

We all value the Australian can-do spirit and our willingness to pull together during these unprecedented difficult times with COVID-19. TAs intends to communicate and engage with all its members via technology and hopefully our actions at this moment will keep us moving forward. Collaboration remains an important strength for TAs at the branch and national levels with partners and corporate members, to deliver webinars and video conference presentations to engage with the TAs community. We can't lose sight of the need to care for one another and our communities – to maintain relationships and connections beyond telephone and video conference calls.

Engineers Australia has created a [COVID-19 Update](#) page with useful information and links for all EA members.

#### **For TAs business continuity, our plan is to:**

- Hold CPD presentations at branch and/or national level by webinar
- Continue TAs branch committee meetings and other specially arranged forums (e.g. working groups to discuss progress on TAs discussion papers) via Teams or other platforms
- Distribute monthly branch emails to members from Chairs of Branches
- Provide a National Monthly TAs news email by the Chair
- Progress advocacy initiatives (e.g. policy and discussion papers)
- Liaise with Federal and State Transport Agencies as required
- Continue our planning for the next national transport conference
- Keep TAs website up to date for CPD events (via webinar other media)
- Weekly posts on TAs LinkedIn Group page

We will also be working behind the scenes to go face to face with events once the crisis is over. We are conscious that while we can't run events in the near future, we need to remain in touch with TAs members and support them professionally.

Thanks to the Federal Government stimulus and industry support packages that are assisting communities and businesses in the short term. However, we all know there is a need to take a long term view. From TAs' perspective, with the assistance of the TAs national executive:

#### **We will arrange for online forums to discuss some of our thinking, including:**

- How we shape transport plans as part of smarter cities
- Looking at transport plans with different lenses (e.g. evidence form current experiences)
- How to capture the potential renewed willingness of society to accept changes
- Having a greater focus on pedestrian and cycle use, and other more sustainable transport generally
- Considering travel demand management measures

#### **Upcoming TAs Webinar Series**

Let me finish by sharing some good news connected to communicating with our TAs members. Our 2020 Transport Medal recipient, Professor Graham Currie, has kindly

offered to be our guest speaker for an upcoming webinar event hosted by our Victorian Branch. Professor Currie will present on a Monash University research project about the long-term impacts of COVID-19 on travel. He will also discuss his views on how COVID-19 might change the way people use transport across our cities. Professor Currie will be the first of Transport Australia Society's response to COVID-19, and we will be pulling together a series of nationally available webinars in the coming weeks/months.

EA and TAs will be hosting webinars using its WebEx system and one can register through the normal events website. As well, State TAs branch committees will continue to seek to organise events through the online system.

Stay Safe & Kind Regards,



**Shalendra Ram**

Chair, TAs National Executive

E: [transport@engineersaustralia.org.au](mailto:transport@engineersaustralia.org.au)

## MEMBER UPDATE

### 2020 TAs Corporate Member Survey

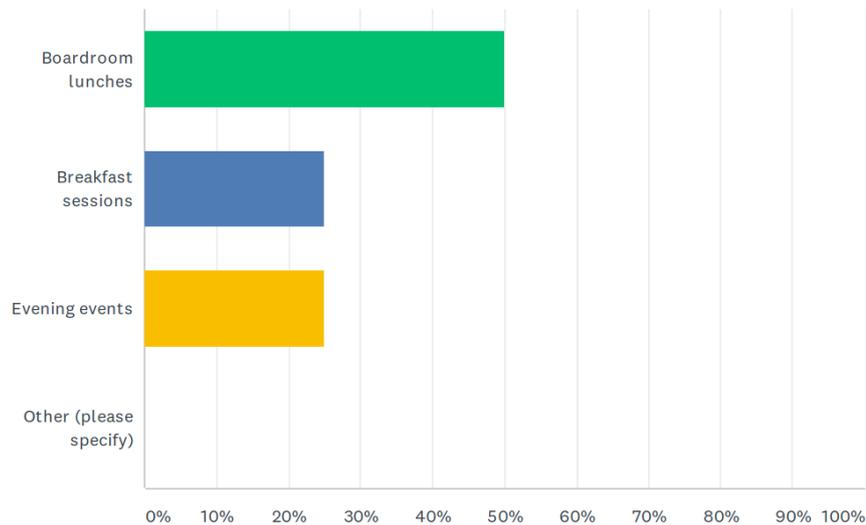
The TAs Corporate Survey went out to all 18 corporate members and feedback was received from five. A couple of key messages include:

