

TRAVEL PORTFOLIO MOTIONS 2024

A 53. NEBO BRANCH

“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Education, Department of Transport and TransLink to make Kindergarten children attending local schools that offer State Delivered Kindergarten an allocation so that they can travel on designated rural bus runs.”

Explanation:

We are seeking that TransLink include in their policies guaranteed seating allocation for kindergarten attendance children. Formal recognition of kindergarten children is required for bus operators to receive any State Government financial assistance. Currently, where space permits, bus operators are transporting kindergarten children on their service as a matter of goodwill. Whilst in many cases the inclusion of these children will assist in the long-term viability of bus runs due to increased numbers, there may be short term instances where the total number of children seeking to travel on a bus run may exceed the number of allocated seats a small bus has capacity to carry. In these instances, we are seeking that there be provision made to allow some discretion and decision making by the local community. Together with either their bus committee or bus operator they can decide how any additional numbers will be handled. We would be seeking that in making the allocation a guarantee, that a small bus operator should not be automatically required to upsize their bus to accommodate the extra numbers if it is a short-term increase.

Since State Delivered Kindergarten has now been in place at any State School throughout Queensland since 2019, it is time that these students be provided for as an allocation in alignment with all other students.

CARRIED

A 54. DIRRANBANDI BRANCH

“That ICPA Qld lobbies relevant bodies (including the Department of Transport and Main Roads), to reconsider/revise existing rules and regulations pertaining to small school bus runs/subsidised bus runs, specifically with reference to the numbers used to close/establish bus runs.”

Explanation:

In the same way small schools that close can be ‘mothballed’ for a period of time, subsidised bus runs should be given the same treatment, especially when the reasons for closing are commercial, and not driven by reduced student numbers.

As mentioned in the ‘Policy on the introduction and administration of subsidised school bus services’, “The Department of Transport and Main Roads will close a subsidised service when the number of distance eligible students falls to five (5).” It also states that, “...The minimum number of eligible students required to institute a subsidised school bus service is seven (7). Eligible students must come from a minimum of three (3) different families, in order to institute a subsidised school bus service. It should also be noted that these seven (7) students must reside more than 16km from the nearest state school and more than 16km from the nearest approved bus service which can transport the students to school.”

Dirranbandi recently faced a situation where the local school bus run owners couldn’t sell their

business and notified families to say that had begun the process of closing their (two) bus runs. Even though student numbers were not the problem in maintaining the runs, this meant that the likelihood of being able to find seven students from three different families, all of whom resided over 16km from the school in order to reinstate the service was incredibly low. One property 10km from town often contributes student numbers towards the bus run that count for the purposes of maintaining the run, but not in the establishment of the same run.

'Mothballing' a closed bus run would be of significant benefit to small schools, as the numbers and policy regulations required to establish them are more attainable for small communities. (5 students, as opposed to 7 from three separate families, more than 16km from a school).

CARRIED

A 55. NEBO BRANCH

"That ICPA Qld on behalf of Nebo Branch, wishes to acknowledge and thank TransLink for their continued reviews surrounding viability and funding of registered rural bus runs."

Explanation:

Nebo Branch would like to express our appreciation to TransLink, particularly the Mackay Regional Operations Office, for their ongoing reviews and understanding during times of low student numbers onboard our rural bus service, the *Valkyrie Access Road Rural Bus Run*. These have sometimes fallen below the threshold, which warranted review of ongoing funding and viability. We have been fortunate to have been given several rounds of review, during which our entire community and school were given the opportunity to make submissions as to the ongoing and future need for the bus run. Due to these extensions, whilst remaining funded, we have now returned to viable numbers and thank TransLink for continuing to recognise the vital connection between the rural bus service and school enrolments. Our community sincerely thanks TransLink for supporting our registered rural bus run through to this successful outcome.

CARRIED

A 56. NEBO BRANCH

"That Nebo Branch wishes to thank ICPA Qld Transport Portfolio Leader Mrs Kylie Camp, and ICPA Qld State Council for their advocacy and submission to TransLink regarding the ongoing need for a funded *Valkyrie Access Road Rural Bus Run*."

Explanation:

In 2023 our Branch provided ICPA Queensland State Council, particularly Transport Portfolio Leader Mr Kylie Camp, with information that cancellation of funding for our rural bus run, due to falling below the threshold of student passengers, was imminent. In response, a submission was made by them to TransLink emphasising the detrimental outcomes for the bus run and the school it services, as well as flow on effects to families, employment, and the shape of our community if the loss of funding were to occur. This submission was an important consideration and reference point for TransLink and we thank you for your advocacy on our behalf.

CARRIED