

Chairman: Cr Ken Keith, Mayor Parkes Shire Council

10 January 2013

Reference: jblb 011310
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State and Regional Development Committee

Dear Chair

Re Inquiry into Inter regional Public Transport

Thank you for the opportunity for this region to provide further advice. Regarding your follow-up questions generated from the Centroc delegates evidence at the hearing at the end of last year, please find below the following.

1. In order to increase the number of intrastate, interstate and overseas travellers to regional New South Wales; a. How can *CountryLink* services be improved?

- Making the quality of the experience more in line with that of the tourist rather than that of a safety net service for those without car transport options. This would include more frequency, packaging up of options for the tourist, end of journey to destination services, quality and safety of service considerations.
- Expand the 131500 call number to include regional information. At present it's only about Sydney. It should be rolled out into country.
- Load tourism info (products, offers, attractions) into Opal Card to make it easy for visitors to find out about things and to make it easy to get entry.
- Better integration of timetables to align with school bus services
- QR codes at bus stops.

b. How can the marketing of *CountryLink* services be improved?

- In the first instance the experience has to be better developed so that it lends itself to marketing. Working with the tourism industry in Central NSW to ensure transport options for the larger events that are then well marketed.
- Expand help line (as above) to include regional information.
- Sponsor more events as events drive tourism. Add partners to build appeal (The Elvis train is a good example)

2. Given the growing trend of cycling in the tourism area, is there any way to improve that situation for tourists who want to utilise cycling as a way to see regional New South Wales, and in particular Central New South Wales?

- Allow bikes on buses. Storage for bikes is essential, particularly mountain bikes.
- Provide support to bike tracks and events across Central NSW.

3. A number of submissions received by this inquiry highlight concerns relating to safety at regional stations as being disincentive to passengers wishing to use inter-regional transport. What are your organisation's suggestions for improving the safety of passengers, especially inter-regional passengers?

- Time tabling and ensuring links happen so that passengers are not stranded.
- Ensuring end of journey to destination linkages.
- Identification of high risk locations and developing mitigations.
- Improved lighting at all stations. Darkness is an issue for passengers.

4. *CountryLink* has developed various measures to increase patronage and encourage regional tourism, such as discounted fare products. For example, the introduction of the Regional Excursion Daily Ticket (RED), which permits pensioners and seniors to travel as many times as they like on the one day for a flat rate of \$2.50. In your experience, how effective are such measures? What other measures would you suggest?

- Sponsor more events as events drive tourism. Add partners to build appeal (The Elvis train is a good example).
- Availability of quality (regional) food and beverages.
- Mobile phone chargers in seats (like AMtrack).
- Faster and more express services such as the new Bathurst Bullet

5. What factors will increase land use density around public transport interchanges in regional areas?

- LEPs, growth, special strategic work could be undertaken with Councils to increase density around interchanges.

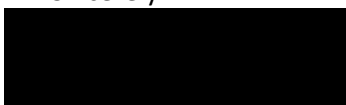
6. To which regional destinations is there a need for improved services from Central New South Wales?

- Mudgee and all destinations beyond Lithgow, Bathurst and Orange. The coach links are slow and limited services. Food and beverages need to be available for long haul journeys. Lighting at stops is inadequate.
- Deregulation of taxi services and more engagement with car transport services to provide options for travellers arriving in places late at night.

7. What is the key to improving inter-regional transport in New South Wales

- Working closely with stakeholders taking a strategic approach would be a good start.
- All the above.
- Expansion of the help line 131500 to include regional information is imperative.
- Bike storage facilities.
- Better transport links at destinations, particularly western regional ones.
- Regional food and beverages on trains.

Sincerely



Jennifer Bennett
Executive Officer