- The diversity of types of events is good, not just technical seminars
- All responses noted interest in contributing to discussion papers and advocacy.

TAs national executive will arrange for a corporate only event in 2020 and will work with branch committees for round table discussions during the year. A corporate only forum would be the best way of getting corporate members together and having keynote speaker (e.g. a transport minister) in to have a facilitated informal discussion.

### Q8 If yes to Q7, please state your preferred format for that corporate member only event:

Answered: 4 Skipped: 1



### 2020 TAs Member Survey

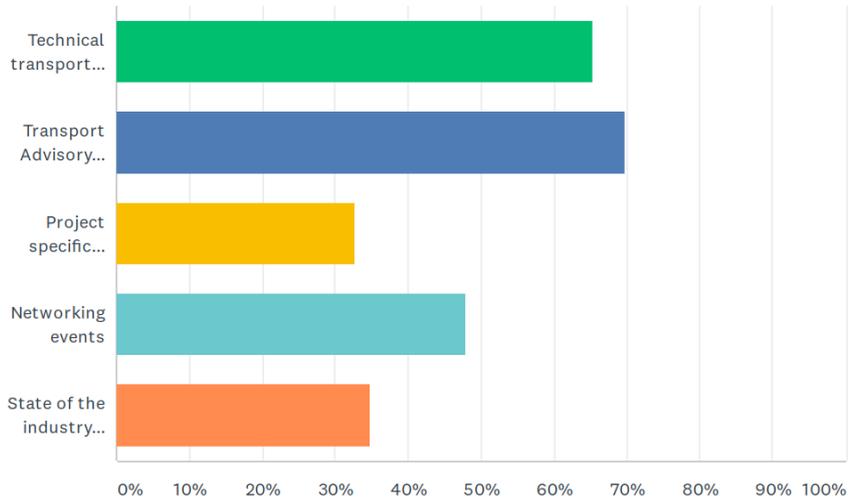
The TAs Corporate Survey went out to all TAs members and feedback was received from forty-six. We will keep the survey open for another few weeks. A few key messages from TAs member survey include:

- There is strong interest amongst members to be actively involved
- Members are very interested in:
  - transport advisory and technical transport seminars for CPD events in the evenings
  - webinars, longer training sessions,
  - advocacy and providing comments on drafts
- There was generally good awareness of national transport conference and TAs branch committee members, however, more could be done to improve this awareness.

TAs Branch Chairs, Deputy Chairs & Secretaries and Conference Chair & Committee will be taking account of these preferences in future events.

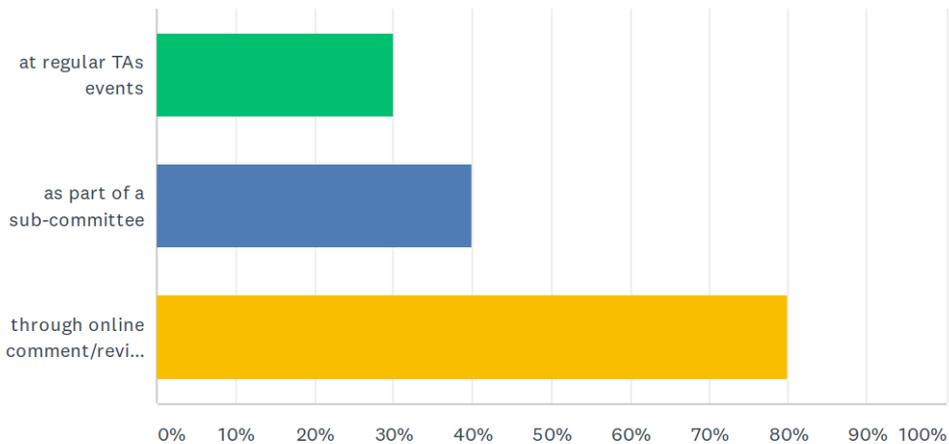
## Q2 What events are of most value to you throughout the year?

