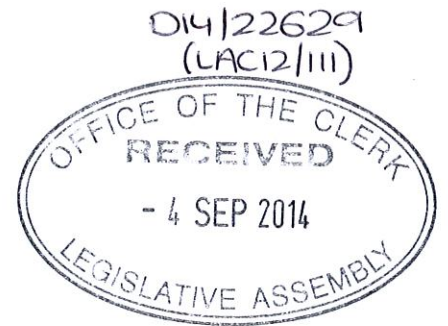




The Hon Gladys Berejiklian MP
Minister for Transport



Reference: 2014-360287

Ms Ronda Miller
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Ronda,
Dear Ms Miller,

I write in relation to the State and Regional Development Committee Report No. 1/55 on inter-regional public transport.

Standing Order 303A of the Legislative Assembly states that within six months of a report being tabled, relevant Ministers are required to report to the House on what action, if any, the Government proposes to take in response to recommendations of the Committee.

The Government has considered the recommendations made in the Report. I am pleased to provide the House with the attached response to the State and Regional Development Committee.

Yours faithfully,

Gladys Berejiklian MP
Minister for Transport

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY ON INTER-REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORT

RESPONSE TO RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation	Responsible Minister	Advice
<p>Recommendation 1:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW enhances the existing inter-regional public transport network wherever practicable, with priority being given to those regions that do not currently have access to the network.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>The NSW Long Term Transport Master Plan (LTTMP) sets the strategic direction for transport planning for the next 20 years, providing a framework for transport policy and investment decisions that respond to key transport challenges, including actions to provide essential access for communities in regional NSW.</p> <p>Enshrined as a key, overarching action in the LTTMP, Transport for NSW (TfNSW) has committed itself to working towards connecting communities in regional NSW through improved travel links that are fast, convenient, safe and secure, with stronger community transport and more travel choice for residents and visitors.</p> <p>This overarching action is then filtered down into the actions contained in each of the NSW Regional Transport Plans (RTPs) for the ten regions.</p> <p>The RTPs include a number of transport planning actions, across all transport modes that address and enhance the existing inter-regional public transport network in regional NSW.</p> <p>These include some of the following (as appropriate to the region):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve NSW TrainLink services – The long term plan for regional rail considers how to improve rail services, create better connections to regional centres, examine opportunities to realign train and coach timetables and improve the range of travel opportunities; • Improve regional bus services – TfNSW works in partnership with local bus operators to introduce a more robust contractual framework for local and regional buses. We will work with the bus operators to develop routes and timetables which improve services for customers and develop a service framework that matches routes, coverage, hours of operation and vehicles with specific local needs;

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the integration of community transport services into the passenger transport system – TfNSW will work to better integrate community transport services into the overall transport system to more efficiently meet a broader range of needs. We will work with community transport providers, taxi operators and with traditional bus operators to deliver a fully integrated transport system; • Ensure adequate community transport services are provided – TfNSW will continue working with community transport providers to ensure that future demand for community transport can be met. We recognise the need to provide adequate services to support the mobility of people who are experiencing transport disadvantage with limited access to the network; and • Investigations into flexible or demand responsive transport solutions – TfNSW will investigate the applicability of flexible or demand responsive transport solutions and work to identify and implement these services in appropriate locations.
<p>Recommendation 2:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW re-routes the NSW TrainLink Southern Coach services to incorporate stops at Jindabyne and Berridale.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>From 30 June 2014, NSW TrainLink's Bombala to Canberra return coach service was diverted to include stops at Dalgety, Jindabyne and Berridale for a twelve month trial period. This service operates on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays.</p> <p>More broadly, TfNSW is working to improve NSW TrainLink services for the Southern region, consistent with the Southern RTP and supporting travel to and from the region.</p> <p>TfNSW will examine opportunities to realign train and coach timetables operating in the region to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the range of travel opportunities; • Improve connections and service frequency; • Improve customer access to travel information for rail and coach travel; and • Improve the integration between local and regional bus services and NSW TrainLink services across the region. <p>Assisting travel within the Southern region, TfNSW will work towards better integrating NSW TrainLink coach services with regional bus services. As far as possible, we will aim to use coach services as part of the regional bus system. One initiative to be investigated is for NSW TrainLink coach services to pick up and set down at multiple key destinations in major centres and towns.</p>

