

# Access to transport for older people in Tasmania

COTA (Tas)  
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## 1.0 Introduction

*Accessible transport*, by definition, should provide people with the opportunity to access places, goods and services within an acceptable amount of time, cost and ease<sup>1</sup>. As people age, mobility may decline but the *need* to travel from one place to another may not. Older people need access to transport to undertake daily living activities, access health care, and participate in work/volunteering, learning, social, cultural and recreational activities; all of which are important for maintaining health and wellbeing, and quality of life.

Lack of access to transport due to problems of affordability, safety, availability, convenience and appropriateness of the type of transport available can act as a barrier to older people's participation in the community.<sup>2</sup> Health can affect desirability to use, afford and access transport services.<sup>1</sup>

When both accessibility and mobility are constrained, *transport disadvantage* is said to occur. People aged over 60 years and those on low incomes and pensions are more likely to experience transport disadvantage. It has been recognised that Tasmania's rapidly aging population will increase the proportion of the community who are transport disadvantaged. It is therefore important that transport is accessible, reliable and affordable and that older people feel safe and comfortable while using it.<sup>1</sup>

This paper has been prepared for the Council on the Ageing (COTA) Tasmania Policy Council. In 2010, COTA wrote to a number of Government agencies, transport providers and Councils seeking information regarding transport services, issues and gaps for older Tasmanians. A large number of responses were received. This paper provides a summary of the information received, with supporting data and information from other publications, as referenced.

This paper explores the issue of transport disadvantage by reviewing correspondence and literature relating to:

- The modes of transport that older people use
- Issues and concerns about transport as expressed by older Tasmanians as well as the views of providers of transport
- Some of the plans, frameworks, strategies and reports in Tasmania that relate to transport
- Transport services by local government area (including a visual map of transport services)
- Options for action by COTA (highlighted in circles throughout the paper)

This paper does not look in detail at airline, ferry or train transport in Tasmania.

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER) & Southern Tasmanian Councils Authority, undated, *Accessibility, Southern Region Background Report*.

<sup>2</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *General Social Survey*, 2006, 4159.0.

## 2.0 How do older people get around today?

Tasmania has a high per capita car ownership rate (second only to Western Australia)<sup>1</sup> and this has been increasing over the past few decades. Despite this there are also many Tasmanians that do not own or have access to a car, who cannot afford to run a car to the extent that they need, or who are unable to drive because of age or disability.<sup>3</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data shows that almost one in 10 occupied private dwellings (9.0%) in Tasmania do not have a motor vehicle.<sup>4</sup>

As drivers age, the less likely they are to hold driver's licences. In Tasmania, as at 1 July 2007, 84% of people aged 70-74 and 35% of people aged 85 years and over held a driver's licence.<sup>5</sup> The Registration and Licensing Branch in Tasmania recognises that it is important for older drivers to continue to drive safely for as long as possible and that the only factor that puts older drivers at any increased risk is physical fragility or vulnerability.<sup>5</sup>

The General Social Survey (ABS 2006)<sup>5</sup> of approximately 13,000 households across Australia found that as people age, their ability to easily get to places needed and the proportion that have access to a motor vehicle to drive, declines. Inversely the proportion of people who can not or often have difficulty getting to places needed increases with age. Table 1 provides this transport data from the General Social Survey for Tasmanians aged 55 and over<sup>6</sup>.

Compared to other Australian States and Territories, Tasmanians (of all ages) have the second highest proportion of people who can easily get to places needed (second only to the ACT).<sup>2</sup> Six percent of Tasmanians aged 55-64 and 5% of persons aged 65 and over said they had difficulty accessing service providers due to transport or distance issues.<sup>6</sup>

**Table 1: Proportion of older Tasmanians with access to cars and transport difficulties<sup>6</sup>**

Age	55-64 years	65-74 years	75years or over	All persons (over 18 years)
<b>Transport</b>				
Has access to motor vehicle to drive	91.4	81.5	67.3	86.2
<b>Difficulty with transport</b>				
Can easily get to places needed	89.8	89.5	86	88.1
Can not, or often has difficulty getting to places needed	**	**	3.1**	2.6

\* Not available for publication but included in totals where applicable

\*\*Estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution

<sup>3</sup> Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER), 2010, *Tasmanian Urban Passenger Transport Network*, Tasmanian Government.

<sup>4</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2010, *Tasmanian State and Regional Indicators*, 1307.6

<sup>5</sup> Registration and Licensing Branch, Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER), 2010, *Discussion Paper- The Review of the Older Driver Licensing System in Tasmania*, Tasmanian Government.

<sup>6</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), 2006, General Social Survey, Tasmania, 2006, 4159.6.55.001.

Other locally collected data confirms that the majority of older people travel by car. Metro Tasmania, from market research undertaken in May 2010, concluded that 80% of people aged 50 and over used a car as their main mode of transport during a regular week. The research also found that 53% of people surveyed had never used a Metro bus or had not used a Metro Bus in over a year. Thirteen percent of people aged 50 and over used a Metro bus as their main mode of transport, 12% used a Metro bus more than once per week and the main reason for travel was to go the city.<sup>7</sup>

Glenorchy City Council, as part of its *Positive Ageing Strategy* survey, found that older residents are most likely to use the family car (driving themselves) (59%), walk (48%) or catch a bus (42%) to get around. Community transport was only used by 7% of the total respondent group.<sup>8</sup> A survey undertaken by Burnie City Council found that 17% of seniors over 50 used the local bus service every day and that 50% never used the service. Communities that have no public transport or taxi services, such as King Island, report that most residents who are unable to drive for themselves are reliant on family and friends to transport them, or the Community Car.

The *Greater Hobart Household Travel Survey* (2008-2009) found that walking accounted for 20% of household daily trips in Greater Hobart, whereas cycling accounted for less than 1% of daily trips. Four percent of trips on weekdays were made by public transport.<sup>9</sup> There are no specific figures for Tasmanians over 50 years.

The text box on the following page provides an overview of the different modes of transport that older people may utilise if it is accessible to them.



<sup>7</sup> Metro Tasmania Pty Ltd, 12 October 2010, Written Correspondence.

<sup>8</sup> Myriad Consultancy, 2007, *Positive Ageing Strategy Research Report*, Glenorchy City Council, Tasmania.

<sup>9</sup> Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER) 2010, *Greater Hobart Household Travel Survey, Summary of analysis and key findings*, Tasmanian Government.

## Modes of Transport and Related Assistance in Tasmania

**Buses** are the main form of public transport in Tasmania. Buses may be either *core passenger transport*, i.e. wholly or partly funded by the State Government, including Metro Tasmania services in Greater Hobart, Launceston and Burnie, and rural and regional services operated by Tasmanian Redline Coaches and Tassie Link Regional Coach Service/Tiger Line Travel, or *commercial transport providers*, i.e. operated on a commercial basis without Government support including charter coach services (of which there are approximately 12 companies). Metro Tasmania is the largest public passenger transport company in Tasmania. Metro operates along 50 routes with the majority of services radiating from either Hobart or Glenorchy Bus Stations.<sup>1</sup>

**Taxis:** There are around 400 licensed taxis and 30 wheel-chair accessible taxis (WATs) operating in Tasmania.<sup>1</sup> Car hire, including luxury care hire, is also available.

**Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc** is funded by the Home and Community Care Program (HACC) to provide social and non-emergency medical transport to HACC-eligible clients, enabling independence and quality of life. The organisation has around 60 vehicles operating across 11 districts in Tasmania, approximately 450 volunteer drivers and a client base of around 4000. (Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc, 7 October 2010, Written Correspondence) In its last Annual Report, Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc stated that the total passenger trips of the six month reporting period (January 2010 to June 2010) converts to annual activity level of around 95,000 passenger trips and that there was an actual increase of 898 clients, an overall increase of around 30%.