Answered: 46 Skipped: 0



## Q8 If yes to Q7, how would you like to be engaged to provide input

Answered: 40 Skipped: 6



TAs National Executive encourages our Branch Chairs to continue with CPD activities in the form of transport related presentations and discussion forums during the isolation and distancing caused by COVID-19. We will also list our activities around Australia on TAs website and post reminders via TAs Linked Group page. TAs branch committee members are encouraged to post on TAs Group LinkedIn page as well.

## UPDATE ON DISCUSSION PAPERS

With the COVID-19 environment, the thinking by the national executive was that all Discussion Papers be placed in a holding pattern until late June 2020 with exception of the Ports Discussion Paper. However, in the last two weeks, there has been some suggestion from Branch committees that TAs should continue its efforts in the preparation of the planned discussion papers. An update on the discussion papers are as follows:

### **Ports and other Maritime Issues (Mike Veysey – Chair of Working Group)**

The Discussion Paper on Ports and other Maritime issues is a deliberate attempt by EA's Transport Australia society to "spread our wings" beyond our traditional strengths in the roads and rail fraternity. Fortunately, we have discovered some of our members are really experts in this area! The Discussion Paper is very close to being finalised, with great thanks to our "Technical Editor" (i.e. the person who did most of the work) Michael Schaumburg. As Australia is an island nation it is impossible to overstate the importance of our ports, and the rail and road networks which connect with them. So, you might ask, what will we recommend? Here are a couple of our draft recommendations:

- Develop a long term (50 year plus) National Ports Strategy to support economic development and Defence needs. The strategy will indicate the future role of the major ports; ports expansion and if and where new ports need to be considered, or ports to be closed or change function.
- Establish a national governance framework incorporating all levels of government and private sector where appropriate to ensure the implementation of the national strategy. Ensure port authorities/ managers prepare comprehensive governance, risk management and accountability frameworks, policies and processes for their business and operations linked to overarching legislative and regulatory regime.
- We are saying it's about time to take our Ports and other Maritime infrastructure issues seriously, which may be a bit harsh, but there is no alternative to this "wake up call".

### **Airports (Christian Griffith – Chair of Working Group)**

Due to the dire and uncertain state of commercial aviation in Australia due to COVID-19, this discussion paper is unofficially on hold till June 2020. However, the Chair, together with a couple of authors will be progressing some discussions during April & May 2020. The airports have been particularly affected by COVID-19 and the future of aviation in Australia and globally is highly risky and uncertain. The initial intent (scoped a few months ago) was that TAs would prepare a discussion paper (DP) on:

- State of play with air transport in Australia
- Important issues and challenges
- Recommendations for improvements with:
  - high level focus on transport strategy/policy, planning & design & delivery; and
  - focus on what affects engineering, or that engineering affects.

The paper will cover background, current situation, future and finish with high level recommendations on engineering, safety & security, user experience (passenger to/from & at airports & movement of freight), cost of air-based transport of passengers and freight, technology and new industry developments. It will also include specific recommendations for types of airport in Australia and their importance: Domestic (city & regional) & International Airports – why are they important gateways; policy (funding, pricing, investment, safety, environment, governance), and aviation and transport engineering courses (pavement, traffic, asset management) at universities.

