

INQUIRY INTO INTER-REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT

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Submission to the Inquiry into Inter-Regional Public Transport

On behalf of Snowy Mountains Grammar School

Snowy Mountains Grammar School, Jindabyne, (SMGS) is a small, co-educational Kindergarten to Year

12 school located in Jindabyne in the NSW snowfields of some 235 students - 50 in the primary and 185 in the secondary school. Our students come from across NSW and beyond. We have a Boarding House that accommodates 50 students – boys and girls. Most of these students come from Canberra and Sydney. About half are “Weekly Boarders” – they travel home each Friday afternoon and return to school on Sunday evening. The other half are “Full Boarders” only leaving the House on “Exeat” Weekends – where the Boarding House is closed twice a term; and for school holidays. The school provides mini bus and/or coach transport for these students on these occasions. Each Friday the SMGS 24 seater Rosa, travels to Canberra – it is usually full. It returns on Sunday evening. The school pays a driver to do this run. On Exeat Weekends and Holidays we run two buses or, on occasions, a coach, hired from Cooma Coaches.

Apart from the school-organised options, outlined above, there are no public transport options available to students travelling to or from Jindabyne for their schooling. In order to get students home for personal or medical reasons we need to drive the students to Cooma to meet the regular bus from Bega to Canberra.

Students who live in Cooma use the Cooma Coaches transport that is provided using the State Government’s funding for school travel. This bus picks up between Cooma and Jindabyne including Beridale, East Jindabyne and Tyrolean Village and all points in between. There are also buses that run from Moonbah, Thredbo, Perisher, and Lakewood.

Transport for students to weekend and afternoon activities around Jindabyne is provided by the school or parents. Weekend public transport to and from the ski resorts for snowsports is not available and once again, it is either the school or parents who provide this. A public transport system that links Jindabyne with Cooma and Canberra on a daily basis is needed. In winter a morning and afternoon shuttle at least as far as Skitube (but preferably continuing to Thredbo) is needed. The trip as far as Skitube could be a round trip of about an hour and run throughout the day with a break over lunch. Funding from the resorts might be an option. Thredbo might be able to meet this shuttle with their own bus to continue on to their resort. This would also alleviate the “hitch-hiker” problem that develops outside the school as seasonal workers need to get to work in the resorts from their homes in Jindabyne.

Geoff Greentree

Deputy Principal