

Local Community Transport groups welcome promise of funding

Local providers of specialist community transport services for the frail aged and disabled and transport isolated individuals are “over the moon” about today’s promise by the NSW Opposition to substantially increase community transport funding if elected at the next election.

Welcoming today’s announcement, Peter McLeod, the Executive Officer of the Community Transport Organisation said he has waited more than ten years for the promise of a much needed funding increase for grass-roots local community transport groups.

“The local specialist transport providers in our communities who are there to help transport isolated people with their day to day transport needs, stand to have funding more than doubled under Barry O’Farrell’s much fairer plan.”

“For a decade we have appealed to the NSW Government for a humane increase in the Community Transport Program to deal with the backlog of pleas for assistance from some of the neediest and transport isolated areas of the State but until today’s announcement by the NSW Opposition Leader, we have been ignored.”

“The reality is that for economic reasons more and more people are living at the fringes of cities and towns where regular public transport services are not an option. For the aged, the poor, the disabled, the dislocated, owning and maintaining a car or paying for a taxi is simply not an option”, Mr McLeod said.

“Community transport, resourced largely by local volunteers, help people remain a healthy and functional part of their communities for longer, reducing the strain on hospital and other high cost health services. We applaud the NSW Opposition Leader and the Shadow Minister for Transport Gladys Berejiklian, for their wisdom and support”, Mr McLeod said.

The package announced today promises:

- A doubling of Community Transport Program funding via the Ministry of Transport by \$12 million dollars over four years;
- Establishment of a “one stop shop” within the Ministry of Transport for CT providers to improve communication, efficiency and reduce unnecessary administration costs;
- Establishment of an appropriate driver accreditation framework to ensure CT providers can enhance their services and ensure utmost safety of volunteers, employees and clients; and,
- The appropriate data collection so proper ongoing assessments are made of unmet community transport needs in both health and non-health related services.

Peter McLeod is available for media interview and to supply photos of local community transport operations.

Media assistance:

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