicle and public passenger transport services and infrastructure;

We are Car-centric and Decentralised in Tasmania.

-Some of the statistics, both new (See Southern Region Background Report by the Department of Infrastructure Energy and Resources) and older (Census items to follow) depict this clearly.

At August 2001, there were 90,386 employed residents of the Greater Hobart-Southern Region. On 7 August 2001 (Census day), some 67.2% of these employed residents travelled to work by car, **59.6% as a driver and 7.6%** as a passenger.

At State level, the car is still the dominant mode of transport in the Journey to Work. In 2001, **88% of JTW was by 'car as driver' or 'car as passenger'**; increasing by 5.7% from 1991-2001. This translates to 14,000 new vehicle movements in the JTW over the last decade.

Research tells us that it is the infrequent scheduling of public transport, and the lack of diverse routes which deters us from taking the bus. There is juxtaposed with this the independence, flexibility and convenience of taking your own vehicle.

An assessment of the benefits of public passenger transport, including integration with bicycle and pedestrian initiatives;

- **Potential to share and be Community wise.**

Over 350,000 registered vehicles and fully licensed persons in Tasmania.

- **Incentives are essential.**
- **Cost savings can be calculated/measured.**

The role of Commonwealth Government legislation, taxation, subsidies, policies and other mechanisms that either discourage or encourage public passenger transport; and

There are huge cultural influences that can be made in this arena to encourage use of alternative transportation modes.

- Readdress insurance policy. Allow carpooling and carpoolers to feel confident they can legally share rides together.
- Create standard work place policy for cyclist, public transport and carpoolers e.g early finish or later start, compulsory car or bike spaces.
- Increase parking fees and adapt car parks to be either for single passenger vehicles or for cars with more than one person in them (free).

Best practice international examples of public passenger transport services and infrastructure.

To name a few that come to mind from personal experience.

- Public bicycles in Barcelona, Spain.
- Safe and exclusive bike ways in Montreal, Canada.

- Carpooling via telephone with allostop, Quebec, Canada.
- Carpooling zones for pick up and drop off, San Francisco.
- Car sharing schemes such as in British Colombia, and even Australian Cities (although high density concentrated populated zones).
- Online ride sharing, Germany- Europe.
- Use of River Transportation using ferries- such as Bangkok, Thailand.
- Carpooling lanes and signs- incentives for express.
- Rail to major airports and departure places e.g Osaka, Japan; Hong Kong.
- Novelty transport to support small business and Australia's cultural diversity e.g bicycles (rickshaws, India); tramways (San Francisco, Melbourne).
- Customer Service incentives on public transportation such as snacks on buses (Turkey, Thailand)

We look forward to carpooling being included in the outcomes of this inquiry as it is such a prevalent (car use and ownership & already numerous existing carpooling online sites) and obvious (single occupancy) means of immediately diversifying our travel routes, saving on environmental costs, congestion and economic expenditure (Individual, State and Federal- roads, parking, fuel).

If support can be directed from a Federal level, the carpooling culture can grow immediately for successful and measurable outcomes.

In positive anticipation for dynamic, creative and realistic change:

Yours Sincerely,

Georgi Marshall

**Founder/Director
Cool Pool Tas.**