

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

████████████████████
Organisation Name:
Your position or role:

YOUR SUBMISSION

Submission:

In 2019 I coordinated a Petition for a Town Bus Service on Phillip Island. Many of the signatures which totaled approximately 1700, were collected by myself; i was not online. During that time people who signed my Petition told me how hard it is for them to get around, Phillip Island, on Public transport. Young workers, who do not have a car depend on others to drive them. Older people would do the same; our local RSL and Bass Coast Health offer driving services for medical appointments. We do have buses on Phillip Island but they leave the Island and have very defined routes which are not inclusive of all areas and residential estates are growing on Phillip Island. To save repeating myself I will attach the letter given to Bass MP Jordan Crugnale with my Petition which was then tabled and presented to Parliament in November 2019. F.Y.I. I have also attached letters of support.

FILE ATTACHMENTS

- File1:** [606d36fda6de8-MP Letter.docx](#)
- File2:** [606d36fda7960-Snr Citz ltr.PDF](#)
- File3:** [606d36fda8065-PICS ltr Jordan Crugnale Town Bus petition 26.10.19.docx](#)

Signature:
████████████████████

PHILLIP ISLAND TOWN BUS SERVICE PETITION

To connect our townships and settlements.

Jordan Crugnale MP
Member for Bass
9 McBride Avenue,
Wonthaggi Victoria, 3995

31/10/2019

Dear Jordan,

My name is [REDACTED], a permanent resident and active community member of Phillip Island since February 2007. Through my own resources and initiative, I have been circulating the attached Petition for a Town Bus Service for Phillip Island, Victoria.

Residents of Phillip Island have long struggled without local public transport to take them from place to place on the Island. Settlements like Sunset Strip and Wimbledon Heights for example, have limited or no shopping facilities for even the most basic needs, and can be isolating without the ability to go into Cowes to shop or attend a medical appointment; especially if one does not drive, because of age or health issues, or have access to a car. (I have enclosed the Map of Phillip Island, published by the Phillip Island Tourism & Business Association, which shows how scattered these settlements are.)

A Public Town Bus Service on Phillip Island would meet the needs of residents who want to get around the Island without the use of a car, much like a shuttle or community bus service or, like Lillydale and Rowville, a PTV 'Telebus' Service. We really need some creative thinking to provide a reliable service that reaches out to distant settlements like Ventnor and Cape Woolamai; even if the Bus runs different routes on different days. It may even reduce car use during the summer holiday season when car traffic is very heavy.

Please find attached, a letter of support from Phillip Island Senior Citizens Club and the 1,700 plus signatures collected from various local shops, recent markets and on the Bus to Wonthaggi over the last several weeks. Petition sheets have also been taken to some of our local community group meetings to collect signatures. Unfortunately, many residents felt uncomfortable about including their residential address, because of the public locations of the Petition, therefore, a number are without a full address.

Residents have told me that a reliable Town Bus Service could get people to work as many of our young people are not driving yet. A bus would be useful when the car needs servicing or fixing and could reduce the need for a second family car. Many residents have immediately stated that 'it's a good idea' when asked to sign.

Some of the questions asked were: Will the Bus operate an East West Service?

Will it run 7 days a week?

Will they be Electric Buses?

Will it be a Bike and Ride Service?

Young people at the Bus stop told me they need a bus to get around as they can be socially isolated and unable to go to work. French Island and San Remo residents also expressed interest in a Phillip Island Town Bus service. Others have asked if the Bus would go to San Remo. Cowes and San Remo are the closest town centres with churches, banks, medical services and shopping facilities. These

towns are the Island's length apart with many settlements in between. Even with electronic banking and shopping services, cash is still used widely in our communities and can only be obtained in the town centre. Residents who do not have internet access at home must travel into Cowes to use the public facilities available at the nearest library.

Tourists who arrive by public transport such as the V/Line Bus or the passenger ferry, can be stranded without a viable option. I have been told that there are four taxis servicing Phillip Island (from a call centre based in Melbourne) and their range covers Bass to Wonthaggi to Melbourne. Taxis can take over an hour to arrive when booked and when used for medical appointments patients are often late! Another concern is that Taxi drivers are not fond of short trips or half price Taxi cards. A recent full paying Taxi user reported paying \$29 to go from Rhyll to Cowes' Transport Hub.