### **Climate Change and Transport (Scott Elaurant, Chair of Working Group)**

The discussion paper is unofficially on hold till June 2020 however the Chair together with a couple of authors will be progressing a draft with 1 or 2 other authors of his working group and a draft will be shared with the working group during May 2020 for comment. In the meantime, Scott Elaurant (South Australia TAs Branch Chair) and Michael Roth (Queensland TAs Branch Committee Member) have provided comments on a Transport Issues paper prepared by “Climateworks” (Monash University). The Issues Paper proposes focus areas for policy development and research by government, industry and research over the next decade, to support the transition to zero emissions transport. The paper:

- Brings together research on zero emissions transport solutions from different sources and sectors in one place
- Summarises major opportunities and issues faced by transport systems
- Provides a selection of case studies and discusses the opportunity for quick wins,

### **Universal Access to Transport (Naomi Langdon, Chair of Working Group)**

TAs is in the process of establishing a Working Group to address this key component of Australia's Transport Task - To ensure social inclusions and basic transport requirements are addressed for people who might otherwise be transport disadvantaged. This will lead to a TAs Discussion Paper in due course. It is early days; however, we are convinced this is a key issue for us to progress.

- The concept of focusing on universal access rather than access for those with a disability
- International (UN or other) and national requirements (e.g. DDA for infra & services and NDIS for clients / users)
- State of play for universally accessible transport in Australia
- Future position for universally accessible transport in Australia
- Recommendations (policy, infrastructure and services) – e.g. should there be a national Guideline for Universally Accessible Transport? What is the role of government in providing subsidised alternative transport (e.g. taxi, Uber etc)

### **Summary Comment**

My request to all TAs members is that, if you are interested in assisting with contributions or review of drafts if you have some spare time during these COVID-19 times and can assist any of the chairs or working groups, please reach out to them.

Progress of these discussion papers is very dependent on the availability of colleagues to move things along. TAs has a wonderfully rich resource of highly experienced professionals who we would like to tap in to for the benefit of the Australian community.

## TRANSPORT STORIES FROM AROUND AUSTRALIA

Thank you to the TAs national executive reps for their contributions to this section of the newsletter – stories from around Australia.

### Australian Capital Territory

ACT Government has been expanding its project roll out in **Active Travel** themed projects including extensive works going to the market across the Canberra region. The projects have included cycle and pedestrian projects with shared trafficable pavements. The works are in support of the Active Travel infrastructure and supporting standards that were released in 2019. Further, the works also support the ACT Climate Change Strategy that outlines a number of measures which include:

- expanding the role of the ACTSmart to promote Active Travel choices in homes, schools and businesses
- expansion of the Active Travel Office and school-based active travel initiatives implementing car free days
- prioritising walking and cycling infrastructure to improve the safety and connectedness of the active travel network
- exploring options for a reward scheme to increase active travel
- trialling financial incentives to encourage the uptake of electric bikes.

### Tasmania

The \$576 million Bridgewater Bridge replacement project included in the **“Infrastructure Tasmania Project Pipeline”** demonstrates that investment decisions are not always based on sound business cases. Infrastructure Australia concluded its independent evaluation of the Tasmanian Government’s Derwent River Crossing proposal following a rigorous assessment process. It has not been added to the Infrastructure Priority List at this time as a Priority Project, as the business case did not demonstrate that the benefits of the project would outweigh its costs. “We found that the cost of the proposed project would outweigh its benefits”. The business case also identifies a number of unresolved engineering issues that could add further costs to the project, including design issues and future maintenance requirements for the existing bridge. Nevertheless, the state government is pushing on with the project. Growth and demand forecasts made in 2019 may look quite different in 2020. Is it time to revisit our assumptions? Do our transport plans need to be reassessed?