<p>Recommendation 3:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that NSW TrainLink develops a marketing strategy specifically targeting potential regional customers, and actively promoting the benefits of its rail and coach services compared to other forms of transport.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>NSW TrainLink has already introduced strategies including a Discovery Pass and two-for-one fare offers, to grow the business.</p> <p>NSW TrainLink's Sales and Marketing Plan is being reshaped to improve and revitalise its customer services and operating model. This Strategy is being developed in partnership with TfNSW.</p> <p>The Sales and Marketing Plan will set out strategies to target growth with regional customers, using tactics informed by recent market research that provides an evidence base as to the key product features and benefits that drive mode choice. This will inform a reshaping of existing funding of marketing activities to maximize their effectiveness.</p> <p>In addition, TfNSW also plans to improve public transport customer information by extending the current suite of on-line journey planning tools, and integrated them with maps, fares and other customer information to help potential regional customers better understand their travel options.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers the implementation of a process to liaise and consult with local governments in relation to public transport issues; and • Promotes this process to local governments. 	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>Development of the LTTMP and RTPs involved extensive consultation with stakeholders across NSW. This included local councils and the Regional Organisations of Councils. Consultation included public forums, one-on-one meetings, conference calls and public submissions.</p> <p>TfNSW currently collaborates extensively with local government and is committed to continuing this process. To ensure liaison and consultation is maintained, the principle of engagement with local councils has been enshrined at multiple levels within our overarching planning documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a state-wide action of the LTTMP, TfNSW will continue to engage with local councils to produce better transport and land use outcomes; • As a specific regional NSW action of the LTTMP, TfNSW is committed to partnering with local government, recognising they are key to identifying, funding and delivering the changes and projects required to improve the transport network at a local level; • Continued liaison and consultation with local government has also been built into the

		<p>implementation and delivery process of the RTPs. TfNSW will support continued collaboration with local councils, Regional Organisations of Councils and Regional Development Australia to support delivery of the RTPs and to respond to future planning needs; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For individual actions where it is relevant to work with local councils (for example addressing pinch-points on the road network or improving cycling and walking opportunities), it is specifically identified in the RTPs that TfNSW will collaborate with local authorities. <p>TfNSW actively promotes this process through presentations with local councils and the implementation of individual RTP actions.</p> <p>NSW TrainLink's customer services are delivered through a regionally-based management structure with the three Regional General Managers and nine Regional Service Delivery Managers embedded within regional communities and liaising regularly with local government on transport issues.</p> <p>NSW TrainLink's business strategy is to regenerate regional transport services with a focus on target markets, reoriented services and upgraded products. This is in partnership with TfNSW. This strategy is informed by public consultation undertaken with stakeholders across the State.</p>
<p>Recommendation 5:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW conducts a review of Regional Transport Coordinators to examine their role, including, but not limited to their role in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessing public transport needs and service gaps in their target regions; Developing appropriate strategies to meet the needs identified; and 	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>TfNSW has seven Regional Transport Coordinators (RTCs) based in rural and regional areas of NSW, three in the greater metropolitan regions of Sydney and one in Western Sydney. They are currently tasked with reducing the negative effects of transport disadvantage by improving coordination with community stakeholders, transport operators and other agencies.</p> <p>Positive outcomes from the program include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of partnerships between transport providers; Integration of transport modes; Reduction of service duplication; Greater use of existing transport resources; Increased transport options; Improved access to community activities and reduction of social isolation; Provision of flexible services meeting individual needs; and Environmental benefits. <p>Under an action contained in the RTPs, RTCs will continue to ensure adequate community transport</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitating liaison and consultation between local governments and Transport for NSW in relation to public transport issues. 		<p>services are provided.</p> <p>The recommendation is supported. The Secretary of TfNSW will instigate a RTC review in the 2014/15 financial year.</p>
<p>Recommendation 6:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW Regional Transport Coordinators to regional communities, and develops strategies to encourage greater engagement between Regional Transport Coordinators and their local stakeholders.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>A positive outcome of the current RTC program is the development of partnerships between transport providers.</p> <p>Under the actions of the RTPs, RTCs will continue their work and engagement with local stakeholders and local community transport providers to identify and support the needs of those experiencing transport disadvantage. TfNSW will ensure adequate community transport services are provided in regional NSW and that community transport services will be better integrated into the passenger transport system.</p> <p>The recommendation is supported. Improved stakeholder management strategies will be developed in the RTC review in the 2014-15 financial year.</p>
<p>Recommendation 7:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW, in conjunction with NSW TrainLink, develops a systematic mechanism for regional transport staff to have input into suggested improvements to the inter-regional transport network.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>A systematic mechanism for input is currently in place where both the Newcastle and Wollongong Regional Offices of TfNSW have a direct line of communication with all TfNSW RTCs. This mechanism allows for any suggested improvements to inter-regional services to be analysed and contracted subject to them meeting reasonable demand and cost parameters.</p> <p>Arrangements are in hand for TfNSW to analyse the Rural Coach Service provided by NSW TrainLink to determine where improvements and better integration with contract bus services can be achieved.</p> <p>NSW TrainLink's Meet the People Program was established shortly after the organisation's inception on 1 July 2013 to encourage and capture staff ideas and feedback on service delivery and operational improvements. With an average of two sessions scheduled per week across the State, these insights from both staff and customers have driven many of the strategies and initiatives articulated in NSW TrainLink's Corporate Plan.</p>

