



ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

Inquiry: Inquiry into the Use of School Buses in Rural and Regional Victoria

Hearing Date: 17 September 2021

Questions taken on notice

Directed to: **Tony Bates, Deputy Secretary, Financial Policy and Information Services
Department of Education and Training**

1. Mr MEDDICK Page 7.

Can you supply information in relation to a pilot touch-on touch-off technology?

In 2017, to further improve child safety, DET installed electronic tracking on all Students with a Disability Transport Program services (441). The tracking provides clear advice on when students board and alight, and who is on a bus at any time; this is ideal for emergency management. DET is exploring how this information is best deployed to families.

DET is currently working with two existing SBP networks in Mornington and in Daylesford, to identify how Electronic Manifest Systems or 'bus trackers' can improve the safety and wellbeing of students on mainstream school buses. These pilots commenced in the first half of 2021, and at this stage it is difficult to draw conclusions of their effectiveness due to limited travel on school buses with COVID restrictions. These networks will be monitored further in 2021-22 to further test suitability of tracking devices and opportunities to expand trails or deploy more wider across the Program.

2. Mr GEPP Page no 9.

Can you provide data on the number of children (using the school bus system) who attend schools outside of their designated zone

Response:

Eligibility for the School Bus Program is based on students living at least 4.8km from their nearest government or non-government school, this is measured by the shortest practicable distance driven by car. For the majority of government school students, their nearest school would align with their zoned government school.

In 2021, the number of government and non-government students approved for travel on a bus to school that is not their nearest is approximately 4,850 (8% of total travellers). These students are required to pay a fare of \$120 per term should they accept the travel.



