

# Industry Update

## The View from Canberra



# June 2011

## Moving People - The Next Decade

Registration for the 2011 BIC National Conference is now open.

The theme for the 2011 BIC National Conference is *Moving People – the Next Decade* and will focus on bringing operators and suppliers together to plan the direction of industry representation and businesses direction for the next decade

Some of the key sessions in the plenary program, which are still being finalised include:

- **National Contracts – Principles, Definitions and Non-negotiables**
- **Industrial Relations – The 5 Year Transition and Beyond**
- **Workshops and Open Discussion “The threats, the risks and the opportunities in the next decade and what do you want”**

To download a copy of the BIC National Conference Registration Brochure go to BIC’s Ozebus website [www.ozebus.com.au](http://www.ozebus.com.au).

## National Urban Policy and Moving People

In the context of the BIC Conference in Fiji and what we can expect and plan for in the next decade, the announcement of the National Urban Policy as part of the Federal Budget and the release of the comprehensive policy statement the following week by Minister Albanese is a key component of setting a course for the next ten years.

The National Urban Policy is the most significant Federal Government announcement ever made in regard public transport, Australia’s cities and the role of the Federal Government. The National Urban policy is one of the biggest achievements of the Rudd/Gillard Governments. That is, if they deliver?

The National Urban Policy has the potential to be the genesis for a long term policy framework that addresses how transport needs to work in the future in the context of our cities. The announcement reflects the core policy positions that the BIC has been advocating over the last decade and most recently in the Moving People – Solutions for a Growing Australia research.

On July 6 the BIC is organising a Summit with a number of other peak body organisations in Federal Parliament to re-enforce the need for Federal government involvement in how we move people, not just in our cities but in our regions and remote communities as well. The Summit will focus on the need for all parties to support the National Urban Policy and to develop policies that focus on how we move people as part of the solution to greenhouse gases, an increasing and ageing population and future energy challenges.

## Carbon Price and Moving People

Negotiations are underway between the Government, the Greens and the Independents through the multi-party climate change committee over the form the proposed Carbon Price will take before it is put to a vote in Parliament. No legislation is going to be introduced into Parliament until Julia is certain she has as an agreed negotiated package. So the timeframe for this to be resolved may still be a fair way off.

The BIC has taken a three pronged approach to how the bus and coach industry and public and active transport should be treated in the context of a Carbon Price:

- It doesn’t disadvantage public transport providers through increased fuel costs.
- It encourages a shift from cars to public and active transport through direct action aimed at commuters.

- It supports the uptake of environmentally friendly technology through purchase subsidies for low emissions and hybrid buses.

The whole community must play its part in whatever climate change policies are introduced if real greenhouse emission reductions are to be achieved. A Carbon Price if introduced should provide incentives for public transport use and for green jobs in the bus manufacturing sector. The national urban policy says as much. Let's hope there is some policy consistency and symmetry across these issues.

### **Sustainable Population Strategy and Moving People**

One of the disappointments in relation to policy consistency and symmetry was the recent announcement of the Sustainable Australia – Sustainable Communities Strategy by Minister Tony Burke. This strategy was supposed to be all about the future challenges of an increasing and ageing population. Whilst the strategy adopted the National Urban policy, it avoided the “big question” of future population levels and by doing so became hamstrung in assessing the impact of population growth on demand for public services and resources including public transport.

It is the BIC view this particular strategy doesn't go far enough in:

- Dealing with how public transport can fit into future sustainability measures from Government.
- Addressing the impacts of population growth on transport networks and identifying measures to address this.
- Identifying transport accessibility as a part of social inclusion policy.