Also, in Tasmania, recent events have highlighted the vulnerability to the economy posed by freight infrastructure constraints. Recent Headlines include: “Coronavirus,

industrial action in Melbourne and a cyber-attack have been blamed for delays moving freight in and out of the port of Burnie”; ["Dire situation' causing Bass Strait freight backlog"](#); VicPorts' lease offer to TT-Line 'quite unacceptable'; [International freight was already under pressure](#) from the spread of coronavirus. Tasmania’s status as a reliable supplier of fresh produce is at risk. Tasmanian exporters have invested significantly in just-in-time delivery and discussions around moving the Spirit of Tasmania birth to Geelong have added to the concerns of exporters. Infrastructure investment decisions need to reflect an overarching understanding of the integrated nature of supply chains and ensure both current and future demand is appropriately estimated.

## South Australia

The Australian and South Australian Governments are jointly funding the \$141 million **Flinders Link Project** to extend the existing Tonsley rail line to the Flinders Medical Centre, creating new connections to the health, innovation and education precincts. The project will include:

- A 650-metre extension of the current Tonsley rail line, including an elevated single track over Sturt Road, Laffers Triangle and Main South Road, linking Flinders Medical Centre and Flinders University to the passenger rail network;
- Construction of the new Flinders and Tonsley train station; and,
- An integrated shared pedestrian/cycle path adjacent the rail line from the new ramp located at the corner of Sturt Road and Birch Crescent to the new Flinders Station.

[The Flinders Link project](#) is expected to be completed in the second half of 2020.

To help safeguard the Flinders Link project team and the wider community, DPTI has implemented measures to manage the risks of contracting COVID-19. The Flinders Link project team will provide construction updates and work notifications via letterbox drops, emails and the project website. They are also available to speak via telephone. There will be no planned community events or information sessions until further notice.

## Victoria

In VIC there has been the release by Infrastructure Victoria of its document last week titled [Good Move: Fixing Transport Congestion](#). There are three big problems with our current transport pricing system – problems that can all be addressed if we change the way we pay and change the way we travel. This paper explores the problems, the solution, the community view and options for government on the pathway to change. Pricing scenarios cover roads, public transport and parking. We need to complement investment with network-wide transport pricing reform because it is necessary, effective and fair and motivates a willing community to change the way they travel. Vic TAs Branch may consider a forum to discuss this document.

## New South Wales

The NSW government has a vision is to give everyone the freedom to choose how and when they get around, no matter where they live. In order to achieve this the government is delivering a **\$55.6bn program – the largest Australia has ever seen to keep people and goods moving**. Some of the key projects under way or about to commence include:

- West Connex – The project is planned to open in stages and when all sections are finished in 2023, the road will enable a motorist to drive in a connected and traffic-light free loop from Parramatta past Ashfield, Rozelle and Sydney University and down to Kingsford Smith Airport.
- NorthConnex - In the north of the city, NorthConnex will enable a traffic-light free (yet toll-heavy) route from the Harbour Bridge to the Pacific Highway and to the Central Coast and Newcastle.
- Sydney Gateway – A new land and viaduct connection between the WestConnex and the Kingsford Smith Airport currently being tendered.
- Western Harbour Tunnel - Stretches from the Warringah Freeway at Cammeray, across Sydney Harbour, to the WestConnex interchange at Rozelle
- Beaches Link - Provides an alternative to the Spit Bridge for the Northern Beaches, connecting through to the Warringah Freeway and Gore Hill Freeway.
- Parramatta Light Rail - A 12-kilometre light rail network with 16 stops will connect Westmead to Carlingford via the Parramatta CBD and Camellia.
- Sydney Metro City & South West - A 30-kilometre metro line extending metro rail from the end of Sydney Metro North West at Chatswood under Sydney Harbour, through new CBD stations and south west to Bankstown.
- Sydney Metro West - A direct connection between the CBDs of Parramatta and Sydney, linking communities along the way that have not been previously serviced by rail.
- New Intercity Fleet - A new fleet of intercity trains carrying customers from Sydney to the Central Coast, Newcastle, the Blue Mountains and the South Coast.
- Regional Rail – Replacement of the entire NSW regional rail fleet, including 60 XPTs and more than 50 XPLOER and Endeavour passenger cars.
- Easing Sydney's Congestion - A program to deliver significant improvements to reduce Sydney's congestion.

