

Developing an Emissions Reduction and Resilience Plan for Tasmania's transport sector

In Tasmania, the disproportionately high use of private cars is associated with inequality in mobility and access to opportunities. To address this, major improvements to our public transport services are required in tandem with providing widespread active transport options. This would create a more equitable and inclusive society, especially for those who cannot or do not want to drive. Access to public transport is vital for social and economic participation, which aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Increasing the levels of walking and cycling contribute to healthy lifestyles and have the potential to reduce the burden upon the public health system. Investing in safe and connected path networks for pedestrians and cyclists can reduce exposure to stressors such as air pollution and enhance both physical and mental well-being. Moreover, using sustainable mobility can lead to significant health benefits and lower emissions.

Electrifying transport is a more efficient way of utilising renewable energy than using intermediate fuels such as hydrogen or biofuels. Policies that support electrification can reduce emission levels across the region, resulting in positive impacts on both environmental preservation and economic development.

General Policy recommendations:

Create a single Transport Authority that oversees buses, roads, and community transport.

Set ambitious and measurable emissions reduction targets that focus on greenhouse gas emissions from transport.

Prioritise investment in public transport by redirecting funds from road projects, and developing an integrated transportation system, for example that includes open ticketing across all modes.

Introduce a progressive vehicle registration scheme based on emissions.

Gradually increase the tax on fossil fuels over time, keeping a fair transition in mind, so as not to impact those at a lower socio-economic level.

Increase the coverage and regularity of the public transport network.

Provide bus stops with covered and safe waiting areas. Equip buses with USB ports, WiFi, and workstations.

Encourage employers and schools to support flexible work and study arrangements - hence reducing travel demand.

We owe it to future generations to transition quickly away from fossil fuels and lower emissions. In fact, we have a duty of care to do so.

Graeme McCormack