

4 December 2017

Transport for NSW
Future Transport Team
18 Lee Street
CHIPPENDALE NSW 2008

To Whom It May Concern

Transport for NSW – Draft Tourism and Transport Plan

1. The Tourism & Transport Forum Australia (TTF) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the *Draft Tourism and Transport Plan*. TTF is a national member-funded forum that advocates for the public policy interests of leading corporations and institutions in the Australian tourism, transport and aviation sectors.
2. TTF welcomes the development of the *Draft Tourism & Transport Plan*. TTF has long advocated for the better integration of tourism and transport policy and for greater coordination between tourism and transport agencies in the delivery of infrastructure that supports the growth of the NSW visitor economy. TTF is pleased that the NSW Government has acknowledged the importance of public transport to the NSW visitor economy.
3. The visitor economy is one of Australia's super-growth industries, particularly in the post-resources boom period. In NSW alone, tourism is worth more than \$38 billion, directly supports 261,000 jobs and contributes around 3 per cent of GSP. NSW also makes up 29 per cent of Australia's total tourism consumption.
4. Public transport will play an increasingly important role in supporting the growth of the NSW visitor economy, providing travellers with efficient and reliable connections between major international gateways, including airports and ports, to hotels and CBD locations. Public transport also provides visitors with an affordable means of access to and from visitor precincts, major event venues and regional destinations.
5. The most visited cities in the world are supported by easily accessible and frequent mass transit services. New York, London, Paris, Tokyo and Hong Kong are all cities that provide visitors with world-class public transport options. For many of these cities, its transport network is a world renowned tourist attraction in its own right.

6. The NSW Government is to be commended for its work in improving the transport experience for domestic and international visitors. The introduction of more frequent rail services between Sydney Airport and the CBD and between Sydney and the Blue Mountains are welcome initiatives. TTF also acknowledges the NSW Government's decision to fast-track the replacement of regional XPT trains to improve the comfort and reliability of regional journeys. However, more needs to be done to provide better public transport services for visitors.
7. TTF is particularly concerned about the lack of public transport access for visitors to and from National Parks. Nature-based tourism has become increasingly popular in the past five years, with international nature-based visitor numbers in Australia increasing 49 per cent since 2012. Similarly, domestic visitor numbers have also increased by 41 per cent over the same period.
8. However, the full potential of our National Parks and regions are yet to be realised due to a lack of public transport access for visitors. TTF recommends that the NSW Government continue to invest in regional rail services to further open up nature-based tourism opportunities.
9. TTF also believes that the NSW Government should work with the Australian Government to prioritise investment in the improvement of inter-city rail services between Wollongong and Sydney, Newcastle and Sydney and Canberra and Sydney within the next decade.
10. In addition, TTF believes that there is potential for the NSW Government to expand on-demand transport trials to regional areas to further improve connectivity to nature-based tourism destinations. Trials could provide an affordable, reliable and convenient 'last-mile' link between major transport hubs, such as train stations and airports, with hotels and major tourist attractions.
11. Out of peak transport services also need to be improved in Sydney to support the NSW visitor economy. TTF notes that the current Sydney transport network does not provide 24 hour public transport services. This is a deterrent to the NSW nighttime economy – making it difficult for shift workers and visitors to get home, particularly on weekends, and for those living in regional areas. TTF urges the NSW Government to follow the Victorian Government's lead and undertake a trial of 24 hour public transport services on weekends.
12. TTF supports the development of new payment and ticketing options, and is a strong supporter of the NSW Government's trial of contactless payments on the Manly Ferry. TTF encourages the NSW Government to expand the contactless payment trial across NSW.
13. It is important, however, that any future roll-out of contactless payment platforms across the network can support both debit and credit payment systems, providing commuters and visitors with greater choice when paying for transport services.

14. TTF also urges the NSW Government to consider working with other Australian jurisdictions to provide a seamless public transport payment option. Currently each State and Territory has their own payment system for public transport services, i.e. Opal in NSW, Myki in Victoria and the GoCard in Queensland. This can be a frustrating experience for tourists who have to purchase multiple 'smartcards' over the duration of a visit.
15. Advancements in contactless payment technology mean there is an opportunity for Australian jurisdictions to work together to provide a consistent payment system for public transport services, providing a more seamless customer experience. TTF encourages the NSW Government to consider a feasibility study that considers the possibility of developing a consistent payment system for public transport services across Australia.
16. Initiatives for investigation over the next 10 years, including providing multiple language options on Opal top up machines and the extension of Opal ticketing to other private operators, are supported. TTF also supports moves to provide visitors with an 'Opal visitor pack' that can be purchased prior to arrival in Australia to encourage greater use of public transport services.
17. TTF notes that travel to and from major sporting events is often free or subsidised. This provides a great incentive for attendees to use public transport to access major events and associated precincts. TTF believes that subsidised public transport services should be extended to major arts and cultural events across NSW. TTF would urge the NSW Government to work with the sector to undertake a trial as a means of boosting attendance at major arts and cultural events.
18. TTF supports the roll out of better WiFi connectivity on Sydney Ferries, and at Central Station and Circular Quay. In the longer term, TTF believes the NSW Government should extend free WiFi to cover all transport services, stations and wharves to provide a better customer experience for visitors across the NSW transport network.
19. Cruise shipping is the most dynamic and fastest growing sector of the Australian visitor economy and has become one of the great success stories for Australian tourism. However, with port facilities at Circular Quay at full capacity and an increasing number of ships too large to pass beneath the Sydney Harbour Bridge to access the White Bay terminal, the only viable deep-water option to accommodate growth and cater to the tourism industry is Garden Island.
20. TTF urges the NSW Government to work with the Federal Government, and in particular the Department of Defence, to secure a long-term option for berthing cruise ships that balances security and tourism needs to make sure NSW doesn't miss out on lost tourism revenue.
21. Overall, TTF believes that the *Draft Tourism and Transport Plan* is a good first step to ensuring better integration between the visitor economy and the public transport network. It is critical that the plan does not become just another 'glossy document' and provides real outcomes for the NSW visitor economy. This will require a close working relationship between NSW tourism and transport agencies over the long-term.

22. Thank you again for the opportunity to provide a submission to the *Draft Tourism and Transport Plan*. Should you have any further questions about this submission, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Ben Gommers
Corporate Affairs Manager