

# RACT PUBLIC TRANSPORT POLICY



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# RACT POLICY – PUBLIC TRANSPORT

<b>Organisation</b>	RACT
<b>Business Unit</b>	Advocacy Committee

Version	Author	Description	Date Revised	Review Date
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# MOBILITY STRATEGY PILLAR: SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is the third component of RACT's mobility strategy. Within this pillar, one of RACT's vision statements is to encourage multiple passenger transport options.

## 1) PUBLIC TRANSPORT POLICY STATEMENTS

### 1.1 Public Transport Explained

- Public transport and associated infrastructure, such as buses, trains, trackless trams and ferries ensure commuters have access to multi-modal transport options that ease traffic congestion.
- As well as benefitting congestion levels, public transport can also benefit human and environmental health as commuters engage in more physical activity by walking to and from public transport stations.
- Public transport can also provide economical transport options and increase access for individuals with mobility issues.

### 1.2 Purpose of this Policy

- Tasmania's population is growing and as a result, RACT has a strong focus on sustainability through public transport advocacy.
- This policy addresses the co-existence of public transport, cyclists, pedestrians and private vehicles through improved infrastructure, incentives and education.

### 1.3 Relevance to RACT

- RACT, like all Australian automobile clubs, has transitioned from a sole focus on the motor vehicle to all forms of mobility. This is part of a new outlook that centres on sustainable transport, including public transport options.
- The integration of public transport with cyclists, pedestrians and private vehicles through better infrastructure, incentives and education is an ongoing challenge for all road authorities and stakeholders, including RACT.

## 2) BACKGROUND, EVIDENCE AND POSITION

### 2.1 Background

- A shift of investment towards public and active transport and away from roads and parking can create equal mobility while reducing transport costs, congestion and greenhouse gas emissions (Climate Council, 2016).

- Public transport offers opportunities to increase healthy outcomes as trips can be multimodal through walking or cycling to or from transit (Heart Foundation, 2018).
- Tasmania’s small and highly dispersed population makes it difficult for the state’s public transport system to meet the needs of users in rural and urban fringe areas. In addition, Tasmanians are highly dependent on the car as a means of travel due to the design of urban centres (Transport Access Strategy, 2016).
- Dominance of car journeys are a result of current limitations on other modes of transport, notably public transport, but also walking and cycling (City of Hobart, 2018).
- Growth in urban fringe areas across Tasmania has resulted in dispersed, low density residential development, making it difficult for people access public transport. This poses significant challenges to the provision of fast, frequent and reliable transit services and establishing high patronage routes (Transport Access Strategy, 2016).
- Bus services in regional, rural and urban fringe areas are less frequent, slower and service fewer stops compared to urban services (Transport Access Strategy, 2016).
  - First and last mile issues are prevalent for Tasmanians living or working in outlying areas, where the nearest bus stop is beyond walking distance. This makes it less likely that a person will use public transit.
  - People who live or work in these areas are forced into vehicle ownership due to a lack of transport options. They require park and ride spaces to connect to public transport routes.
- In Tasmania, commuters often need transport outside the hours in which buses operate, as well as better coordination between connecting services (TasCOSS, 2014).
  - RACT believes public transport fares are unaffordable for many people and concessions are not available to those on low wages. There is also no centralised source of information about timetables, fares or routes.
- Tasmania has the fastest ageing population in Australia, meaning there are more elderly people facing barriers in accessing transit services due to mobility limitations, particularly for those living in outlying areas (Transport Access Strategy, 2016).
- Conversely, transit networks that provide wider spatial coverage to low population areas, at the expense of services operating frequently in high population areas, are poorly patronised and an inefficient use of resources (Tasmanian Government, 2012).
  - Frequency and reliability of services is an important factor to increasing patronage as this reduces waiting time, travel time and costs for commuters.
- Tasmania’s public transport network has few bus priority measures, meaning buses are subject to localised congestion and delays (Tasmanian Government, 2012).
- Public transport offers opportunities to increase healthy outcomes as trips can be multi-modal, with people walking or cycling at both ends of the public transport journey to get to and from the point of origin and destination (Heart Foundation, 2018).
- Tasmania’s tourism growth has generated increased demand for bus travel (Transport Access Strategy, 2016).

## 2.2 Evidence

- Approximately 85% of people in Greater Hobart drive to work, while 90% of the rest of Tasmania also use a private vehicle to drive to work (ABS, 2016).

