



Transport

Outcome

All Tasmanians are able to travel where they need to go to participate in work, training, education, volunteering, and social and recreational activities, and to access services

Why is this a priority?

TasCOSS consultations consistently reveal access to transport as one of the most important issues facing low-income and disadvantaged Tasmanians. While many people focus on transport for elderly and disabled Tasmanians, in fact the most transport-disadvantaged groups in the State are young people who do not yet have their licence, people living on low incomes who cannot afford to run a car, and people who have lost their licence.

“What I would really love to have is public transport.”

— Kelsie, 16, Rosebery⁶⁶

Despite good efforts in recent years by Metro Tasmania and other service providers, transport services in the State are still substantially characterised by:

- Limited hours and frequency of operations
- Limited geographic scope
- Limited integration in ticketing, physical location and timetables
- Limited affordability, and
- Limited eligibility.

Needs are particularly acute outside Hobart and Launceston.

In the North West, the trip between Burnie and Devonport—a 35 to 45-minute car trip—takes more than two hours and two different bus companies, if buses run at all.

A trip from Queenstown to the University of Tasmania’s Cradle Coast Campus in Burnie (via Devonport) takes 7.5 hours using three different operators—and is only possible on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Although these issues severely hamper the mobility of transport-disadvantaged Tasmanians, they also discourage people with access to a car from shifting away from driving towards more environmentally sustainable and healthy public or communal transport.

⁶⁶ Bottom Line Blog, *Being young on the West Coast of Tasmania*, 25 August 2015

Recommendation

That the State Government begin the process of bringing its level of transport funding to \$300 per capita per year, or \$150 million per year.

In the first year, this money should be spent to:

- Finalise and develop an action plan for, and begin implementation of the long-awaited *Transport Access Strategy*
- Fund at least two projects—one rural, one peri-urban—trialing innovative feeder services into Metro or other existing bus services
- Launch a centralised passenger transport information website, and
- Overcome the barriers to establish a direct Burnie-Devonport bus service.

Cost

Public Transport Improvement Project (per annum)	Approx \$50 million ⁶⁷
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Rationale

At under \$200 per year, Tasmania's per capita spending on transport is the lowest in the nation. Even the Northern Territory, the next lowest spender, spent \$270 per capita per annum in 2013.⁶⁸ As the examples above demonstrate, this level of funding is demonstrably inadequate for meeting the transport needs of Tasmania's dispersed transport-disadvantaged population.

Business as usual forces relevant government departments and transport operators to focus more on cost management than on better service provision for transport-disadvantaged Tasmanians, and prevents any exploration of innovative services such as feeder services for Metro or other existing bus services.

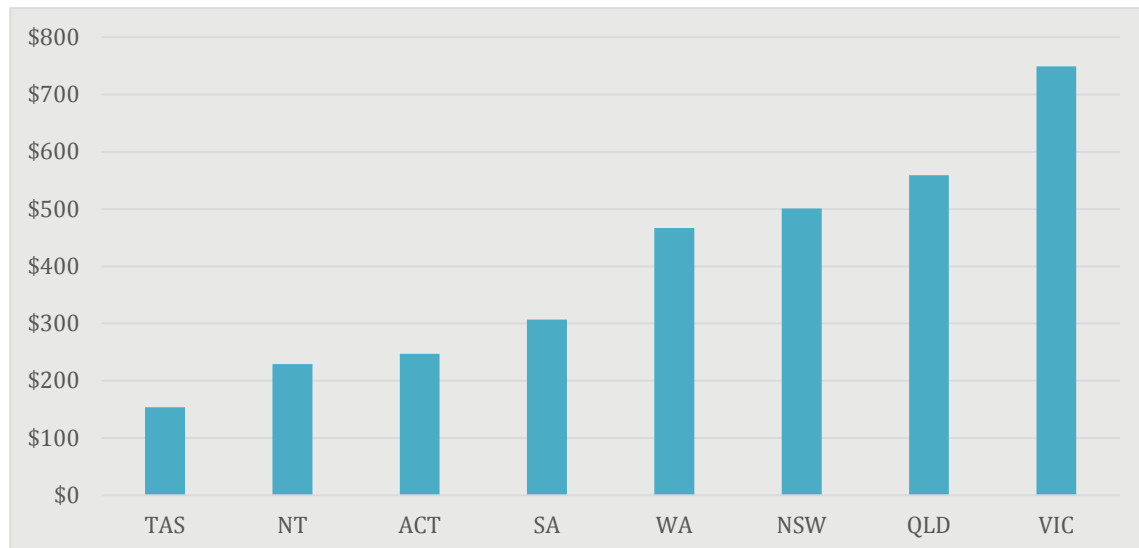
TasCOSS has already expressed its concerns about the lack of funding in the 2015-16 Budget for the finalisation of the *Transport Access Strategy*, an election commitment which will be vital to setting out strategic directions for further action. The Strategy is now overdue; it needs to be finalised and implemented. One of its action areas should be two projects trialing feeder services aimed at overcoming the "last mile" problem facing many transport-disadvantaged Tasmanians living outside the centres of urban areas. The lessons from these projects will be crucial to rolling out similar feeder services across the State.

⁶⁷ This will depend on the timeframe in which it is possible to increase spending on transport to meet this target.

⁶⁸ TasCOSS (2014), *Transport in the Community: Final Report*, p 13.

<http://www.tascoss.org.au/Portals/0/Documents/Publications/Reports/TasCOSS%20Transport%20in%20the%20Community%20Project%20report%20Oct%202014.pdf>

State Transport Spending Per Capita⁶⁹



Tasmania is the only Australian state to lack a centralised website providing comprehensive transport information for residents and tourists alike. All participants in TasCOSS' 2014 *Transport in the Community* project agreed that such a website will make potential users aware of transport options and greatly simplify multi-modal or multi-operator trips. Service Tasmania has already expressed strong interest in hosting the site.⁷⁰

The DPAC-funded Wheels for Work and Training grant awarded in 2014 to Merseylink/Phoenix Coaches has already come up with a full design—routes, timetables, costing—for a direct Burnie-Devonport bus service. We understand that additional funding will be required to overcome barriers associated with existing contracts.

⁶⁹ ABS 3101, Australian Demographic Statistics, March 2015; 2015-16 State and Territory Budget Papers. Both Victorian and NSW figures are for selected projects only and sharply understate the total public transport spend.

⁷⁰ TasCOSS (2014), *Transport in the Community: Final Report*, p 23.

<http://www.tascoss.org.au/Portals/0/Documents/Publications/Reports/TasCOSS%20Transport%20in%20the%20Community%20Project%20report%20Oct%202014.pdf>