Our most local bus service is one inter-town bus taking residents from Phillip Island townships to Wonthaggi in the morning and returning in the afternoon, five days a week. V/Line Buses connect Cowes to destinations other than those on the Island. A reliable Town Bus Service would encourage residents to shop locally which would be good for Phillip Island Businesses. Currently local buses take residents off the Island to shop at Wonthaggi (Mon-Fri) or Fountain Gate (weekly).

A Town Bus Service would meet the needs of Phillip Island residents and support local businesses by keeping revenue on the Island and providing transport for their non-driving workforce. A young staff member of a Cowes Bakery rides her bike to work from Surf Beach, it takes her 30 minutes; she would rather catch a bus!

Looking forward to your support.

Yours faithfully,

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area.

Attn: Jordan Cruznale MP
Member for Bass

To whom it may concern,

As [REDACTED], I often get emails and phone calls, not just from our members but from other seniors in our community who ask if we have a community bus available on a daily basis, and moreover a regular service. As someone who is disabled, I feel this bus would be very advantageous, not just to me but the wider community. The Vline bus is great but we need something more available, like on a half hourly / hourly basis as opposed to having to wait 2hrs for the next Vline bus, which does not cover a large majority of the island.

Having this bus service would greatly improve the quality of life of our seniors. It would mean they are able to keep their independence for a more prolonged period of life. They can meet up with friends and family downtown. They can visit medical services on the island with greater access, as having to wait for a taxi can be sometimes too long a wait, and not everyone is eligible for a half price taxi card. With our elder generation having access to a regular community bus, you are giving them a greater quality of life. No-one ever likes to have to rely on other people to get us around, when we know that with just a small thing like a community bus available at least on an hourly basis every day, Monday to Sunday, would be a huge extension to their independence and quality of life.

Obviously we are not asking for this service as a freebie. Depending on where people are travelling to, I know our members would be happy paying a concession rate for the bus service, which would be a great deal cheaper than a taxi ride, even if someone has a half price taxi card. Example only: \$2 from Cowes to Rhyll.

Please, please, please take this matter seriously. From a senior's point of view, they have given so much to our community, it would be just the grateful and humanitarian thing to do. Please find a way to make this happen within the next 2 - 4 months. I believe it would work out to be a valuable asset to our community as a whole, but especially to our elder generation and I believe would be very profitable for the bus company to run.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Dated: 11th October, 2019

PHILLIP ISLAND CONSERVATION SOCIETY INC
PO BOX 548 COWES 3922



Website: www.picsvictoria.org.au

Facebook: www.facebook.com/picsvictoria

Jordan Crugnale, MP
9 McBride Avenue
WONTHAGGI, 3995

26.10.2019

Dear Jordan,

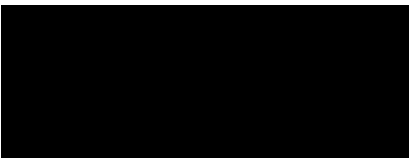
The society is writing to support the petition currently circulating, instigated by Rhyll local resident Carmen Bush, calling for a Town Bus service to be made available on Phillip Island. This petition has so far garnered over 1600 signatures which is a clear indication of the support, especially among Phillip Islanders, for the need for this service.


We support a Town Bus service not only because of the difficulty for locals without cars getting around Phillip Island, but because visitors arriving by bus or ferry have no way of moving around the island unless they use a taxi or can hire a bicycle when that business is open. Having a regular Town Bus service will encourage visitors to arrive by public transport as they will be able to continue on public transport once they arrive on the island.

In the 2017 census about 300 children aged 10-14 years, 255 teenagers 15-19 years and about 200 young people aged 20-24 years were counted. Many of these children and young people would likely use a regular Town Bus if one was provided. Other people would use it to get to and from work or shopping, visiting, etc. And we believe once the service was publicised in Melbourne and through PTV it would be popular with visitors to the island as well and may encourage them to stay longer on the island.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Yours sincerely,




Secretary.