



Progress Report

2023 Federal Conference Motions

School Travel Portfolio

Compiled March 2024

The School Travel Portfolio has continued the advocacy for students living in rural and remote locations who are required to travel for their education throughout 2023 and into 2024. At the 2023 Federal Conference held in Darwin two motions were presented relating to School Travel.

Student Concessional Fares

Student concessional fares continue to be a topic of concern for many of our members. Since the pandemic, the climate of very high airfares and an unusually high demand for air travel has seen airfares continue to rise and, in many cases, they are now increasingly expensive than fares pre-pandemic.

In October 2023 the portfolio team issued letters to all major domestic Airlines within Australia requesting they introduce capped fares for students from rural and remote areas when flying to and returning home from boarding school.

In early November, ICPA (Aust) was contacted by the Senior Manager, Government and Public Affairs, Qantas Airways Limited Chris Kwong in response to this letter. ICPA (Aust) has since been in a number of conversations with Mr Kwong, and he and his team are developing a new flyer to help ICPA members with their understanding of the current Resident fares program.

At the request of Mr Kwong in December the Student Travel portfolio sent out a survey to ascertain which flights were being accessed by our members and which flight routes had since been cancelled (due to covid) but were still needed. ICPA (Aust) has shared this information with Mr Kwong and his team and are looking forward to a favorable outcome.

Federal Council will be inviting Mr Kwong to the 2024 Federal Conference. This will provide him the opportunity to witness for himself the impact that your motion becoming something tangible for rural and remote students would have on our members and their families.

Various programs continue to be available from various airlines and state and territory governments which have assisted with the high cost of airfares for regional, rural and remote students. Federal Council is currently in talks with Qantas in the hope that the airline will recognise the needs of geographically isolated students and that with continued advocacy we will eventually see a Student Concessional Fare from one if not all our domestic airlines.

Federal Council would like to draw members' attention to some of the current programs available:

REX: It is pleasing to see that the expansion of the airline REX throughout Australia has enabled the introduction of the "Community Fare." There are various rules that need to be followed in order to qualify which can be found on their website [here](#).

Qantas has introduced the "Australian Resident Fares" program which offers residents from Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australia discounted domestic economy return airfares from their local regional airport to their nearest capital city or major town. More information can be found [here](#).



Western Australia: The Western Australian Government has introduced a Regional Airfare Zone Cap which will extend to June 2025. More information can be found [here](#).

ICPA (Aust) hopes these programs have been beneficial for some members to date. We would especially like to thank those members who completed and returned the survey and shared their experiences. The information collected may have the ability to not only tell stories but also give airlines a realistic number of our rural and remote students using flight as a way of transport for their education.

Sensor Devices on School Buses

Following conference a letter was sent to the Hon Catherine King MP, Minister for Transport concerning this very important issue.

ICPA (Aust) has not received any feedback from the correspondence sent, however we will continue to pursue this concern and raise the issue whenever possible.

For members information, ICPA (Aust) is pleased to draw attention to the Australasian New Car Assessment Program (ANCAP) - A stricter vehicle safety system for 2023. This includes an alert system that notifies the driver or emergency services if a child has inadvertently been left in a locked car.

According to the ANCAP [Fact Sheet](#) the **Child Presence Detection** system monitors the rear seats and/or doors and provide a visual or audible warning through the vehicle's infotainment system upon exiting, a honk of the car horn, a notification or alert to an app on the driver's mobile phone, or an 'eCall' alert to emergency services. More advanced systems may also have the ability to automatically open the windows of the vehicle or activate the vehicles air conditioning system.

Look Before You Lock

Prior to the return of the 2023 school year, it was pleasing to see that the Queensland Government took steps towards education and awareness that may assist in the prevention of further tragedies, launching a campaign with the catch cry "Look Before you Lock". More information on this initiative can be found [here](#).

New Passenger-check alarms in NSW Buses

Transport for NSW has specified for all new rural and regional buses to be procured through the next generation of Bus Procurement Panel (Panel4) are legally required to have a passenger-check alarm system installed.

ICPA (Aust) will continue to put forward the School Travel Portfolio motions at every opportunity and invite members to contact Federal Council with any further information.

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To view the full 2023 Federal Conference Motion Update Report click [here](#).