		<p>This ongoing Program continues to play a key role in informing the development and delivery of improvements to regional transport. It is complemented by NSW TrainLink's annual business planning and review cycle which employs a top down-bottom up approach to identify and deliver service improvement and operational efficiencies, in the context of the overarching directions and priorities within the integrated Transport Cluster.</p> <p>Regional Transport Coordinators and Roads & Maritime Service Regional Managers were also consulted as part of the LTTMP and RTP process. Their feedback helped to shape long-term transport planning actions for regional NSW.</p>
<p>Recommendation 8:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW conducts a full accessibility audit of NSW TrainLink's trains and coaches, its regional railway stations and bus interchanges, and addresses any issues.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>TfNSW is working towards building a fully accessible transport system for all users. As a completed action of the LTTMP, the updated NSW Disability Action Plan 2012-2017 was released in December 2012 and sets out a continuous process of improvement over the five year period by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building an accessible transport network; • Reducing transport disadvantage for people with a disability; • Improving the journey experience of people with disability; • Enhancing customer insight and engagement; and • Supporting accessibility through partnerships. <p>TfNSW is committed to meeting the <i>Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002</i> to the fullest extent possible.</p> <p>TfNSW is also committed to meeting the DDA targets to the fullest extent possible. We have developed an objectively determined and prioritised list of infrastructure investments to support access to transport services.</p> <p>NSW TrainLink's business strategy to regenerate regional transport services with a focus on target markets, reoriented services and upgraded products considers the accessibility of InterCity and regional stations and services. This Strategy is aligned with TfNSW Transport Access Program and other relevant initiatives including the design of the new InterCity fleet.</p>

<p>Recommendation 9:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW considers broadening the scope of community transport to provide services to all groups in regional communities experiencing transport disadvantage.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>Community Transport provides vital access to recreation, shopping and doctors' appointments for transport-disadvantaged members of our community through the Home and Community Care Program and the Community Transport Program.</p> <p>Ensuring adequate community transport services are provided in regional NSW is a key action of several RTPs.</p> <p>TfNSW is working on several aspects within the community transport area to broaden its scope. This includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving the integration of community transport services into the passenger transport system is an RTP action for several regions in NSW. Achieving more efficient operation of these services may allow for a higher level of service and greater flexibility, therefore meeting a broader range of customer needs that experience transport disadvantage. We will work with community transport operators, taxi operators and traditional bus operators to help deliver a fully integrated transport system. • Given the vulnerability of community transport customers, the Government is introducing operator accreditation requirements for community transport operators providing services funded by TfNSW. <p>There has been ongoing consultation with the community transport sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consultations on the Social Access Framework identified opportunities to utilise community transport resources more flexibly in transport disadvantaged communities. <p>TfNSW notes that as a commitment of the 2011 state election, an additional \$12M was allocated for community transport over four years.</p>
---	-------------------------------	--