## Queensland

The population of South East Queensland expected to grow from approximately 3.3 million to 5.5 million by 2041, while total employment expected to increase by around 1.1 million job over the same period. With modelling indicating the current rail network is nearing capacity, particularly in the peak periods, it is critical the capacity of the SEQ rail network is increased to ensure appropriate levels of accessibility are maintained into the future. To address this need, following extensive planning TMR has recently commenced construction of the **Cross River Rail project**. This is a 10.2km rail line from Dutton Park to Bowen Hills, which includes 5.9 kilometres of twin tunnels under the Brisbane River and Brisbane CBD. Cross River Rail will deliver four new

underground stations at Boggo Road, Woolloongabba, Albert Street and Roma Street, and upgrades to Dutton Park and Exhibition stations.

Key benefits from this project include providing economic growth through urban renewal across the whole SEQ rail network, unlocking the bottleneck of having a single rail river crossing within the inner city, providing greater rail capacity for commuters to the outside the Brisbane local government area where 80% of the population growth will occur, and transport integration with other projects such as Brisbane Metro, and new rail connections to the Sunshine Coast, Ripley and Flagstone. Cross River Rail construction has been adjusted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, with major works contractors proactively implementing significant social distancing and other protective measures to maintain safe operations, along with 95% of the Delivery Authority's office workforce now working from home. The Queensland Government sees this project as an important part of sustaining Queensland's economy through the COVID-19 pandemic period, with the Delivery Authority's current focus being to ensure the project is mobilised throughout this significant event. You can read more the state's review on transport in the [South East Queensland's Regional Plan Review](#).

## Northern Territory

**Darwin Movement Strategy** - Darwin and the Northern Territory are expected to drastically transform in the coming decades as we strive to keep pace with rapid technological, cultural, social, economic, and climatic changes. The City of Darwin in conjunction with the Northern Territory Government, are preparing Movement Strategy for Darwin that will lay the foundations to embrace the opportunities that emerge from these changes and lay the foundations to create a modern, sustainable, and active city that is accessible and safe for all residents. The Strategy will be further supported by smart city, greening and cooling initiatives currently being developed for by the City of Darwin. The Strategy will have a 10-year life span and will need to consider a broad range of opportunities for everyone to safely and efficiently move through the city. The Strategy will include conventional transport methods; however, emphasis will be placed on alternative methods of transport; such as bicycles, e-scooters, personal mobility devices, electric vehicles; all the while improving amenity for pedestrians.

## Western Australia

The Evolve Bayswater Alliance – Coleman Rail, has been named the preferred proponent to build the new station for the Public Transport Authority of WA. The **Bayswater Station** is a complex project in its own right and marks the first part of the Morley-Ellenbrook Line. The station is set to become a vital transport hub and will better integrate with the Bayswater town centre through new public spaces and more pedestrian-friendly streets. The scope of the \$253 million new Bayswater Station project includes a new station building, surrounding precinct works, new platforms (long enough to accommodate 6-car trains), new rail bridge, elevated Principal Shared Path, upgraded pedestrian underpass, bus interchange, improved parking, and rail infrastructure to support the Forrestfield-Airport Link and the future connection with

the Morley-Ellenbrook Line. A rail turnback required for Forrestfield-Airport Link operations will also be built west of the new train station. The first island platform (with a track on each side) will be built while the current line and station continues operation, ensuring impacts to commuters and the local community will be minimised. Trains will begin using the new platforms once they are completed, which will allow the old station to be removed and a second island platform to be built to accommodate the Morley-Ellenbrook Line. This announcement was an important step in the continuing delivery of the WA Government's METRONET program of works, that should assist in WA's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.