**Other Community Transport:** Many HACC funded organisations provide community transport as part of service arrangements for their clients. Eleven organisations provided transport as an output in the North of Tasmania, 13 in the North-West and six in the South. (DHHS, 8 October 2010, Written Correspondence) Most of these organisations are not funded specifically to provide community transport (they receive HACC funding for other purposes) but presumably do so because of demand. There are a range of other transport options for older people, depending on the local government area. For example, cars operated by not-for-profit community-based organisations such as neighbourhood houses, clubs, aged-care facilities, volunteer groups, shelter accommodation, Council-operated transport and 'good neighbour'-type services. It is not known exactly how many organisations provide other forms of community transport in Tasmania but it is perceived to be significant. Twenty-nine organisations have so far received funding from the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC)'s *Cars for Communities Program* (see page 17). (DPAC, 19 October 2010, Written Correspondence)

**Transport Assistance Schemes:** The State Government funds the *Transport Access Scheme (TAS)* which provides parking and taxi fare concessions for people with severe or permanent disabilities that prohibit independent access in the community. There are currently 19,000 TAS members with a large number of new requests received each month. There are also concessions and subsidy schemes in place to enable pensioners and older Tasmanians to obtain concession fares for travel on privately-owned buses.<sup>1</sup>

**Patient Travel Assistance Program and related services:** This Government-operated program provides assistance for people who are required to access medical treatment outside their region by covering or contributing to expenses relating to patient travel, medical support and close family member travel. The Government also provides other patient transport services e.g. Ambulance Services. The Department of Veterans Affairs provides transport assistance to veterans with specialist medical needs.



### 3.0 What are older people saying about transport?

Numerous publications have recorded the views of older people on transport. Below are some of the main points that came out of the information gathered for this paper.

#### 3.1 Having a Say and Working Together

Some older people have said that many decisions that affect the transport and mobility options of seniors are made without their having a say in the decision-making. It has been suggested that this is especially the case for older people living in rural and remote areas.<sup>10</sup>

There is, however, evidence that older people have been extensively consulted on the issue of transport as part of many (but not all) of the policies, frameworks, strategies and plans outlined in Section 4 of this paper. In addition, Council on the Ageing (COTA Tas) provides a channel through which members and stakeholders can have a voice on issues which are important to them, such as transport, on an ongoing basis. The Tasmanian Council of Social Services (TasCOSS) has undertaken numerous consultations with older people as part of Home and Community Care (HACC)-funded projects. Such consultations are critical for giving older Tasmanians a voice on matters that affect their lives. Despite these consultations, however, it is noted that some of the strategic plans listed in Section 4, while identifying the ageing population as an issue, do not always propose specific actions that would decrease transport disadvantage for older Tasmanians, at least not at this point in time.

Older people have expressed a desire to work more closely with local government on transport issues.<sup>10</sup> A number of Councils have undertaken consultation and surveys with their communities as part of the development of 'Ageing Strategies'. Some Councils are also involved in the delivery of transport services as outlined in Section 5 of this paper.

#### **Possible COTA Policy Council Action:**

Government plans, policies, strategies and frameworks need to do more than recognise that the ageing population is going to present challenges for transport systems. Older people are telling us that transport is an issue for them now. Actions should specifically address the needs of older Tasmanians now and, importantly, into the future.

Local government is a key partner on transport issues, whether as a provider or a 'facilitator'. It may be possible to explore opportunities for alternative models of transport services in collaboration with local government, to help fill transport gaps, e.g. door-to-door, dial-a-ride, car sharing services. Such partnerships should also involve Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc.

<sup>10</sup> Positive Ageing Consultative Committee, 2003, *Getting Around, Transport Issues for Older Tasmanians, A Report on the Community Consultation Forum*, Seniors Bureau, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Tasmanian Government.

### 3.2 Car Running Costs and Loss of Driver's Licence

Older Tasmanians have expressed concern about car running costs including fuel, maintenance, insurance and registration, as well as the implications of loss of driver's licence.<sup>10, 11, 12</sup> Loss of driver's licence can be a significant shift for older people that can take some adjusting in lifestyle. Loss of driver's licence can contribute to a loss of independence and a decline in overall health and wellbeing.<sup>10, 12</sup> The idea of programs to help retain driver's licence were welcomed by some communities, e.g. 75% of people surveyed by Burnie City Council said they would like to participate in driving programs that will increase skills and independence.<sup>13</sup>

Older people have also said they require their own car due to lack of suitable public or community transport options.<sup>11</sup>

#### Possible COTA Policy Council Action:

Tasmania's development patterns have been influenced by the high level of car use. Older people should be supported to retain their driver's licence for as long as possible, because, for lack of alternative transport, it is the most convenient way to get around. There are however a number of disadvantages with the high level of car use, e.g. financial, environmental, reduced social contact, convenience (e.g. parking) and safety issues.

### 3.3 Age-friendly Communities

Consultations<sup>8, 10, 11, 14, 15</sup> with older people have highlighted a number of barriers to mobility in local communities including:

- The condition of footpaths: Older people, along with the rest of the population, are encouraged to walk and be active however footpaths need to be safe for people who want to walk. Falls risk is a significant health issue for the older community.
- The timing of traffic lights: Concern has been raised that the timing of the green walk light is too short for many older people to cross the road safely.
- Parking: For those with walking difficulties, parking can be a problem.
- Dangerous driving: Cars driving too close to kerbs can be unnerving.
- Etiquette at street crossings: Some older people have expressed concern about drivers becoming impatient and older people being forced to hurry when crossing roads.

#### Possible COTA Policy Council Action:

COTA may wish to identify what an age-friendly community would "look like".

Utilise the 'Healthy By Design' Guidelines.

A combination of advocacy, policy and education strategies may assist to create more age-friendly communities.

<sup>11</sup> Tasmanian Council of Social Service (TasCOSS), 2008, *Enhancing Quality of Life, Addressing Poverty and Disadvantage through the HACC Program*, TasCOSS.

<sup>12</sup> Tasmanian Council of Social Service (TasCOSS), 2010, *Independence: support for the elderly in their communities*, HACC Consumer Consultation Report 2009.

<sup>13</sup> Burnie City Council, undated, *Senior's Forum Survey, Council Services and Volunteering, 50+*.

<sup>14</sup> Hobart City Council, 1 February 2011, Written Correspondence.



- Inadequate street lighting.
- The height of kerbs.
- Feeling safe in the community.

### 3.4 Concerns about Public Transport Services

Access to public transport can support social contact and engagement, and produces incidental exercise which keeps older people more independent.<sup>12</sup> Concerns about public transport services have been expressed in a number of publications and include issues such as:

- **Transport not operating at times and over routes to enable people to participate** in social activities and access the wide range of services available to them.<sup>10, 11, 15</sup> Adams (2009) states that research consistently shows that: *“Tasmania’s rural and urban-fringe communities need more transport services outside the morning and afternoon peak – services during the middle of the day, in the evening and on the weekend.”*<sup>16</sup> The Report of the Core Passenger Services Review also found that services are not matching community needs, with some communities being over serviced, while others are going without.<sup>17</sup>

Consultations undertaken as part of the development of the *Tasmanian Plan for Positive Ageing* identified that many older people cited the need for expanded evening and weekend services, and flexible door-stopper type services.<sup>18</sup> The recommendation for more door-to-door services is a common theme in a number of publications.<sup>1, 15</sup> The frequency of bus services between suburbs (e.g. one bus per hour is not enough) and the lack of synchronisation of services were also raised by older people.<sup>8, 10</sup>

A significant amount of data has been gathered in Tasmania to identify areas of transport disadvantage (measured using socio-economic data and accessibility indicators). In the South of Tasmania, for example, there is a clear correlation between transport disadvantage and the broad acre public housing estates in Bridgewater/Gagebrook, Clarendon Vale, Rokeby and Risdon Vale.<sup>1</sup>

As part of the Review of Hobart Passenger Transport Case Study, the researchers report that: *“A brief review of the Metro bus timetables indicates that the Hobart bus network is complex with numerous route variations and complicated timetables. Other issues are:*

- *Inadequate operating hours with over 60% of routes spanning less than 8 hours...85% of routes finish before 7pm.*
- *Low service frequencies with over 60% of routes running less than six times per day.*
- *Poor weekend services with 70% of routes not operating on Saturday and 85% not operating on Sunday.*

*Another issue is the lack of a “one seat ride” if travelling from one suburb to another – meaning that passengers seeking destinations beyond the CBD are required to transfer between buses in the CBD.”*

Parsons Brinckerhoff, 2009, *Review of Passenger Travel Demand Measures Greater Hobart, Final Stage 1 Report, April 2009, Review of current passenger transport system and land use patterns across Greater Hobart, Final Report,* pg. x.