- Approximately 6% of people in Greater Hobart travel to work by public transport, which is lowest proportion of all Australian capitals – behind Canberra (8%) (ABS, 2016).
- Approximately 2% of people across the rest of Tasmania take public transport to work, one of the lowest proportions across regional Australia (ABS, 2016).
- Greater Hobart’s average commute is 13.8km, while the rest of Tasmania’s average commute is 16.4km. The national figure is approximately 16.5km (ABS, 2016).
- Approximately 90% of private dwellings have one or more registered motor vehicles in Tasmania, on par with the national figure (ABS, 2016).
- Approximately 88% of dwellings in Tasmania are detached dwellings, resulting in a dispersed and car-reliant population. Nationally, the figure is 73% (ABS, 2016).
- Approximately 60% of the 1355 respondents to the Tasmanian Travel and Physical Activity Study (TTAPAS) live within five minutes walking distance of a bus stop (Menzies Institute of Medical Research, 2018).
  - However, 58% said they rarely/never used the bus during the week, with 82% rarely or never using buses on weekends.
- Approximately 40% of people in the TTAPAS study said that bus frequency, timetabling, complicated trips and delays were the main reasons to avoid using this mode of transport in Tasmania. About 20% said they chose to drive, ride a motorcycle, walk or cycle instead (Menzies Institute of Medical Research, 2018).
  - Other disincentives included: inaccessibility for people with mobility issues or prams, delayed buses, lack of comprehensive stops, excessive costs and walking distance to stops.

## 2.3 Position

### RACT

- Urges the Tasmanian Government and public transport operators to improve and incentivise public transport by funding high frequency and rapid journeys that are efficient, affordable and reliable across high population areas. This includes:
  - Priority bus lanes that improve journey times by avoiding congestion, as well as cheaper fares, fleet investment, enhanced infrastructure at bus stops and use of real time data communication to allow commuters to make informed decisions.
- Urges the Tasmanian Government and transport operators to ensure that transport-disadvantaged people, who live away from key corridors, have mobility limitations or need to travel outside peak periods, can overcome transit barriers through:
  - Start and end of line facilities with low cost/free parking as well as efficient transfers from urban fringe and rural areas onto high-frequency corridors. These would connect regional and urban fringe locations with employment, services and education in CBD or urban areas.
- Encourages all levels of government to develop connections between cities and outlying suburbs through first and last mile active travel links to public transport, through cycleways and walkways.
- Urges the Tasmanian Government and public transport providers to consider alternative public transport options, such as ferries, light rail, electric buses and

trackless trams. This should be linked to RACT's long-term visions for the Greater Hobart, Greater Launceston and North West Coast regions.

- Urges the Tasmanian Government and public transport providers to consider more efficient transit systems that reduce greenhouse gases, such as low and zero emission (electric) vehicles.
- Encourages public transport providers to implement the following incentives: bicycle carriage on public transport, real-time travel information, journey information and planners, integrated ticketing, storage lockers and showers at transit terminals free travel outside peak periods and loyalty schemes
- Supports governmental initiatives that remove or significantly reduce vehicles and parking from Hobart's CBD in favour of public and active transport options.
- Urges all levels of government to improve urban planning strategies so residences are closer to public and active transport corridors, employment, education, services, and recreational activities in order to reduce car dependency and transport disadvantage.
- Encourages a coordinated approach between government, researchers and stakeholders to create a public transport culture. This approach would address community education and incentives, health and cost benefits, transport planning, infrastructure, land use planning and social welfare issues through:
  - An updated Public Transport Policy that is tailored to population growth and increased walking and cycling as well as modern active travel infrastructure.
- Supports schemes that enable on demand, 'mobility as a service' approach to transport, where people can access multiple forms of public and private transport through an integrated account. This includes ride and car sharing services.

### 3) SCOPE

#### 3.1 Policy Application and Ownership

This policy applies to:

- Tasmanian public transport patrons, pedestrians, cyclists and motorists
- Metro Tasmania and public transport manufacturers
- Bicycle Network Tasmania
- Pedestrian Council of Australia
- Local government
- Tasmanian Government policy makers and ministers
- Australian Government policy makers and ministers
- Local government
- Sustainability and traffic experts

The ownership and responsibility of this policy is with the RACT Board.

### 4) APPROVALS

**4.1 Date of approval: [insert date]**

**4.2 Date of review: [insert date]**

**4.3 Signature of CEO: [insert signature]**