<p>Recommendation 10:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW develops a community transport accreditation scheme as a matter of priority.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Partially supported.</p> <p>Community Transport provides vital access to recreation, shopping and doctors' appointments for transport-disadvantaged members of our community through the Home and Community Care Program and the Community Transport Program.</p> <p>Given the vulnerability of community transport customers, the Government is introducing operator accreditation requirements for community transport operators providing services funded by TfNSW.</p> <p>There has been ongoing consultation with the community transport sector.</p>
<p>Recommendation 11:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that the NSW Government (subject to budgetary considerations):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers the provision of funding with the Australian Rail Track Corporation for projects to upgrade the existing track network to enable passenger trains to travel at faster speeds; • Obtains advice from Transport for NSW and the Australian Rail Track Corporation to identify the priority areas requiring immediate action. 	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported in principle.</p> <p>TfNSW is developing a long term plan for regional rail that will enhance rail passenger services through timetable, fleet, and targeted track improvements.</p> <p>Across regional NSW, the LTTMP identified a number of road and rail corridors that have strategic value in supporting economic development and population and employment growth. The following rail corridors, as part of the Australian Rail Track Corporation, have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadmeadow to Acacia Ridge (Queensland); • Macarthur to Albury/ Melbourne; • Broadmeadow to Moree; and • Parkes to Broken Hill. <p>TfNSW will conduct corridor strategy studies along these corridors as part of its long term plan for regional rail, which will investigate current barriers, future options and long term programs to enhance regional rail passenger services.</p> <p>For the longer term, TfNSW will consider high speed rail. The NSW Government is assisting the Australia Government with the high speed rail study and supports the initiative to select a high speed rail corridor between Brisbane and Melbourne. Once the corridor is identified, TfNSW will work with the Department of Planning and Environment to determine the best approach to protecting the corridor.</p>

<p>Recommendation 12:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW and NSW TrainLink:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review each of the timetabling issues raised in Appendix 5 of this report; • Identify areas where timetabling can be reconfigured to provide regional passengers with improved services, including same-day return journeys and departure and arrival times that complement business hours; and • Implement improvements to the timetabling of regional services where it is practicable and affordable. 	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>The recommendation is supported. TfNSW is developing a long term plan for regional rail which will guide the future rail services for rural and regional NSW. Along with the RTPs, this plan will provide a framework for more responsive and integrated public transport services. Submissions received in the course of the Inter-Regional Public Transport Inquiry will be considered in subsequent timetable development. TfNSW notes that Central Coast express services were improved in the October 2013 timetable and that a trial extension of NSW TrainLink coach services to Jindabyne and Berridale commenced in June 2014.</p> <p>NSW TrainLink's business strategy is to regenerate regional transport services with a focus on target markets, reoriented services and upgraded products. This includes investigation of timetabling options to deliver improved connectivity, journey times and customer amenity for regional and intercity customers. These options are currently being analysed by TfNSW - in partnership with NSW TrainLink - to determine their feasibility in the context of the wider integrated Transport timetable for NSW (see – TfNSW response to Recommendation 14).</p>
---	-------------------------------	---

<p>Recommendation 13:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW conducts a state-wide review of how connectivity between its regional rail and coach services can be improved, with a specific focus on remedying anomalies such as the Orange-Bathurst Bullet connection.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>NSW TrainLink is supporting TfNSW with these improvements.</p> <p>As a key action of several RTPs, TfNSW will improve NSW TrainLink and coach services via its long term regional rail plan and development of region specific NSW TrainLink service plans. These plans will involve an examination of opportunities to realign rail and coach timetables to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve connections and service frequency; • Improve the range of travel opportunities and reflect more closely the travel demands of the region and its customers; • Improve customer access to travel information for rail and coach travel; and • Improve the integration between local and regional bus services and NSW TrainLink services across the region.
<p>Recommendation 14:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW undertakes an audit of inter-regional public transport services to identify where express services can be introduced to facilitate faster travel times.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>TfNSW is undertaking work in a number of areas which will facilitate faster, more efficient travel via public transport services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TfNSW is developing a long term plan for regional rail that will enhance rail passenger services through timetable, fleet, and targeted track improvements. The plan will review the current stopping patterns of regional passenger services to consider options to standardised regular 'clockface' stopping patterns and consider more express services to meet the needs of the majority of passengers. <p>Under the long term regional rail plan, TfNSW will also examine opportunities to realign train and coach timetables to improve connections, service frequency and travel time and invest in improvements to the NSW TrainLink fleet to improve service levels.</p> <p>In the longer term, TfNSW will consider high speed rail from Brisbane to Melbourne via Sydney. TfNSW will continue to work with the Department of Planning and Environment and the Australia Government to identify and protect a corridor.</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with regional bus operators and local communities, TfNSW will introduce innovative regional bus services that are responsive to specific customer needs. Route and timetable changes and integration between different services will reduce travel time. To determine what works best, TfNSW will consider trial projects to guide future decisions about the provision of regional bus services. Our continued program of rural highway upgrades will also assist in the improvement of travel times for communities along the network of regional roads in NSW.
<p>Recommendation 15:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW upgrades existing bus interchange facilities where these facilities do not meet the needs of regional commuters.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>As an action of the RTPs, TfNSW is committed to improving public transport interchanges. TfNSW will ensure that major transport interchange points across NSW are assessed and benchmarked against interchange standards and that development of a program of improvement works will be rolled out to ensure NSW interchanges meet passenger needs.</p> <p>TfNSW delivers regional station upgrades and access improvements as part of the Transport Access Program (TAP). The TAP is an initiative to provide a better experience for public transport customers by delivering accessible, modern, secure and integrated transport infrastructure where it is needed most.</p> <p>The Country Passenger Transport Infrastructure Grant Scheme also provides support funding to projects that improve the amenity of passenger transport infrastructure for rural, regional and remote communities. Improvements to bus facilities are included within this scheme.</p>
<p>Recommendation 16:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that NSW TrainLink updates its website to include clear information about the connectivity of other public transport services with NSW TrainLink train services, including information about timetables and interchange facilities.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>The current NSW TrainLink website will be redesigned to provide an integrated and comprehensive single source of information on transport timetables, route maps, interchanges, fares, ticketing and other service information to help people understand their travel options in and around the regions.</p>

