

## **BIC Column March 2014**

There have been some headlining grabbing announcements this month (Qantas, cut down more trees), a lot of intrigue and accusations flying around (Stephen Conroy, Clive Palmer). Thankfully none of that has involved the bus industry.

As we all know, and appreciate, the bus industry is the workhorse of passenger transport and we tend to stay away from the limelight and controversy, we just quietly move people where they need to go and get on with the job.

The same applies to the industry representation BIC undertakes in Canberra and works with State Associations in achieving. This month the BIC is at the coalface in representing the industry.

In early March I appeared at the public hearing into the Senate Inquiry into the Infrastructure Amendment Bill. The purpose of the Inquiry is to determine what impact proposed amendments to the Infrastructure Australia Bill would have on the organisations role in assessing infrastructure project proposals and providing advice to the Commonwealth Government.

After having a look at the proposed changes to the law, the BIC determined the Bill might limit Infrastructure Australia's ability to compare all types of infrastructure proposals (in particular ones relating to public transport), and to provide transparency on how decisions are made by the current Government.

We were not alone in this view so we drew together the resources and support of members of the Moving Australia 2030 Taskforce, and the final submission we put to the Inquiry was endorsed by six separate national organisations. This gave our views more clout and the position in our submission was mirrored by a range of submissions by other organisations put forward to the Inquiry.

The hearing was quite robust and the BIC gave a good account of the need for the Commonwealth Government to take a role in our cities and public transport through independent bodies like Infrastructure Australia. You can see all of the fireworks of the appearance on the OzeBus website via YouTube [www.ozebus.com.au](http://www.ozebus.com.au).

In mid March we will be hosting our annual industry dinner in Canberra and holding a Lobbying Day at Parliament House which will bring delegates from the BIC Council and Membership together with Federal Parliamentarians. We have more than 20 meetings scheduled for the Lobbying Day and we will be working to ensure that the discussions are relevant at both a local and national level.

Prior to these events the BIC is hosting a dinner and discussion with Minister for Small Business and long time bus industry supporter the Hon Bruce Billson MP. We have a range of issues relating to the impact of red and green tape on bus operators which we will present to the Minister.

The BIC is also sponsoring the Australian Davos Connection Infrastructure and Cities Summit in Sydney which will include addresses from the Minister for the Environment the Hon Greg Hunt, Minister for Communications the Hon Malcolm Turnbull and Shadow Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, the Hon Anthony Albanese.

So another busy month for BIC, while the bus industry gets on with doing what it does best, safely moving people around our cities and regions 365 days a year with a minimum of fuss and drama.