<sup>15</sup> Tasmanian Council of Social Service (TasCOSS), 2007, *Our Lives Our Future – The forum report.*

<sup>16</sup> Adams, D, 2009, *A Social Inclusion Strategy for Tasmania*, Tasmanian Government

<sup>17</sup> Pauley, J, 2007, *Connected Communities, Better Bus Services in Tasmania, Report of the Core Passenger Services Review.*

<sup>18</sup> Seniors Bureau, Department of Premier and Cabinet, 2007, *Time to Be Living Well, Tasmanian Plan for Positive Ageing, Second Five-Year Plan*, Department of Premier and Cabinet, Tasmanian Government.

Transport disadvantage in rural areas is particularly significant in Tasmania because of the large proportion of the population living in rural and remote areas.<sup>1,10, 11, 12, 19</sup> In the Derwent Valley for example, there is no public transport except for school buses servicing small rural towns such as Bushy Park, Westerway and Maydena.<sup>1</sup> Latrobe Council reports that unquantifiable advice from organisations representing older Tasmanians in Latrobe and Port Sorell suggests that there are transport issues for them.<sup>20</sup> As part of the *Beaconsfield Community Health and Wellbeing Mapping Project* in 2010, older aged focus group participants stated that those who lived in rural and isolated towns/properties were dependent on relatives or community transport to assist them to get to services and activities.<sup>21</sup> Similarly the *Meander Valley Council Health and Wellbeing Map Project* in 2006/07 cited lack of public transport, particularly for older residents as a major issue in an area where the population is as dispersed as in the Meander Valley (please see the case study in the text box below for further information).<sup>22</sup>

"The Meander Valley municipality has limited transport services which include two Community Car services subsidised by the Meander Valley Council, one at Deloraine and one at Westbury. These are available for transporting clients to medical and health services only and are well utilised and valued by the community. The cost for use of these services has increased significantly in recent years and they are becoming less affordable for community members, particularly those accessing regular treatment such as radiotherapy, chemotherapy or dialysis. Redline coaches provide the only public bus service in the area but these are limited in their drop off and pick up points and their vehicles can be difficult for clients with disabilities or mobility problems to access. There is one public taxi service in the rural part of the municipality which is based at Deloraine. The Westbury Community Health Centre runs a weekly shopping service for clients to Launceston in return for a donation. Transport was identified throughout a number of sections of the needs survey as being a major issue and one which limited individuals ability to access services, to be involved in recreational and community activities and to participate in family activities. There is a need for increased and improved public transport services within the Meander Valley but the exact structure and options for the development of these requires significant further investigation.

*Meander Valley Health and Wellbeing Map Project 2006/07* <sup>22</sup>

<sup>19</sup> West Tamar Council, 18 October 2010, Written Correspondence.

<sup>20</sup> Latrobe Council, 8 November 2010, Written Correspondence.

<sup>21</sup> University Department of Rural Health, 2010, *Beaconsfield Community Health and Wellbeing Mapping Project*.

<sup>22</sup> Barrett A, Skellern K and Whelan J, 2007, *Meander Valley Health and Wellbeing Map Project*.

**What does the Department of Infrastructure Energy and Resources (DIER) have to say?**

*“...there is never enough funding to provide a system that will meet everyone’s needs at all times. In a passenger transport context, this would entail a transport system that is frequent, convenient and cheap enough to match the demands of the most needy customers. Satisfying these needs is particularly difficult financially in regard to the transport requirements of the aged population, as these will tend to be the most costly services and its customers also tend to have low capacity to contribute directly to meeting those costs.”*

**Possible COTA Policy Council Action:**

Access to public transport is clearly an issue of concern for older people, which has been recognised by Government. However identifying what to do about improving access to public transport for older people is less clear.

On the surface, if you consider the services that operate across Tasmania as outlined in Section 5 of this paper, it may appear that there are plenty of transport options. However for many people there are still barriers in terms of affordability, convenience and appropriateness of type of transport.

In addition, it has been widely predicted that as the population ages, the need for affordable and personalised services is likely to increase.

A multi-faceted strategy will be required that includes increasing coordinated community transport type services (door-to-door), addressing concerns about volunteer driver shortages and investigating technologies such as cars more suitable for older people, as well as adapting travel behaviour. COTA should press the Government for clear and tangible outcomes.

- **Transport not being accessible and appropriate for people with particular needs.**<sup>16</sup> Older people with walking frames, chronic injuries or a disability may experience difficulties getting on and off buses.<sup>8, 11</sup> Not being able to read timetables due to poor eyesight, confusion about which side of the road to wait for buses, the location of bus stops (e.g. up hill) and the distance to bus stops have also been raised as concerns.<sup>8, 10</sup> Some older people have also commented they have had difficulties with taxis agreeing to take them.<sup>8</sup>

Metro Tasmania currently has 70 (32%) of its 218 buses as wheelchair accessible, with four more wheelchair accessible buses due to arrive this financial year.<sup>7</sup> Passengers can call a toll free number on the day of their intended travel to ensure the service they wish to catch is wheelchair accessible. Under the *Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport*, Metro is required to have 55% of services delivered by accessible buses by December 2012 and 100% by December 2022.<sup>7</sup>

Metro Tasmania states: *"In implementing service changes...Metro must continue to ensure that 90% of residents are within 500 meters of the route in peak periods and 1000 meters of a route in off-peak periods....For residents who are not able to walk the 500 and 1000 meter thresholds there are a number of other options available. These include half price taxi fares which are administered by the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources. Also, Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc provides assistance and advice to individuals and organisations in the community to help them meet their transport needs and access a range of services and community facilities."*<sup>7</sup>

**Possible COTA Policy Council Action:**

Advocate for all buses to be accessible for people with mobility difficulties. Information such as timetables should be simple to understand and easy to read. Information about the wide range of transport services should be accessible and widely available.

- **Cost and equity of fare structures for passengers.**

Community consultation to help inform *A Social Inclusion Strategy for Tasmania* identified that transport was a critical factor in the ability of Tasmanians to access the services they need.<sup>16</sup> One of the key themes that emerged from consultation was being able to afford the cost of travel either privately or on public transport. It is not known whether this issue was specifically expressed by older Tasmanians. Concern about the cost of public transport and the equity of fare structures for passengers in general and also for older Tasmanians has also been identified by other organisations.<sup>11, 13, 15, 19</sup>

Through its contracts with transport providers, the Department of Infrastructure, Emergency and Resources (DIER) stipulates maximum bus fares, and provides for substantial concessions for elderly passengers of about 50% of the full adult fare. For the purpose of bus service contracting, DIER



categorises areas into either 'urban' or 'non-urban' zones. In general, fare subsidies are more generous in urban areas, in terms of both the level of fares payable and the breadth of types of pension/benefit that are recognised as warranting a concession.<sup>23</sup>

Older people have expressed concern about taxi costs and the eligibility for subsidies.<sup>10, 11</sup> In Tasmania, DIER subsidises the use of taxis through the *Transport Access Scheme (TAS)* which is open to people (of any age) with a medically certified permanent disability that hinders their mobility. This provides a flat discount of 50% up to a maximum of \$25, rising to 60% with a \$30 cap for wheelchair-reliant members of Tasmania travelling in a Wheelchair Accessible Taxi (WAT).<sup>23</sup>

**Possible COTA Policy Council Action:**

Advocate for low cost transport services, particularly for those older Tasmanians that are most disadvantaged.

- **Perception that older people can't cope with public transport.**

There are a range of reasons why an older person may feel unable to cope with public transport (e.g. being in a wheelchair, requiring a walking aid, fear of falling, previous negative experiences<sup>8</sup> etc), some of which are associated with lack of confidence and self esteem.

- **Safety**

Transport being safe emerged as a theme from submissions to *A Social Inclusion Strategy in Tasmania*.<sup>16</sup> Safety was also raised in consultations carried out by the Positive Ageing Consultative Committee in 2003. Sometimes safety is linked with the behaviour of young people.<sup>10</sup>

**Possible COTA Policy Council Action:**

Tasmania needs evidence-informed health promotion programs that aim to enhance mental health and wellbeing for older Tasmanians. Long term falls prevention programs are also needed.