<p>Recommendation 17:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that NSW TrainLink:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implements improvements to on-board services and amenities on its trains and coaches that can be achieved in the short-term and without significant cost; and • Gives consideration to the Committee's findings with respect to on-board services in the acquisition of any new rolling stock utilised for inter-regional public transport. 	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>As part of our RTP work to improve NSW TrainLink services, TfNSW will invest in improvements to the existing NSW TrainLink fleet to improve on-board services and amenities. At present, upgrades are in progress for both the V-Set fleet and the Hunter fleet. A new intercity fleet is being procured.</p> <p>Considerations with regards to on-board services will be informed by customer insights, and trialling of new product innovations on existing services. The Committee's findings will also be given consideration and subject to assessment in the course of developing the on-board service model for new fleet.</p>
<p>Recommendation 18:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW implements practicable measures to improve the amount and timeliness of information available at regional stations.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>As identified in the RTPs, TfNSW is committed to improving public transport interchanges. Work will include improvements to customer information at stations such as service information, ticketing, timetables, and wayfinding guides.</p> <p>Station and interchange upgrades are delivered as part of the Government's TAP. They include improvements to signage and passenger information throughout the stations precincts.</p>

<p>Recommendation 19:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW considers measures to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broaden NSW TrainLink's coach network coverage; • Better integrate coach services with connecting train services; and • Remove unnecessary barriers to using coach services. 	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>Supporting travel to and from each region, TfNSW will improve NSW TrainLink and coach services via its long term regional rail plan and development of region specific NSW TrainLink service plans. These plans will involve an examination of opportunities to realign rail and coach timetables to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve connections and service frequency; • Improve the range of travel opportunities and reflect more closely the travel demands of the region and its customers; • Improve customer access to travel information for rail and coach travel; and • Improve the integration between local and regional bus services and NSW TrainLink services across the region. <p>TfNSW will also work to integrate NSW TrainLink coach services with regional bus services. This will involve a revision of timetables and service levels for train and coach services and identification of opportunities to improve connectivity to long distance train connections, as part of the long term regional rail plan.</p> <p>To support travel within each region, TfNSW will work towards better integrating NSW TrainLink coach services with regional bus services. As far as possible, we will aim to use coach services as part of the regional bus system. One initiative to be investigated is for NSW TrainLink coach services to pick up and set down at multiple key destinations in major centres and towns.</p> <p>NSW TrainLink is supporting the review of coach services currently being undertaken by TfNSW, with a focus on improving services and connectivity for regional customers and consistent with our commitment to put the customer at the centre of all that we do.</p>
---	-------------------------------	---

Recommendation 20:

The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW examines and reviews the cost of fares on the NSW TrainLink and the Sydney Trains networks, with a particular focus on the fare structure concerning the nexus of the NSW TrainLink and Sydney Trains networks.

Response:

Not supported.

Sydney Trains and NSW TrainLink offer different services with different costs:

- Sydney Trains and NSW TrainLink Intercity operate local commuter services. While the area covered by these services is extensive, most customers travel relatively short distances to and from work, education or other services. Seats cannot be booked and customers may be required to stand for part of their journey.
- NSW TrainLink Regional, in contrast, operates services for relatively long distance journeys. Seats must be pre-booked, ensuring that customers are guaranteed a seat for their whole journey. NSW TrainLink Regional customers also have access to different classes of seats (including sleeper berths on express passenger train (XPT) services), as well as services like on-board dining and a buffet car.

