

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

Mr David Gittus

Organisation Name:
Your position or role:

YOUR SUBMISSION

Submission:

Unlike other states Victorian country school buses are not permitted to carry any person other than a school child. Often these buses are only partly full and so from a productivity viewpoint we are wasting a significant amount of fuel and other resources, and making life very difficult for those without a car.

Here is a typical scenario. Billy aged 12 and his brother aged 15 travel to school together in a school bus. Billy then leaves school in year 10 to take up Vocational training in the nearby Tafe college. Billy must now find his own way to college as he is ineligible to travel on the bus. Often in country regions the school bus is the only public transport.

This policy of excluding all but school children is driven by the Education Department and is no doubt supported by Headmasters, but it is completely out of step with what happens in other States. Paradoxically the Victorian Education Dept have no problem with school kids in Melbourne and its suburbs sharing public transport with the general public.

About ten years ago the Victorian Government spent large amounts of public money on looking to improve transport options for people in the regions. The Statewide project was called "Transport Connections" and was administered through the Department of Planning and Community Development. The Program involved a partnership with the Department of Transport, DPCD (as lead agency), and the Education Department.

A key recommendation from the Program was that School buses in remote regional areas be allowed to carry non-school passengers if there were surplus seats.

The Education Department would not change their stance on this and so the one opportunity for the Program to have the greatest impact was wasted.

I am in favour of allowing country school buses to carry passengers on spare seats in rural and regional Victoria.

FILE ATTACHMENTS

File1:
File2:
File3:

Signature:
David Gittus