### 3.5 Community Transport

The perceived and actual inability of the commercial bus and taxi industries to provide on-demand, door-to-door and heavily subsidised transport for older people has seen the emergence of the community transport sector.<sup>23</sup>

While community transport providers are seeking to address some of the gaps in available transport for older people, there are still some issues of concern raised. Adams (2009) states that community transport services are fragmented and uncoordinated, with different levels of government involved in funding and/or subsidising

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<sup>23</sup> Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources (DIER), 2010, Written Correspondence.

the services.<sup>16</sup> DIER has identified that there are over 40 different organisations just in the Southern Region that provide a form of community transport, largely run by volunteers, including aged care facilities, clubs, community organisations.<sup>1</sup>

For many providers, funding is via grants and short term rather than a coordinated response to regional transport needs.<sup>1, 16</sup> In some cases there are a range of transport providers, including commercial operators and community groups and volunteers. Sometimes these services cover similar routes to take passengers to the services and activities needed.<sup>16</sup> Community transport will pick up door-to-door but sometimes it is at such an exaggerated cost, particularly if people only want to go around the corner to their local centre but are unable to walk.<sup>24</sup>

A significant issue for the community transport sector is the attraction and retention of volunteers.<sup>24</sup> Another related matter is that of the cost of acquiring the licence to drive community transport buses. Some communities have reported on the desire by young people to drive the buses but that the cost of the licence is a barrier.<sup>24</sup>

A Survey of HACC Funded Community Transport was undertaken in 2006, despite significant data quality issues, the principal conclusion drawn was that access to HACC funded transport is widespread, with assistance available to transport disadvantaged HACC clients in every region in Tasmania.<sup>25</sup> In contrast, organisations such as TasCOSS who regularly consult with HACC clients, continue to identify barriers to transport, including community transport.

**Possible COTA Policy  
Council Action:**

Advocate for better coordination of efforts between the range of community transport providers. In particular, ensure that older people that are not strictly HACC eligible but are experiencing transport disadvantage, do not miss out.

### **3.6. Environmental Issues**

Older people have raised concerns about emissions from transport, particularly in Launceston.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Clarence City Council, 19 October 2010, Personal Correspondence.

<sup>25</sup> Home and Community Care (HACC), 2006, *Survey of HACC Funded Community Transport Evaluation Report*



## 4.0 Transport Plans, Frameworks, Strategies and Reports in Tasmania

Transport is recognised as a key issue in many existing plans, frameworks, strategies and reports published by the Tasmanian Government and local government authorities. Below is a brief summary of some of these documents:

### 2001: *Tasmania Together*

*Tasmania Together* was first published in 2001 as the “community’s plan for the future”. *Tasmania Together* is currently undergoing a 10 year review.

Transport is linked to numerous *Tasmania Together* objectives (e.g. infrastructure, housing and accommodation, recreation and community participation, safety and security). The benchmark that is most directly related to transport is:

#### Possible COTA Policy Council Action:

Advocate for Tasmanian  
*Together* to report  
specifically on transport  
accessibility for older  
people.

<b>Goal 1</b>	A reasonable lifestyle and standard of living for all Tasmanians
<b>Standard 1.1</b>	Ensure that all Tasmanians have the economic capacity to enjoy a reasonable standard of living and access to the basics.
<b>Indicator 1.1.7</b>	Transport accessibility

*Tasmania Together* quotes the ABS’ 2002 General Social Survey data where 87.5% of people in Tasmania had access to transport. The targets in *Tasmania Together* were 90% by 2010 and to remain at that level through to 2020. In 2010, *Tasmania Together* reported that there had not been any significant change in the number of people having access to transport (87.5% in 2002 and 88.1% in 2006). In the revised edition of *Tasmania Together* (2009), it was reported that future reporting against this benchmark would include data for older persons, however in the most recent progress report (2010), no breakdown is given.

### 2002: *Home and Community Care (HACC) Program Tasmania – Review of Community Transport and Community Transport Services Tasmania (CTST) Inc.*

In 2002, a review of HACC funded community transport services in Tasmania was undertaken. This review made numerous recommendations relating to a range of areas associated with community transport services including customer and community outcomes, internal processes, people learning and growth, and financial management. It was recommended that a major modification to community transport occur on a benefit/cost basis reflecting both need and existing and potential supply capacity.

### **2003: Getting Around – Transport Issues for Older Tasmanians**

In 2003, the Positive Ageing Consultative Committee published a report on the findings of consultations with community groups representing older Tasmanians. The consultations were used to inform the *Tasmanian Plan for Positive Ageing 2000-2005*. The consultation process culminated in recommendations relating to:

- Cross-government partnerships
- Licensing policy
- Investigate overseas models for alternative transport options
- Education strategies and access to information
- Taxi subsidies
- Traffic management
- Age-friendly environments

### **2005: A study into transport needs in rural Tasmania – unpublished**

In 2005, DIER commissioned a report on existing transport services in Tasmania's non-urban areas, the deficiencies in these and the likely market that is presently unserved/poorly served. Although unpublished, its findings were referred to in some detail in *A Social Inclusion Strategy for Tasmania*.

### **2006 (updated 2007): Tripartite Partnership Agreement**

In August 2006, the Australian Government, the State Government and Local Government Association of Tasmania signed a *Tripartite Partnership Agreement for Population Ageing*. The Agreement was in place for three years and included a commitment to “enhance opportunities for ageing Tasmanians to participate in their community through coordinated access to transport services.” A final report on activity of the partnership was handed down in 2009.

A Community Transport Working Group was tasked to investigate community transport options for older Tasmanians. The Working Group identified a number of State Government initiatives including the *Rural Transport Solutions and Community Transport Review Project* of DIER and the *Non-Emergency Patient and Community Transport (NEPCT) Project* of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS). In addition, the Premier announced in March 2009 that \$1.5 million would be made available to create a Community Transport Trust to be administered by the Social Inclusion Unit in the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPAC) (refer to text box on the next page). As such the Working Group concluded that “further options for improving community transport were not required at this stage.”



## **2007: Connected Communities – Better Bus Services in Tasmania – Report of the Core Passenger Services Review**

This review is a requirement of the *Passenger Transport (Transitional) Regulations 2000* and involved an assessment of services including Metro Tasmania, free-to-user school bus services and private fare paying services. The review resulted in some 120 recommendations relating to:

- Consistent urban bus services
- Better connections for urban fringe communities
- Rural school bus services
- Meeting needs in regional towns
- Better buses

A large number of the recommendations relate to transport for school students and older people are not specifically recognised in the recommendations, however there are numerous recommendations that would have implications for transport needs of older people. For example, the Review recognises that overlaps, duplications, inefficiencies and anomalies within Tasmania's core passenger services are most apparent within the urban fringe areas around Hobart and Launceston and along the North West Coast between Wynyard and Port Sorell. There are nearly 3 million trips each year from urban fringe communities into nearby urban centres. Nearly 90% of the (nearly \$10 million of the annual) funding supports student only services. The Review recommends that the focus of services in urban fringe move from providing services restricted to students to the provision of services for the community more generally and that the current funding bias toward the provision of the student only services be removed.

## **2007: Time to be Living Well – Tasmanian Plan for Positive Ageing (Second Five-Year Plan)**

Access to transport was one of the highest priority issues identified by older Tasmanians as part of the consultations carried out for the *Tasmanian Plan for Positive Ageing*. The Plan seeks to provide a broad policy framework for actions by the Tasmanian Government, local government and individuals to support positive ageing. Transport is

### **Cars for Community Program**

The Cars for Communities program was introduced to help communities purchase vehicles to provide local transport services. Organisations can apply for funding for a car, a people mover or a mini-bus to meet a community's transport needs.

To be eligible to apply, the organisation must:

- be incorporated or sponsored by an incorporated organisation
- be based in Tasmania
- not have outstanding loan or grant obligations from previous financial assistance from the Tasmanian Government
- not be a government agency
- seek to transport people only

The capital cost of purchasing a vehicle is the only funding available through the Tasmanian Community Transport Trust.

The organisation applying must show how it will fund the upfront costs, such as GST, stamp duty, first year registration and insurance, and how the continuing costs of the proposed transport services will be met.

Cost recovery methods, such as fee for service or hire fee, are encouraged and are likely to be important to ensure the organisation can deliver an ongoing transport service to meet continuing costs such as registration, fuel, maintenance and motor accident insurance.

(Source:  
[http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/siu/grants/cars\\_for\\_communities](http://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/siu/grants/cars_for_communities))



identified as a key area for action. As part of the Plan, the Tasmanian Government committed to:

- Review and enhance the administration of the Transport Access Scheme (TAS).
- Review the delivery of core passenger services.
- Develop proposals to ensure full and equitable access to public transport.

Other initiatives related to transport include urban infrastructure (the creation of 'liveable communities'), housing and accommodation (with access to transport), recreation and community participation (participation enabled by adequate transport) and safety and security (feeling safe when commuting).

