



MEDIA RELEASE

Adrian Pederick MP JP

Member for Hammond
Parliamentary Secretary to the Liberal Leader for
- The River Murray
- Sustainability and Climate Change

Monday August 20th, 2007

Student transport in the spotlight

The limitations of public transport were the focus of a meeting in Strathalbyn last Thursday with growing population and school student numbers at the centre of the problem.

Local MP Adrian Pederick called the meeting in response to comments from parents expressing concern at bus capacity and levels of safety for children travelling to and from school on public transport.

Representatives of passenger transport industry and schools met with parents to discuss the growth in numbers of students travelling between townships in the Eastern Hills - most notably those choosing a school other than the one nearest to them - placing extraordinary pressure on the public transport system.

This has resulted in many passengers, often students, being required to stand during their journey. Manager of Service Planning for Transport SA's Passenger Transport Division, Phil Saunders, explained that the current services provided were at or near their maximum and it would not be possible to add further services in the near future.

General Manager of privately owned Transit Plus, Mark Dunlop, said buses operate with special conditions in the region, observing an 80kph speed limit when carrying passengers on the open road.

Mr Dunlop said drivers underwent special training and buses were equipped to cater for standing passengers, each of whom had the option to either stand or wait for another service, or seek an alternative method of transport.

Following questions and round-table discussions, Mr Pederick summarised the meeting by suggesting that while every reasonable effort would be made to cater for growing passenger numbers, schools in the region may need to consider shared charter services to manage the situation in the short-term.

Caption.

At the Hills Transport Forum were from left; Keeah Ness, Terina Edwards (Social Options Coordinator District Council of Mt Barker), Adrian Pederick MP, Donna Niven, Judith Burnell (Cornerstone), Mark Dunlop (Transit Plus).

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