

SUBMISSION NO. 160

Blue Mountains Commuter & Transport Users Assoc.

Ref. Federal Gov.1

Date. 11<sup>th</sup> Dec.03

The Chair.  
Environment & Heritage Committee.  
House of Representatives.  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Secretary: *[Signature]*  
**RECEIVED**  
12 JAN 2004  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STANDING COMMITTEE ON  
ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE

Thru. Hon.Kerry Bartlett M.P.  
Member for Macquarie.

Dear.Sir/Madam.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit to the Committee our ideas and actions taken for the improvement of Public Transport.

Unfortunately our time has been restricted from the many Inquiries that are at present in progress, Interim Reports, Ministerial Releases etc., however it offer this as an interim reply to the Inquiry, for which we are grateful in being able to have the opportunity to do so.

Therefore the following issues are explored in relation to the Blue Mountains Area. page 18 of your paper.

- Reducing automobile access. Etc.
  1. The Association agrees that through villages the speed limit through these areas should be 40Kms, we endeavor to control speed around schools but not through the villages. Why not?
  2. There is an opportunity within the Mountains to use part of the Rail Corridor to provide secure bike trails along these areas as the Highway is not a safe environment. ( These facilities should not prevent expansion of the rail system when required)
  3. The Association has with other bodies formed an Integrated Transport Forum, which has been able to improve communication between the providers and local council (Please see appendix.)

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4. Increasing parking fees in Commuter Car Parks would not be an attractive proposition as the motorist looks at his petrol bill only and then relates this to rail ticket which if it is higher the decision is to take the car, the motorist does not take into consideration the risk factor on the road the full cost of the car, depreciation, cost of wear and tare etc.
5. The Blue Mountains City Council is developing the criteria for medium density around the Railway Station precincts also facilities that are accessible

### What are the initiatives that are being taken?

The Blue Mountains Integrated Transport Forum has been operating for the last eight years and recently since there is now one bus company for the whole area which is very cooperative we have taken the following actions

1. Identified any limitations for the use of low floor buses on the local Streets and corrective action taken, this was done.
2. Investigated the alternative routes on the Mountains known as the Link Road Programme both alternate to the Highway and now looking at the village precincts.
3. Standardisation of bus route signage throughout the Mountains Upper Upper Mountains is done first.
4. Ensuring that appropriate bus stops are being provided when the Highway is being Developed especially at Railway Stations.
5. The Forum is investigating the provision of appropriate signage at Railway Stations for local and tourism opportunities.
6. There is a need for a Transport Survey on the Mountains targeting not only the present users but the general community as well. The Forum recognizes the journey commences at the front gate and the destination is known thus the decision is made at this point " Will I take the car catch the bus, walk, bicycle etc." To provide the necessary services the Providers must have the appropriate information

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7. One aspect that arose was the problem of bus stops that did not have Gutters that are needed for the use of low floor buses this is being addressed.

The Forum is therefore endeavoring to have an infrastructure that meets the aspirations of the Future Sustainability of the Mountains as addressed with the Community Forums held by the Blue Mountains City Council.

What can the Federal Government contribute to the Sustainability Aspect as far as Public Transport is concerned I offer the following suggestions.

- The Federal government has already contributed to the widening of the Highway through the Mountains in order of \$100 million and some internal road projects,

The Association therefore see the role of the Federal Government continuing in providing funds that supports public transport as the preferred means of transport especially as the Global Warming is becoming predominate and reducing the necessity of use of the oil resources which are finite.

Another consideration is if Australia does not reduce the importation of oil we could be held for ransom by external political circumstances.

Funding Opportunities for the Federal Government to consider.

- Funding for road projects that supports greater use of public transport specifically. E.G. Completion of the Links Road project on the Blue Mountains.
- Use of rail corridor as previously mentioned.
- Safe Access to the Highway for bus services. E.g. Mount Street Glenbrook access is denied I the Eastern Direction.
- Bi-directional signaling on the Mountains that will allow increase in freight and passenger services (The Federal Government did it for the Highway why nor rail).
- Projects that increase computer car parking space.
- Bureau of Statistics to provide more specific information in relation to all transport trips for present system and also the specific trips taken by car for work, social and other needs.

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- There is the need to provide four tracks of rail between Penrith and St Marys which is similar to road funding opportunities but for rail as fast services cannot be provided, this we feel is an advantage if we are considering the Sustainability Theme.

I have endeavored in the time available to cover the aspects of public transport and would appreciate further involvement on behalf of the members, before I close I wish to extend thanks on the initiative taken by the Government in relation to the ARTC Lease arrangements that is not only a plus for freight but allows opportunity for improved passenger services both Intrastate and Interstate.

We wish you success in your endeavors

Paul Trevaskis Hon.Sect.

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