### **Integrated Transport Plans**

- **2003: Northern Tasmanian Integrated Transport Plan**

*Northern Tasmania Integrated Transport Plan* was developed through a partnership between the Tasmanian Government, Region North and member Councils of Region North – City of Launceston, Meander Valley, Northern Midlands, West Tamar, George Town, Dorset, Break O'Day and Flinders.

The Plan describes a long-term strategic framework for a coordinated approach to the development of the transport system for the next 20 years. It outlines eight goals, strategies and actions, and although not explicitly outlined in terms of older people, a number of the proposed actions have direct implications for the ageing population.

- **2006: Cradle Coast Integrated Transport Strategy and Plan**

*The Cradle Coast Integrated Transport Strategy* provides a strategic foundation for coordinated action to addressing transport issues over a 20 year period to ensure an integrated, safe, accessible and efficient transport system that will continue to meet the needs of the Region's communities and industries.

- **2010: Southern Integrated Transport Plan**

This Plan is a collaborative initiative between the Tasmanian Government, Southern Tasmanian Councils Authority and twelve member Councils. The Plan identifies key challenges, priorities and strategies under six key policy areas:

- Infrastructure: Efficient, safe and reliable infrastructure.
- People: A passenger transport system that provides people with choice in meeting their transport needs.
- Planning: A planning system that supports the

**Possible COTA Policy  
Council Action:**

Tasmania's Integrated Transport Plans are key documents that will guide the development of transport systems into the future. Monitor activity and advocate for action as needed. Consider inviting a speaker to the Council to cover this topic.



efficient movement of goods and creates sustainable, liveable, accessible and well-connected communities.

- Freight
- Safety: A safer transport system for all users.
- Environment: A transport system that supports better environmental outcomes.

The Plan recognises but is not limited to the transport needs of older Tasmanians.

## **Demographic Change in Tasmania**

- **2007: Demographic Change in Tasmania: challenges and opportunities - Issues Paper**

The Demographic Change Advisory Council was established as part of the 2006-2007 State Budget. The role of the Council is to identify economic, social and fiscal implications arising from demographic change, and strategies to address them from a whole-of-Tasmania perspective. This paper outlines the challenges, benefits and opportunities associated with the ageing population. Transport was outlined as an issue in its own right and also linked with:

- Productivity in the public sector: Planning processes should ensure that business and residential developments occur in locations that enable economies of scale to be obtained in the delivery of government services such as public transport.
- Health: It is recognised that changes in health status across the community will change the nature of transport requirements.
- Housing: Transport is recognised as being vital to enable older people to 'age in place'.
- Community services: It is recognised that community transport services rely on sufficient numbers of volunteers and it is likely that such services will see an increase in demand for its services.

- **2008: Demographic Change in Tasmania: Strategies for addressing challenges and opportunities – Strategic Discussion Paper**

In response to the Issues Paper released in 2007, the Demographic Change Advisory Council released a Strategies Discussion Paper for consultation with the Tasmanian community to inform a final Strategies Paper. The paper identifies five key strategic areas, one of which is “*maintaining independent living for older Tasmanians*”. The Paper suggests that the State Government could:

- Introduce a State Policy to amend planning schemes to create a more age-friendly environment including attention to public transport by better planning of local infrastructure.
- Utilise the ‘Healthy by Design Planning Guidelines’ to address issues such as conveniently located public transport stops.

Investigating opportunities for increasing community-based transport services is also identified as a potential action.

**2009: *Change in Tasmania: Strategies for addressing challenges and opportunities – Strategies Paper***

The final Strategies Paper consolidates the previous papers to present possible strategies to address those challenges and opportunities that require action and focus on initiatives that are likely to help address future challenges, rather than on existing actions. In addition to the proposed strategies outlined above, it was proposed that the Government could investigate the use of the New South Wales Community Transport System, which operates in partnership with local volunteers, Local Government and State Government.

**Possible COTA Policy Council Action:**

Support the inclusion of Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc in exploring other models of community transport as suggested by the Demographic Change Advisory Council.

Explore creative use of existing resources such as idle school buses in communities.

**2008: *The Non-Emergency Community Transport Project***

The *Non-Emergency Community Transport Project* aimed to establish centrally coordinated community transport networks to help eligible people attend scheduled, non-emergency health-related services where other transport options were not available. The Project was borne out of *Tasmania's Health Plan*, released in 2007, which (through the *Clinical Services Plan* component of the Plan) recognised the need for health services to be as close as possible to where people live. In addition, a Senate Inquiry into the *Patient Travel Assistance Scheme (PTAS)* found that a review was necessary. In 2008, the Department engaged a private consulting firm to investigate patient transport services (including the Tasmanian Ambulance Service, non-emergency patient transport in the North and North-West managed by the hospitals), PTAS and Community Transport Services. This review resulted in 91 recommendations.

**Possible COTA Policy Council Action:**

Familiarise with the eligibility criteria for all the different modes of transport for older people and make this information available so people are aware if and what their choices are.

**2008: *Tasmanian Framework for Action on Climate Change***

Improving Tasmania's transport system is one of eight priority action areas in this Framework.



The *Hobart Passenger Transport Case Study* was commissioned by the Tasmanian Government to better understand the issues facing the urban passenger transport system and to assist Government in developing appropriate, sustainable responses to meet long-term challenges to the urban transport systems. The Study's outcomes were used to inform development of the *Tasmanian Urban Passenger Transport Framework*.

The study provided a comprehensive review of passenger transport issues and options for the Greater Hobart metropolitan area, but many of its recommendations are applicable to Tasmania's other major urban areas.

The Study comprised five individual projects and was largely undertaken by independent consultants. The key projects were:

**1. Review of Passenger Travel Demand Measures:** Travel demand measures are strategies and policies that aim to reduce car-based travel demand and encourage use of other transport modes, including public transport, walking and cycling.

**2. Travel Demand Forecasts:** This project involved developing a model of Greater Hobart's road and public transport system to understand the potential future impact of different interventions in the transport system, such as public transport improvements. This includes forecasts of overall vehicle kilometres travelled, traffic volumes, trip numbers by mode and greenhouse gas emissions associated with the passenger transport task.

**3. Alternative uses for Hobart's existing urban freight rail corridor, including light rail and bus rapid transit:** This project made some preliminary investigation of alternative uses for the existing urban freight rail corridor through the Northern Suburbs. The bus rapid transit paper investigated the infrastructure costs associated with redeveloping the urban freight rail corridor into a bus way - an exclusive right-of-way to provide buses from the Northern Suburbs with a faster trip to the Hobart CBD.

**4. Investigation of the viability of passenger ferry services on the Derwent River:** This project provided a high-level estimate of the infrastructure and service delivery costs associated with establishing a commuter ferry service on the Derwent River.

**5. Development of a walking and cycling strategy, to address local area transport:** Development of the *Tasmanian Walking and Cycling for Active Transport Strategy* was a key component of the *Hobart Passenger Transport Case Study*.

## 2009: A Social Inclusion Strategy for Tasmania

In 2009, *A Social Inclusion Strategy for Tasmania* was published, outlining a Framework and a list of strategies and actions. Transport was highlighted as a key component of this Strategy with recommended actions relating to the establishment of on-line one-stop shop for local transport options, establishment of a transport infrastructure fund and transport services development plans. Transport is also reflected in a number of the other strategies.

### Possible COTA Policy Council Action:

Advocate for the Cars for Communities Program (see pg. 17) to be more closely linked with Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc and HACC funded services to ensure coordination and prevent

## Regional Land Use Strategies

Decisions about land use directly affect the demand for different modes of travel. Tasmania has Land Use Planning Projects underway in each of the three regions.

- **Northern Tasmanian Regional Land Use Planning Project**

The Northern Tasmanian Regional Land Use Planning Project is aiming to achieve a consistent, strategy-driven approach where clear state, regional and local priorities guide a common planning structure. A range of discussion papers and reports have been developed which refer to both transport and the ageing population, in addition to broader issues.

- **Living on the Coast: Cradle Coast Regional Land Use Planning Framework 2010-2030: Draft for Consultation**

The Cradle Coast Land Use Framework is presented in five integrated parts:

- Implementation
- Wise Use of Resources
- Support for Economic Activity
- Places for People
- Infrastructure Provision

The Framework includes a number of policies related to transport. The Framework recognises the ageing population however its scope is far greater than the needs of older Tasmanians.