NSW TrainLink Regional provides various discounted or concessional fare products aimed at increasing patronage and encouraging regional tourism. These include the following:

- Country Pensioner Excursion ticket which for \$2.50 provides for a one-way trip anywhere in regional and rural NSW on NSW TrainLink services outside of the MyZone/Opal area;
- NSW Pensioner Travel Vouchers which provides four free single economy class trips on NSW TrainLink services within NSW each year;
- Half-fare concessions for pensioners, seniors and eligible students;
- 15% 'study fare' discount on NSW TrainLink services for students who are not eligible for half-fare tertiary student concessions;
- \$1 fare for children (aged 4-15 years) travelling with a full-fare paying adult;
- Family fares – all adults pay full fares and the first two children pay child fares, while any additional children travel free of charge; and
- Discounts of up to 30% of the full fare in low season.

NSW TrainLink Regional service fares were last increased in 2007.

TfNSW is considering ways to improve regional transport services as part of the RTPs and the Social Access Framework.

Minister for Transport

		<p>NSW TrainLink's Sales and Marketing Plan has been developed as part of the organisation's business strategy is to regenerate regional transport services with a focus on target markets, reoriented services and upgraded products.</p> <p>As part of this process, NSW TrainLink has recently conducted two pilot programs to better understand the relationship between patronage, revenue and fares. These include a "two for one" offer on interstate services and a \$50 fare cap on all regional train and coach services. Initial results from the \$50 fare cap in particular indicate that this is a successful way of growing patronage without impacting revenue, together with encouraging the use of trains/coaches in place of discounted flights, long drives and private coaches.</p> <p>The results of these trials will be provided to TfNSW to inform their fare review and harmonisation strategies.</p>
<p>Recommendation 21:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW extends the coverage of the Opal Card to incorporate public transport in all areas of regional NSW.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Not supported.</p> <p>Metropolitan public transport remains the focus of the Opal ticketing system. Any extension of the system to the broader transport sector, including regional NSW services, is not currently in scope. However, it may be considered after the system has been delivered on the core Metropolitan public transport networks.</p> <p>However, the footprint of the Opal ticketing system does cover some key areas of regional NSW. TfNSW is delivering to customers in the Hunter (from Newcastle to Dungog and Scone), the Blue Mountains (as far as Bathurst), the Central Coast, the Illawarra (as far as Bomaderry) and Southern Highlands (as far as Goulburn).</p> <p>TfNSW has delivered Opal fares to ferry and train customers and is now rolling out the Opal bus network during 2014. Light rail will follow in 2015.</p>
<p>Recommendation 22:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW investigates the matter of customers being required to disembark at the nexus of the NSW TrainLink and Sydney Trains networks in</p>	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Not supported.</p> <p>As noted in response to Recommendation 20, Sydney Trains and NSW TrainLink offer different services with different costs. This is reflected in their different fare structures.</p> <p>Under longstanding ticketing rules, a customer can choose either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The convenience of using one service to take them from a regional station to a metropolitan station

<p>order to obtain Sydney Trains fares, with a view to addressing the issue.</p>		<p>and pay the appropriate NSW TrainLink fare for the whole journey; or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disembarking at the border of the NSW TrainLink (Intercity) network and purchasing the appropriate ticket for that part of their journey. <p>TfNSW has no current plans to change these ticketing rules.</p>
<p>Recommendation 23:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW work with Destination NSW to expand its range of rail and coach tourism packages to and from regional NSW, with a particular focus on packages that support local festivals or events.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>NSW TrainLink & TfNSW response:</p> <p>Supported in principle.</p> <p>NSW TrainLink has an established partnership with Destination NSW.</p> <p>Destination NSW manages a comprehensive calendar of events. Those events accessible by NSW TrainLink train and coach services have been identified and incorporated into joint promotional campaigns.</p> <p>TfNSW and NSW TrainLink have also completed a review of Tourism Marketing Activities and are developing a plan aimed at enhancing the range, reach and effectiveness of tourism packages. This will cover packages that support local festivals or events.</p> <p>In addition, TfNSW is committed to improving tourism related transport services. As an action of several RTPs, this could include seasonal transport options such as holiday bus services and/or park & ride services, as well as working with local councils and festival organisers to develop service plans to encourage public transport use to connect to festivals.</p>

