

TRAVEL

A 38. MOONIE BRANCH

Motion

“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Transport and Main Roads and all other relevant departments to adopt financial payment parameters that are fair for the viability of isolated and remote school bus runs, given the introduction of electronic tagging of school buses and passengers, and fluctuations in remote school student numbers.”

Explanation:

The introduction of electronic tagging of buses and children, while brilliant for the peace of mind of many, has raised some concerns for remote and isolated bus run owners. The foremost concern is the reduction in per kilometre payments when children are not on the bus due to wet weather, town appointments, sports carnivals etc.

Isolated bus runs are a business that needs to be remunerated so they are viable to maintain the security of services in rural and remote areas, such as a minimum per km retainer, despite the daily fluctuations in passenger numbers. In the longer term as rural and remote areas by nature fluctuate in the number of students from the generations and new families coming into district, bus routes need to be easily extended to accommodate these fluctuations. The threat of permanently losing bus runs, when there is only a year or two between the next generation coming of school age is a constant concern. In these rural and remote areas, bus operators are often forced to leave the community for supplementary income to maintain their buses and upgrade them.

CARRIED

A 39. NEBO BRANCH

Motion

“That ICPA Qld lobbies the Department of Transport and Main Roads and Translink to collaborate with ICPA Qld in assisting to gain vital data, state-wide, to ascertain the discrepancy and eligibility of families regarding the conveyance allowance.”

Explanation:

Nebo Branch highlights that this is an issue that has been on the agenda for decades. It is disappointing to see that the same issue still exists with no change in policy from Translink on such a recurring problem, despite ongoing efforts to continually raise awareness from ICPA Qld State Councillors. ICPA Qld State Council has attempted to gain case studies directly from member families to support the advocacy. We understand the issue has reached a standstill with Translink indicating they will not consider any change without data substantiating the difference in lengths travelled by families from their home garage to the property boundary, which for years this organisation has lobbied that families are not being properly compensated for or are unfairly ineligible due to technicalities.

We are seeking that Translink be made aware that this volunteer organisation simply does not have the technical capabilities, funding, or support to collate the supporting data they are requesting in order to consider the matter further. Information requested such as GPS co-ordinates, google maps and images of driveways, property boundaries, and bus pickup locations, is outside of the technical and connectivity capabilities of some members, as well as them being overwhelmed having to undertake and provide this information themselves when being previously requested to do so. We feel it is time that Translink join the efforts in obtaining this data, and further suggest they already have this information in place with their GIS and PLI data systems (see extract below). It is time that Translink take initiative to identifying families being undercompensated, look at restructuring their allowance system, and identifying those who have not been covered at all, in the hope that a more equitable system and method of calculation can be formulated, and finally, being paid for the actual kilometres travelled from home garage to bus pickup location.

Additional Information supporting: In viewing the *Queensland School Transport Assistance Scheme Policy* current as at July 2022, an extract from page 5 reads:-

Distance measurements

A Geographic Information System (GIS) is used to measure distance.

The distance between the student's residence and nearest state school or non-state school of type, or the nearest bus service, is measured by the shortest trafficable route over roads for public use and averaged. For example, distance from school to the residence and return, divided by two.

The following Queensland Government datasets are used:

Department of Transport and Main Roads approved digital road network

Department of Resources Property Address Queensland database, commonly referred to as the Property Location Index (PLI)

Department of Education defined school location points.

The datasets for PLI and school location points are available on the Queensland Government Open Data Portal at data.qld.gov

CARRIED

A 40. NEBO BRANCH

Motion

"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 includes 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 decisions of the local community, together with either their bus committee or bus operator, to 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 41. CLARKE CREEK BRANCH

Motion

"That ICPA QLD lobbies relevant authorities for the Conveyance Allowance to be modified to include kindergarten students in rural and remote areas."

Explanation:

Since the commencement of the State delivered Kindergarten Program to rural and remote communities throughout Queensland, we have seen branch motions presented at ICPA State Conferences regarding Remote Kindy Travel.

In instances where Kindy students are unable to travel by bus to attend these kindergarten programs and when the family home is a considerable distance from the nearest primary school offering a state delivered Kindy program there should be provision of a travel allowance to support geographically isolated families with the cost of travel. Primary students who reside more than 3.2 km from the nearest school are currently eligible for a travel allowance.

CARRIED

F2 NEBO BRANCH - TRAVEL

"That ICPA Qld Inc. lobbies the Department of Education to assume responsibility for the management of rural and remote school bus runs."

Explanation:

The Department of Education would be a better suited Department to handle the management of rural and remote bus runs due to their innate understanding of the uniqueness, complexities and specific needs and circumstances of these runs.

CARRIED