### Possible COTA Policy Council Action:

Tasmania's Land Use Plans are key documents that will guide the development of transport systems into the future. Monitor activity and advocate for action as needed. Consider inviting a speaker to the Council to cover this topic to better understand the process and implications.



- **Southern Tasmania Regional Land Use Strategy 2010-2035: Draft for Public Consultations**

This document, currently in draft form (due for release following consultation in early 2011), is intended to be a broad policy document that will facilitate and manage change, growth and development within Southern Tasmania over the next 25 years.

The ageing population is recognised as a key demographic issue. Background Reports were produced including information on *socio-economic profile* for the southern region including analysis of ageing rates, ageing index, the force of ageing and age dependency ratios; and data on *accessibility* where planning for accessibility means that all people are able to access the services they require through the transport system; and *The Regional Transport System*.

In relation to transport, the plan considers social infrastructure: *“To provide high quality social, community facilities and living environments to meet the education, health care and living needs and facilitate healthy, happy and productive lives for the community”*; Land use and transport integration: *“To ensure that the region has an efficient, safe and sustainable transport system delivered through land use integration that supports economic growth, accessibility and modal choice for the community and the efficient delivery of services, as well as manages the challenges of climate change”*; Activity Centres: *“To focus on employment, retail and commercial uses, community services and opportunities for social interaction in well-planned, vibrant and accessible regional activity centres that are provided with a high level of amenity and with good transport links with residential area”*; and Providing for housing needs: The Strategy recognises that the location, form, type and density of residential development is a significant land use planning issue as it is a key element in (among other things) travel behaviour and the demands upon the transport system.

## 2010: Tasmanian Urban Passenger Transport Framework

This Framework provides directions for the development of a safe and responsive passenger transport system that supports improved accessibility, liveability and health outcomes for Tasmanians in the context of the challenges of climate change. The Framework focuses on actions relating to:

- Moving minds: increasing public awareness, acceptance and usage of public transport, walking and cycling.
- Moving places: Consolidation of population around designated transport corridors and so forth.
- Moving people: Enhancing the attractiveness, efficiency and utility of public transport.
- Moving policies: Encouraging use of alternatives to private vehicles.
- Moving legs: Encouraging walking and cycling.

### Possible COTA Policy Council Action:

Develop a policy position on increasing public transport services in light of the challenge of climate change.

- Moving forward: Adopting a long-term approach to integrated land use and transport planning.

The Framework does not specifically focus on older Tasmanians, however the ageing population is recognised: “Our population is ageing and this will generate new demands on our passenger transport system, including a greater need for services throughout the day, infrastructure to support safe walking and cycling opportunities and better localised access to services”.

#### 2010: Tasmanian Walking and Cycling for Active Transport Strategy

This Strategy is a key initiative under the *Tasmanian Urban Passenger Transport Framework*. Cycling and walking are recognised as important transport options now and for the future to make Tasmanian communities more liveable and better connected and people healthier and physically active. The Strategy outlines key priority areas related to encouraging and supporting active transport. The Strategy does not focus specifically on older people.

##### **Possible COTA Policy Council Action:**

Advocate for older Tasmanians to be specifically recognised in strategies such as the Walking and Cycling for Active Transport Strategy.

#### 2010: Discussion Paper – The Review of the Older Driver Licensing System in Tasmania

In Tasmania, drivers aged 75 years or older are subject to a mandatory annual medical assessment and 85 years or older are subject to a mandatory annual on-road driving assessment.

DIER states that it is committed to ensuring that its older driver licensing system is evidence-based, consistent with current research and meets the needs of older drivers, and the community at large.

DIER has developed a Discussion Paper for consultation that outlines the research carried out and different options identified by DIER for an alternative older driver licensing system.

##### **Possible COTA Policy Council Action:**

Contribute to reviews such as the Review of the Older Driver Licensing System in Tasmania, given the implications of loss of driver's licence for older Tasmanians.



## Under development - Great Hobart Passenger Network Plan

Metro Tasmania is currently developing a ten-year passenger transport network plan that will lead to improvements in transport services for greater Hobart.

The objectives of the plan are to:

- Provide integrated passenger transport outcomes across Greater Hobart to support the Tasmanian Urban Transport Framework
- Support land use objectives of the Regional Land Use Strategy and the Southern Integrated Transport Plan
- Guide development of an integrated passenger transport network
- Identify and prioritise passenger transport project to ensure best use of available funds
- Form the basis for funding and political support

### Possible COTA Policy Council Action:

Seek opportunities to contribute to the Greater Hobart Passenger Network Plan.

Metro has stated that *“through patronage analysis and service planning its focus needs to shift from providing low frequency indirect services that wander through suburbs to direct, high frequency services along key corridors.”*

Unless compensated with other services, this may leave a gap in services for many older people in Tasmania in the future.

## Local government plans

A number of local governments have developed 'Ageing Strategies' or built transport into their strategic plans. For example, Hobart City Council has Positive Ageing and Equal Access Strategies which outline a number of actions relating to transport, parking and related matters.<sup>14</sup> Northern Midlands Council has a Strategic Plan which recognises equity of access as a key area for action. Central Highlands Council highlighted the importance of efficient public transport in its Economic Development Plan, which states that the 'development of improved public/community transport services', particularly for the elderly, due to a growing proportion of aged in the population.<sup>26</sup> Both West Tamar and Meander Valley Councils were involved with Mapping Projects which identified numerous issues and actions related to transport.<sup>19, 22</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Central Highlands Council, 15 October 2010, Written Correspondence.

## 5.0 Transport Services by Local Government Area

Figure 1 (page 34) provides an overview of some of the transport services that operate in Tasmania. The following provides supplementary information to the map.

- All municipalities except for King Island are serviced by Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc. It is hoped that King Island will become another district in the near future. The map identifies the approximate district boundaries of Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc. (in red).
- The public bus services marked on the map (in blue) identify the major fixed routes. In addition there are numerous privately owned bus services operating throughout Tasmania with largely un-fixed routes. A number of these services are outlined below under the respective local government headings.
- Of the 29 Councils that COTA wrote to, 14 responded. As a result the information contained in the map is limited to the information provided by the Councils, with some additional information sourced from the internet as well as providers of transport. It is acknowledged that there are probably gaps in information.
- The presence of services in a municipality does not necessarily mean that the service is accessible for older people nor that the level of transport disadvantage is reduced.
- Below, the 29 Councils in Tasmania are listed with information about the transport services available. The colours highlighted under each heading correlate to the key on the map.

### ***Break O'Day Council***



- Break O'Day Council is serviced by Tassie Link which has a service from Hobart through to St Helens.
- Calow's Coaches provides a service from St Helens to Hobart, Launceston and Bicheno.
- Two organisations have received funding from Cars for Communities.
- There is a HACC funded community car in St Helens.

### ***Brighton Council***



- Brighton Council is serviced by Metro Tasmania and numerous other regional services pass through the municipality.
- Two organisations have received funding from Cars for Communities.

### **Burnie City Council**



- Metro Tasmania operate Upper Burnie (Park Grove – Upper Burnie – Shorewell) and South Burnie (Brooklyn – Havenview) services.
- Redline operates the Hobart to Smithton route via Burnie.
- Maxi Taxis & Maxi Shuttle Buses based in Wivenhoe takes groups and individuals to where they need to go in the North-West region. The service is based on bookings. Groups can be taken anywhere in Tasmania. The service is regularly used by people in wheelchairs and with walking aids.
- One organisation has received funding from Cars for Communities.
- There are also two HACC funded organisations providing community transport, in addition to Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc.
- Crawn Motors operates a service between Waratah and Burnie, and Queenstown and Burnie, as well as connections with Ulverstone and Sisters Beach. They also operate a charter service.

### **Central Coast Council**



- Central Coast Council is serviced by RW & TL Ulverstone and Redline Coaches (travelling from Hobart through to Smithton via Ulverstone and Penguin).
- Metro Tasmania operate the Ulverstone Connector service.
- Two organisations have received funding from Cars for Communities.
- There are also four HACC funded organisations providing community transport, in addition to Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc.
- Smith's Travel based at Riana offer a charter service including a Travel Club which takes people (mostly over 55 living in the north-west) on day trips.