<p>Recommendation 24:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers introducing a comprehensive travel pass for domestic and international tourists that can be used across public transport modes; and • Makes all of its travel passes available to Australian residents. 	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>Two new travel passes for unlimited regional travel have been introduced since July 2013 – the Economy and Premium Discovery Passes.</p> <p>These passes are available to both International and Australian residents, and can be used for travel in any direction on the NSW TrainLink network for the selected period of time (fortnight, month, quarter, and half year).</p> <p>Sales of these new products have been significantly higher than the previous options, making a significant contribution to regional patronage and revenue.</p> <p>These more flexible products replaced the previous two travel passes, which had restrictive conditions: one was only available to international visitors and the other allowed travel in only one direction.</p> <p>NSW TrainLink will continue to promote the Discovery Passes via digital marketing and search optimisation, NSW TrainLink and external sales outlets, the website and on-board/ station posters.</p>
---	-------------------------------	--

<p>Recommendation 25:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that NSW TrainLink works collaboratively with Destination NSW to prepare a strategy focusing on short and long-term initiatives to improve the tourist experience of NSW TrainLink services, with the aim of encouraging more tourists to use these services. The strategy should also address disincentives for tourists using NSW TrainLink services.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport and Minister for Tourism & Major Events</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Partially supported.</p> <p>Destination NSW supports this recommendation in part. It relates to Actions 14D and 25B of the Visitor Economy Industry Action Plan, issued by the NSW Government in December 2012:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and pilot opportunities to improve the visitor experiences available through CountryLink including, for example, improved rail experiences and special event packages; and • Review the opportunities to provide greater and more accessible rail transport into Regional NSW and improved visitor experiences. <p>TfNSW has been identified as the lead agency to deliver these actions.</p> <p>Destination NSW recognises the need to improve the visitor experience. The current product offered by NSW TrainLink must compete with regional air services and those delivered by low cost airlines across NSW and Australia. These services are accessed by a variety of travellers who contribute to the visitor economy. In addition to leisure travellers, business, government and medical travellers all rely on these services.</p> <p>TfNSW is developing a long term plan for regional rail services which will consider how to improve rail services and create better connections to regional centres for all customers in regional NSW. Opportunities to realign train and coach timetables will be examined, as well as opportunities to improve service levels and customers experience on the NSW TrainLink fleet.</p>
<p>Recommendation 26:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that NSW TrainLink considers enhancing its capacity to carry bicycles on its services and simplifies the procedure for using this facility.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>From 2010 cargo space for bicycles, surfboards, snowboards and snow skis on XPT services increased from three spaces to five spaces, with three on Xplorer trains and two on coaches. The number of spaces currently available is limited by the layout of the luggage sections and their locations in both the XPT and Xplorer trains.</p> <p>NSW TrainLink is exploring the feasibility of new bike lockers at key stations to assist customers who would like to ride to the station but not travel with their bicycle. This may also assist customers who have difficulty parking at their origin station and limited access to connecting transport.</p> <p>The requirement to pre-book carriage of bicycles is required as there are limited storage spaces available (maximum of five on XPT, three on Xplorers, two on coaches). Pre-booking therefore avoids customer</p>

		<p>disappointment, should they arrive at a station and find all anchorage points are already taken.</p> <p>Bikes currently stowed in the luggage car need to be boxed due to limited space, and to limit the risk of injury to on-board train staff from protruding pedals and handlebars in the confined space.</p>
<p>Recommendation 27:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW reviews and updates its current marketing strategy for promoting NSW TrainLink services to the international and domestic tourism market, with a view to increasing the visibility of its services.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>NSW TrainLink has developed a Sales and Marketing Plan to support its business strategy that focuses on reorienting services and upgrading its product offers to increase appeal to contestable target markets. As part of this Plan, NSW TrainLink will use its partnership with Destination NSW to better leverage the significant investment made by the NSW Government in international and domestic tourism marketing.</p> <p>The NSW TrainLink Sales and Marketing Plan also identifies the greater use of digital marketing and search engine optimisation as a key strategy to increase the visibility of its services to both the domestic and international tourism markets.</p>
<p>Recommendation 28:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Destination NSW considers developing a strategy to enhance collaboration and engagement between NSW TrainLink and regional tourism organisations to identify and develop tourism opportunities.</p>	<p>Minister for Tourism & Major Events</p>	<p>NSW TrainLink & TfNSW response:</p> <p>Partially supported.</p> <p>NSW TrainLink will work with Destination NSW to engage with regional tourism organisations and identify opportunities for collaboration. NSW TrainLink will evaluate potential investments in marketing activities to support regional tourism based on the level of patronage for travel on its services that may be generated.</p> <p>NSW TrainLink Regional Management teams will continue to play a key role in connecting with their communities, identifying events and tourism attractions and ensuring coordinated marketing communications.</p> <p>Increased collaboration and engagement between TfNSW, local councils and local festival organisers will be facilitated.</p>

