

Comments on the Draft Transport Emissions Reduction and Resilience Plan

Communication and engagement

Tasmanian government needs to clearly communicate why we need to reduce our emissions- because global temperatures are rising, which is threatening all the things that we love and rely upon as humans. The current sharp global temperature rise is driven by the burning of fossil fuels and we need to do everything we can to reduce our emissions and our reliance on polluting fossil fuels.

We need to find a way to communicate with and engage people on this issue so they are inclined to get on board and make the required changes - whether this is by communicating the climate science or by pointing out the various other benefits of alternate transport solutions (lower costs, health benefits, reduced pollution, quieter and safer streets etc.).

I would like to see actions in this emissions reduction and resilience plan around communication and engagement to reduce transport emissions. This needs to be well thought out and a listed action otherwise the other actions in the plan are at risk of being undersubscribed and ineffective.

Schools and active transport

It seems that the proportion of school children walking or using other forms of active transport to get to school is in continuous decline. Perhaps this is due to concerns around stranger danger, road safety or nowhere to safely store bikes and scooters at schools. This causes significant road congestion around schools at pick-up and drop-off time which causes conflict with surrounding neighbours and broader traffic issues.

It is not core business for already overloaded school leaders to deal with these kind of issues. The common response to traffic congestion is to create more parking- which is not an effective solution to either congestion, reducing emissions or healthy and happy schools kids.

It would be great if the state government had a dedicated person engaged to support schools to develop tailored solutions to encourage more active transport, perhaps in conjunction with local councils to ensure that the solutions can be incorporated into town planning.

Table Cape Primary School in Wynyard is a prime example of a school which would greatly benefit from increased active transport options. It is in a relatively quiet, flat location with good access to existing public walking and riding trails (the River Track) yet it relies heavily on car transport and has a major car congestion problem. Even though the River Track runs right behind the school there is no access encouraged to the school from that side.

Public Transport

The public transport options in far north-west Tasmania are practically non-existent. There is no viable way to get from Smithton through to Stanley, Wynyard or Burnie for a regular appointment or work, the route simply does not exist. Many people from Sisters Beach and Wynyard also travel west for work with some informal carpooling but predominately people are forced to use a private vehicles. It would be great if there were smaller shuttle services (EV vans or small buses) from these small localities.

Though the Draft Plan appears to consider Park and Ride options for southern Tasmania it does not appear to consider these for other areas of the state. With the Coastal Pathway now extending from Latrobe and soon through to Wynyard (with discussion of the extension to Smithton) it would be great to have Park and Ride options along this main transit route, to encourage both express bus travel but also bikes and e-scooters. A perfect spot would be at Doctors Rocks on the Bass Highway at Wynyard where the highway upgrade has now created a dead-end road with plenty of free space to expand parking and transit station options.

Biofuels

Biofuels can have benefits as a transition fuel but they still have the potential to produce significant emissions and delay the uptake of cleaner emissions-free technologies. The Tasmanian Government should prioritise and secure local renewable electricity for the decarbonisation of our current emission intensive transport sector. Biofuels development should be considered appropriately to ensure that it has a net-positive benefit for Tasmanians in actually reducing overall carbon emission (Scope 1, 2 & 3) and not restricting the development of other much more appropriate, low emissions business development. It is not a good outcome to develop a net-zero fuel product in Tasmania and then ship it across the world using fossil fuels while at the same time importing fossil fuels into Tasmania. The HIF Biofuel proposal for Surrey Hills near Burnie appears an attractive proposal on the surface but would require a significant use of our renewable energy capacity and, as far as I am aware, the biofuels are not proposed for a Tasmanian market, therefore accruing significant carbon emissions exporting the fuel to other markets. This does not have a net-positive outcome for Tasmania or our global carbon emissions.

Travel to and from Tasmania

Tasmania is a key tourism destination and the tourism sector has been proactive in capitalising on Tasmanian's 'clean green' image and promoting Tasmania as a leading destination for climate conscious travel. I think it is short-sighted not to consider travel to and from Tasmania as part of this plan as getting people and goods to and from Tasmania is inherently imbedded in everything we do and how we live as Tasmanians. Neglecting this element of transport emission risks Tasmania missing out on strategic emissions reduction options. We need to have a strong voice on emission reduction actions that impact our economy and Tasmania people. Regardless of if this is the core responsibility of the Federal government, we should be strong advocates for emissions reductions from cargo and travel to and from Tasmania.

EV and Charging Infrastructure

Tasmanians are finally starting to buy EV's and we are now at risk of the charging infrastructure not meeting the demand and causing negative experiences and delaying further uptake. There needs to be more high-speed charging options added to existing high use areas and we obviously need to continue to roll out more chargers to improve the range coverage.

As an EV driver I would love to see public chargers at Marrawah and Arthur River and more chargers installed a major highway stops like Campbell Town and Elizabeth Town.

There is a need for education of State Government staff around electric vehicle (EV) uptake. We have heard an example of Government staff being offered an EV and opting to instead to purchase/lease a new internal combustion engine (ICE) or Hybrid car because of concern around charging and access to charging infrastructure. EV charging is managed very differently to service station refilling. There needs to be good systems in place to allow flexibility of charging for government fleet vehicles, including reimbursement for charging at home.