### **Central Highlands Council**



- Metro Tasmania runs buses from Bothwell to Hobart.
- O'Driscoll Coaches operate between Ellendale and Hobart.
- Go Highlands! Community Bus provides transport for medical appointments and social outings.
- The Lions Club has a car based out of Bothwell.
- There is also a HACC funded organisation providing community transport, in addition to Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc.
- One organisation has received funding from Cars for Communities.



### ***Circular Head Council***



- Circular Head Council is serviced by Redline Coaches, which connect through to Hobart.
- There are also three HACC funded organisations providing community transport, in addition to Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc.

### ***Clarence City Council***



- Metro Tasmania runs buses between Opossum Bay - South Arm - Sandford - Cremorne - Clifton Beach.
- Tassielink Coaches provide a service to Richmond and Campania.
- Council provides a community bus.
- Two community buses operate in Clarence Plains and South Arm.
- There are also three HACC funded organisations providing community transport, in addition to Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc.
- One organisation has received funding from Cars for Communities.

### ***Derwent Valley Council***



- Derwent Valley Council is serviced by O'Driscoll Coaches travelling from Hobart and Glenorchy to New Norfolk.
- Two organisations have received funding from Cars for Communities.

### ***Devonport City Council***



- Devonport City Council is serviced by Merseylink Bus Service which covers West, Central, South and East Devonport.
- Redline bus services operate between Smithton and Hobart via Devonport.
- Phoenix Coaches provide a service between Devonport and Port Sorell.
- Three organisations have received funding from Cars for Communities.
- There are also four HACC funded organisations providing community transport, in addition to Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc.

### ***Dorset Council***



- RD & FH Saintry North-East Bus Service connects the following localities:
  1. Derby to Launceston (via Sideling or Lilydale): Derby – Branxholm – Ringarooma – Legerwood – Scottsdale - Nunamara or Lilydale - Launceston
  2. Bridport to Launceston (via Scottsdale): Bridport – Scottsdale – Lilydale - Launceston College – Launceston - Newstead College
- There is also a Red Cross Car, the Dorset Community House Bus, a car at the NESM Hospital and a HACC funded Community Car.

### ***Flinders Island Council***



- Flinders Island Council is serviced by Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc.

### ***George Town Council***



- GNS Transport apparently operate a service between Launceston and George Town.
- Lee's Coaches also run a service to George Town from Launceston.

### ***Glamorgan – Spring Bay Council***



- Tassielink buses service the east coast offering routes from Hobart through to Orford, Tiabunna, Little Swan Port, Mayfield, Swansea, Cranbrook, Coles Bay, Bicheno, Falmouth and Scamander.
- Tasielink also run east coast services that connect Bicheno and Swansea with Hobart more directly, connecting with Calows Coaches.
- Bicheno Coach Service runs between Bicheno, Coles Bay and Freycinet National Park.
- One organisation has received funding from Cars for Communities.
- There is also a HACC funded organisation providing community transport, in addition to Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc.
- Southorn Coaches based at Spring Beach near Orford will do charter work for groups on weekends. The operator of the service raised an interesting point that numerous school buses sit idle from 9-2:30 every day of the week.

### ***Glenorchy City Council***



- Metro Tasmania buses operate in Glenorchy City Council area.
- There are also five HACC funded organisations providing community transport, in addition to Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc.
- Three organisations have received funding from Cars for Communities.

### ***Hobart City Council***



- Metro Tasmania buses operate in Hobart City Council connecting Glenorchy and the Northern Suburbs, Western Hobart, Southern Hobart and the East Shore.
- Five organisations that receive HACC funding also provide transport as part of their services, in addition to Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc.
- Hobart is a major base for a number of regional bus services.
- Three organisations have received funding from Cars for Communities.

### ***Huon Valley Council***



- Tassie Link provide services from Hobart through the Valley to Ramea and Dover.
- Metro Tasmania travels to Cygnet via Kingston.
- There is also a seasonal service to Cockle Creek.

### ***Kentish Council***



- Kentish Council reports that there is no public transport - no taxis and no buses, however a Tassie Link bus does seem to pass through the municipality and Rural Primary Health (Department of Health and Human Services) has a nine seater bus with wheelchair access which is used 3 days/week for medical purposes.
- There is also a HACC funded organisations providing community transport, in addition to Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc.



### ***Kingborough Council***



- Kingborough Council is serviced by Metro Tasmania (Margate – Kettering – Channel – Cygnet).
- One organisation has received funding from Cars for Communities.
- A ferry service operates to and from Bruny Island. There is also a HACC funded organisations providing community transport on Bruny Island.
- Oakley's Coaches based at Snug will take group bookings for trips anywhere in the state.

### ***King Island Council***



- King Island has no taxis, buses or public transport and is the only region currently not covered by Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc.
- The region does have a bus based at the hospital and funding was secured as part of the Cars for Communities Program.

### ***Latrobe Council***



- Merseylink provides commuter buses to Spreyton and Latrobe.
- There is also a HACC funded organisation providing community transport, in addition to Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc.

### ***Launceston City Council***



Metro Tasmania provides bus services throughout Launceston City Council:

- North Bus – Mowbray – Uni – Mayfield - Alanvale – Rocherlea
- River Bus – Riverside
- South Bus - Kings Meadows - Youngtown - Norwood – Newstead
- West Bus - West Launceston - Summerhill - Prospect - Casino - Blackstone Heights – Hadspen
- East Bus - Ravenswood - Waverley - St Leonards
- Launceston is a major base for a number of regional services.
- Redline bus service runs a bus from Hobart to Smithton and back, via Launceston.
- Starline Coaches operate between Launceston and Ravenswood.
- AI Transport is based in Ravenswood and provides a charter service that will take groups anywhere. The service regularly takes older people on day trips.

- Sainty's Coaches operate a service from Peace Haven (Norwood) to Launceston.
- Three organisations have received funding from Cars for Communities.
- There are also eight HACC funded organisations providing transport in the area, in addition to Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc.

### ***Meander Valley Council***



- Council funds two community cars, coordinated by volunteers and used mainly for health appointments. Travellers pay a subsidised rate. This service is mainly patronised by older people. The Council once funded free bus trips to and from Launceston daily for the summer holidays however it was not patronised so it was not continued.
- A private company, Westbus, takes people from Mole Creek to Launceston (new service).
- Redline operates a bus route from Hobart to Smithton and back via Mole Creek, Deloraine and Westbury.

### ***Northern Midlands Council***



- Council provides financial assistance for two Care-A-Cars in Longford.
- Tassielink Bus Service includes Launceston to Cressy via Perth and Longford.
- The Redline bus service operates between Smithton and Hobart via Campbell Town and Ross.
- Jack's Bus Service operates a service between Cressy-Longford-Perth-Launceston.

### ***Sorell Council***



- Smith's Surf to City Coaches operate a service to Dodges Ferry and Primrose Sands.
- Redline buses travel to Sorell and Dodges Ferry.
- There is also a HACC funded organisations providing community transport, in addition to Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc.
- Belbins Bus Service is based in Dunalley and will take groups anywhere (charter service), including older people.

### ***Southern Midlands Council***



- Southern Midlands Council is serviced by Redline Coaches as part of its route between Hobart and Smithton, via Kempton and Oatlands.

### ***Tasman Council***



- Hobart District Nurses Association operate a bus that transports community members to and from towns.
- Tassie Link Coaches operates a services but it departs very early in the morning and returns in the early evening. The bus services most of the towns on the Tasman Peninsula through to Nubeena and Port Arthur.

### ***Waratah-Wynyard Council***



- Waratah-Wynyard Council is serviced by Redline Coaches which operates a service from Hobart to Smithton via Wynyard.
- Metro Tasmania operates a Wynyard Connector service.

### ***West Coast Council***



- West Coast Council is serviced by Tassielink which provides a service from Hobart to Strahan via Lake St Claire and Launceston to Strahan via Cradle Mountain.