		<p>Destination NSW response:</p> <p>Partially supported.</p> <p>In line with the response to Recommendation 23, Destination NSW has been facilitating introductions between NSW TrainLink and relevant regional tourism organisations located in parts of the State that are serviced by the rail network and that are interested in exploring opportunities to deliver travel, event and accommodation packages in partnership.</p> <p>Destination NSW has been, and will continue to, liaise with NSW Trains to look at ways to develop transport and accommodation packages to and from regional NSW. The first activities are planned for the first quarter of the 2014-15 financial year.</p>
<p>Recommendation 29:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW works with Destination NSW to determine existing service gaps and to identify new NSW TrainLink train and coach services targeted towards growing the regional tourism market.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport and Minister for Tourism & Major Events</p>	<p>NSW TrainLink & TfNSW response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>TfNSW is working to improve NSW TrainLink and coach services in regional NSW via its long term regional rail plan and development of region specific NSW TrainLink service plans. These plans will involve an examination of opportunities to realign rail and coach timetables to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve connections and service frequency; • Improve the range of travel opportunities and reflect more closely the travel demands of the region and its customers; • Improve customer access to travel information for rail and coach travel; and • Improve the integration between local and regional bus services and NSW TrainLink services across the region. <p>In relation to transport and tourism, TfNSW is committed to improving tourism related transport services. As an action in a number of the RTPs, this could include initiatives such as branding of public transport services, raising awareness of travel options through brochures and websites, and developing seasonal transport options such as holiday bus services and/or park & ride services. We will encourage public transport use to connect to festivals in regional NSW, to assist in growing the regional tourism market around events and festivals.</p> <p>As part of the business strategy to regenerate regional transport services, focussing on target markets, reoriented services and upgraded products, NSW TrainLink is establishing a joint working group with Destination NSW and TfNSW to:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify service gaps that are limiting the growth of regional tourism; and Explore the feasibility of new train and coach services to address these. <p>Destination NSW response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>Destination NSW will continue to work with NSW TrainLink, pending the development of its long term regional rail plan. Where possible, Destination NSW will provide insight to NSW TrainLink, from the National and International Visitor Surveys, regarding preferences in modes of travel that could be used as an input to identify where increased resources could be focussed.</p>
<p>Recommendation 30:</p> <p>The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In determining the trains and buses to be used for the NSW TrainLink network in the future, purchases vehicles that reduce travel times, enhance passenger comfort and better meet the regional transport needs of customers; Gives active consideration to the acquisition of future rolling stock that incorporates tilt train technology; and Gives active consideration to the use 	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response:</p> <p>Supported.</p> <p>TfNSW is developing a long term plan for regional rail that will address the issues around more convenient timetables, slow travel speeds and service frequency.</p> <p>Solutions will be devised to help create a modern regional rail service that is an attractive option for regional communities. The strategy will canvass initiatives to improve running times network-wide and assess recommendations based on potential customer benefit from these services.</p> <p>TfNSW will also invest in improvements to the NSW TrainLink fleet to improve service levels and customer experience. Actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing fleet maintenance and stabling locations, to improve overall reliability and availability of the fleet; Ensuring the current NSW TrainLink fleet receives maintenance to ensure reliability; and Fleet replacement to help boost flexibility in the design of services and offer greater passenger comfort. <p>TfNSW will conduct corridor strategy studies as part of its development of a long term plan for regional rail; which will investigate different future rolling stock options that can reduce journey times.</p>

<p>of smaller rail car sets for NSW TrainLink services, with a view to more frequent services, where possible and practicable.</p>		
<p>Recommendation 31: The Committee recommends that Transport for NSW investigates the feasibility of carrying light freight on NSW TrainLink's services.</p>	<p>Minister for Transport</p>	<p>Response: Not currently being investigated. TfNSW is committed to moving regional freight more efficiently. LTTMP actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacing or upgrading key bridges in regional NSW through the Bridges for the Bush program to ensure parts of the transport network deliver productivity improvements and minimise the cost of transporting goods; and • Build a targeted program of town by passes in regional areas, where bypass projects can improve road safety and improve freight efficiency. <p>In terms of rail freight, the Hunter, Central West, Central Coast, Illawarra and Western RTP's include an action to support and invest in rail freight infrastructure and facilities. This includes supporting the Australian Government to complete pre-construction rail activities for the Maldon-Dombarton freight line; progress the North Sydney Freight Corridor project; and support investigation into an inland freight line.</p>