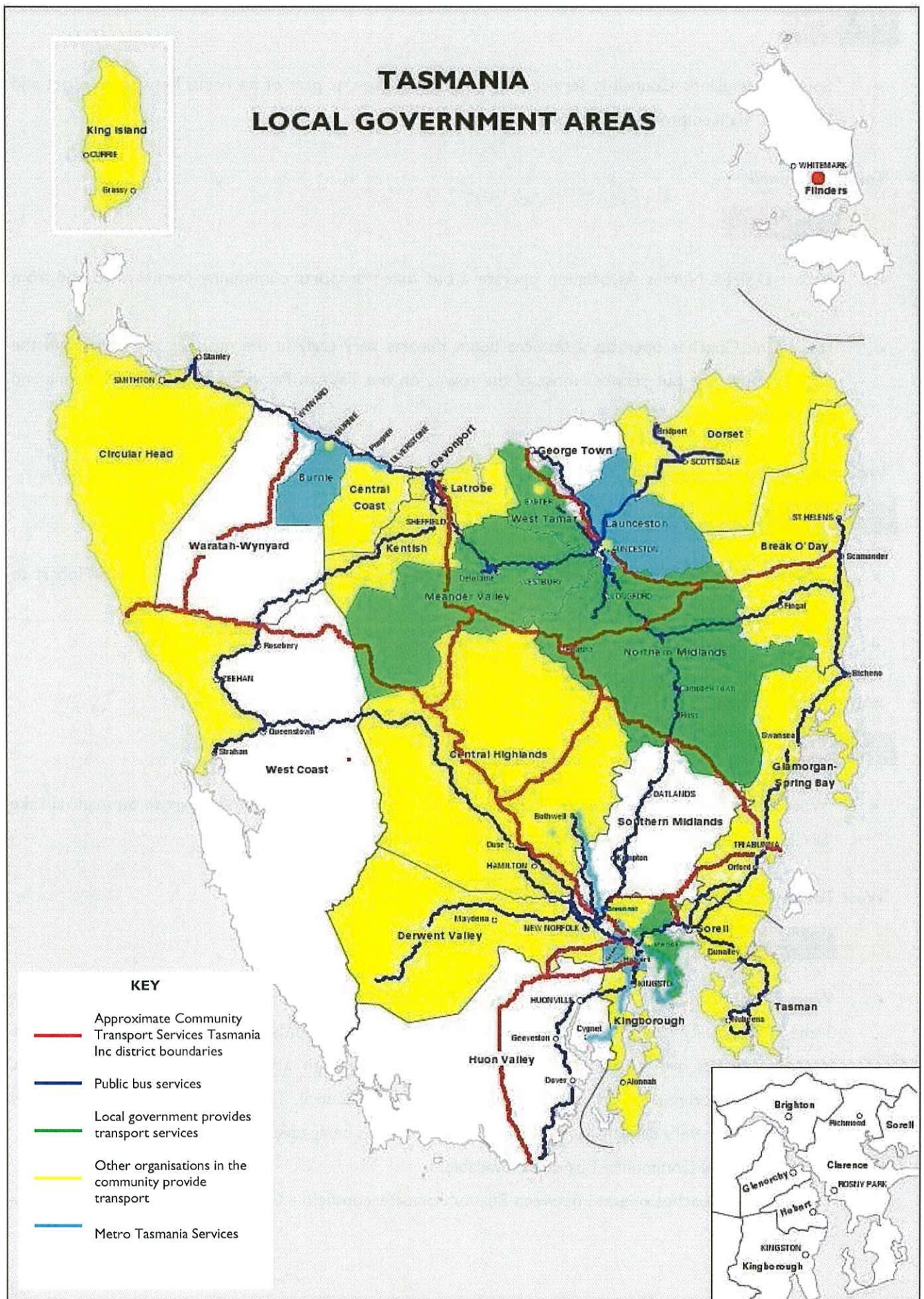
### ***West Tamar Council***



- West Tamar Council in conjunction with the Beaconsfield District Health Service operate the West Tamar Community Car. 98% of clients are aged 60+. They currently have 227 clients on the books. Medical appoints are a priority. This service operates through a fee for service style operation, supported by community donations and underwritten by Council. To find funding for this necessary service has been very difficult with several grant applications being unsuccessful.
- A HACC funded Community Bus is also available.
- Tamar Valley Coaches operate between Beauty Point-Beaconsfield - Gravelley Beach - Exeter – Legana – Launceston.



**Figure 1: Transport Services by Local Government Area**



## 6.0 Conclusion

Transport is clearly an issue of concern for older Tasmanians and as the population ages, it is likely to become even more significant. While the call may be to increase passenger transport services, it should be recognised that public transport may not have the physical and financial flexibility to provide access to dispersed patterns of urban development. *“Public transport is vulnerable to economic and social change as it relies on consistent patronage in order to offer a reliable, frequent and cost-effective service. The role of public transport is essential for those who use and depend on the service for their economic and social wellbeing, however it does not provide a complete solution. Other mechanisms could be implemented to improve accessibility in terms of location of development, changing travel behaviour and telecommunications improvements.”*<sup>1</sup>

Tasmania has numerous plans and strategies in place to guide improvements in transport systems. In addition, the growth of the community transport sector presents opportunities to provide coordinated, integrated, viable and accessible transport services for older people in Tasmania. Below is a summary of possible actions by COTA's Policy Council:

- Government plans, policies, strategies and frameworks need to do more than recognise that the ageing population is going to present challenges for transport systems. Older people are telling us that transport is an issue for them now. Actions should specifically address the needs of older Tasmanians now and, importantly, into the future.
- Local government is a key partner on transport issues, whether as a provider or a 'facilitator'. It may be possible to explore opportunities for alternative models of transport services in collaboration with local government, to help fill transport gaps, e.g. door-to-door, dial-a-ride, car sharing services. Such partnerships should also involve Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc.
- Tasmania's development patterns have been influenced by the high level of car use. Older people should be supported to retain their driver's licence for as long as possible, because, for lack of alternative transport, it is the most convenient way to get around. There are however a number of disadvantages with the high level of car use, e.g. financial, environmental, reduced social contact, convenience (e.g. parking) and safety issues.
- COTA may wish to identify what an age-friendly community would "look like". Utilise the 'Healthy By Design' Guidelines. A combination of advocacy, policy and education strategies may assist to create more age-friendly communities.
- Access to public transport is clearly an issue of concern for older people, which has been recognised by Government. However identifying what to do about improving access to public transport for older

people is less clear. On the surface, if you consider the services that operate across Tasmania as outlined in Section 5 of this paper, it may appear that there are plenty of transport options. However for many people there are still barriers in terms of affordability, convenience and appropriateness of type of transport. In addition, it has been widely predicted that as the population ages, the need for affordable and personalised services is likely to increase. A multi-faceted strategy will be required that includes increasing coordinated community transport type services (door-to-door), addressing concerns about volunteer driver shortages and investigating technologies such as cars more suitable for older people, as well as adapting travel behaviour. COTA should press the Government for clear and tangible outcomes.

- Advocate for all buses to be accessible for people with mobility difficulties. Information such as timetables should be simple to understand and easy to read. Information about the wide range of transport services should be accessible and widely available.
- Advocate for low cost transport services, particularly for those older Tasmanians that are most disadvantaged.
- Tasmania needs evidence-informed health promotion programs that aim to enhance mental health and wellbeing for older Tasmanians. Long term falls prevention programs are also needed.
- Advocate for better coordination of efforts between the range of community transport providers. In particular, ensure that older people that are not strictly HACC eligible but are experiencing transport disadvantage, do not miss out.
- Advocate for Tasmanian *Together* to report specifically on transport accessibility for older people.
- Tasmania's Integrated Transport Plans are key documents that will guide the development of transport systems into the future. Monitor activity and advocate for action as needed. Consider inviting a speaker to the Council to cover this topic.
- Support the inclusion of Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc in exploring other models of community transport as suggested by the Demographic Change Advisory Council. Explore creative use of existing resources such as idle school buses in communities.
- Familiarise with the eligibility criteria for all the different modes of transport for older people and make this information available so people are aware of and what their choices are.



- Advocate for the Cars for Communities Program to be more closely linked with Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc and HACC funded services to ensure coordination and prevent duplication.
- Tasmania's Land Use Plans are key documents that will guide the development of transport systems into the future. Monitor activity and advocate for action as needed. Consider inviting a speaker to the Council to cover this topic to better understand the process and implications.
- Develop a policy position on increasing public transport services in light of the challenge of climate change.
- Advocate for older Tasmanians to be specifically recognised in strategies such as the Walking and Cycling for Active Transport Strategy.
- Contribute to reviews such as the Review of the Older Driver Licensing System in Tasmania, given the implications of loss of driver's licence for older Tasmanians.
- Seek opportunities to contribute to the Greater Hobart Passenger Network Plan. Metro has stated that *"through patronage analysis and service planning its focus needs to shift from providing low frequency indirect services that wander through suburbs to direct, high frequency services along key corridors."* Unless compensated with other services, this may leave a gap in services for many older people in Tasmania in the future.

