

STUDENT TRANSPORT ASSISTANCE POLICY (STAP) FRAMEWORK INQUIRY <i>Committee's Terms of Reference</i>	BUSWA COMMENTS	CONTRACTOR COMMENTS	PARENT COMMENTS	SCHOOL COMMENTS
a) Eligibility Criteria for students to qualify for transport assistance including:				
Nearest appropriate school	Definition of "nearest" school - need to account for local roads, weather conditions, suitability of turning points, routes etc. Should School Bus Services be more aligned with the Education Department?	This criteria has not kept up with the changing face of life in orange school bus areas. Population is decreasing, some farms are getting larger and therefore some family members are moving further away from their traditional base. This is forcing brothers/ sisters families to part and go to schools that are usually smaller less programed and or equipped schools, splitting families from their birthplace. Tradition and community are very strong ideals in the country. How can someone sitting in an office in Perth tell a parent which school is appropriate for their child??		
Access to Spurs	Current definition refers to distance, not time taken. Suggest there should be no limit on Spurs as long as they fit within the 90 minutes.	I know it's a dirty word!! But a bit of common sense with spurs would be good. If a family has 3 children on a bus, plus one to join the following year, live ~ 2kms from the highway pickup, they apply for the bus to front gate and get a 20 METRE extension!!! These are not "latch key kids". They can not safely walk these roads as a metropolitan child can walk theirs. A parent has to be there to drop off and pick up, which they all do in these situations. But they have to cut short work etc to do so. Most spurs are gravel roads which take farm utes through to air seeders and B doubles. They do not have a footpath!		
Inclusion of social, community, economic, financial factors	Common sense approach to provide flexibility. Eg treatment of complimentary students where most appropriate school is not necessarily the closest to home (place of parents' work, school attended by siblings etc)Siblings at the same school. High School able to be completed at 1 school			
What are the current eligibility criteria?	Enrolled at nearest appropriate school, in compulsory education, regularly use bus (60%), live more than 4.5 km from school, reside outside designated Public Transport Area.			
Are eligibility criteria too restrictive, or can they have unintentional outcomes?	Yes.Consider safety of students and take a common sense approach where the 4.5km rule results in unintended / potentially dangerous outcomes. Should school of choice outcomes be permitted where this is a reasonable outcome in a particular situation? Obtain examples of unintended outcomes.			
Are DoE school intake areas consistant with "nearest appropriate school" eligibility requirements?	There is no consistency with the education department	NO		
How might eligibility criteria be improved?	Flexible, common sense approach. Other recommendations based on feedback and comments.	Flexibility and more common sense. SBS needs to consult and listen to those who are directly involved.		
b) The types of transport assistance and entitlements to be provided to ensure students can undertake an appropriate education:				
What are current transport assistance and entitlements provided to students under the STAP framework?	See STAP document			
Are current types of transport assistance and entitlement satisfactory?	Calculation / amount of conveyance allowance - does this result in a reasonable / fair outcome for all parties?			

How are types of transport assistance offered affected by changing area demographics?	School closures / amalgamations / new schools - how this affects existing services and whether conveyance allowances offer a satisfactory alternative.			
Are there additional types of transport assistance or variations to existing types that could be provided?	Recommendations to be based on feedback and comments.	<i>Thinking laterally - Could parents pay a small fee (eg: \$50 per term) to access a bus going to their choice of appropriate school. SBS, contractor and parent would have to negotiate the route.</i>		
c) Relevance of existing policies, practices and rules that are applied in delivering transport assistance arrangements:				
What other policies, practices and rules support or sit behind the STAP and Operational Guidelines. Eg how are you affected by rules regarding regularity of use?	Policies to consider include: complimentary passenger policy, behaviour policies and codes of conduct, policies for students attending educational support facilities, nearest appropriate school policy, policies re vehicles and infrastructure			
Do these additional policies, practices and rules lead to unfair, inefficient or unintended consequences?	Consider Comp students, nearest actual schools, treatment of pupil free days			
How might policies, practices and rules be improved?	Recommendations to be based on feedback and comments			
d) Assessment process when evaluating the safety of bus stops and routes				
What is the assessment process?	SBS says it recognises the importance of frequently updated route mapping and uses a variety of data sources and mapping systems to obtain an accurate and flexible mapping tool "which allows for adjustments to routes to be made relatively easily and quickly" and that a number of factors are relevant to route / stop design.			
What considerations are taken into account in the assessment process?	Scheduled review program criteria including survey forms, annual returns, changes in student demand, contract expiry dates, scheduled vehicle replacements, route changes proposed by SBACs etc. What is the basis of the safety assessment?			
How consultative is the assessment process?	SBS says the process of reviewing routes or areas is conducted in an open and transparent way and that it engages with School Bus Advisory Committees, contractors and schools. Does this extend to safety assessment?			
How could the assessment process be improved?	Recommendations to be based on feedback and comments.			
e) Implications of the NDIS on the delivery of transport assistance for students attending Ed Support facilities				
How does the NDIS interact with the delivery of transport assistance for students attending Ed Support facilities?	Ed support contractors			
Is this interaction between the NDIS and delivery of transport assistance likely to change in the near future? If so how?				
Are there any gaps in eligibility between students eligible for NDIS and those eligible for transport assistance under the STAP framework?				
How could any gaps in eligibility be filled?				
f) Contract arrangements with service providers, including appropriateness of current school bus contracts, and payment arrangements, and previous contractual arrangements and the manner in which they were created:				
What type of contractual arrangements exist for the provision of school bus services under the STAP framework?	672 Evergreen Contracts, 120 short term /invoiced services (tendered),82 fixed term contracts (tendered), 98 cluster contracts (tendered) 40 evergreen contracts have been terminated in the last 18 years			

Are there any issues with the current contractual arrangements?	Contract review. BusWA lawyer John Hammond is reviewing the Evergreen contract and will recommend changes. All feedback welcomed			
How can the contractual arrangements for the provision of school bus services under the STAP framework be improved?	Recommendations to be based on feedback and comments. Relationships are at an all time low, lack of confidence in communications with staff at SBS for fear of retribution. Not enough transparency in calculating TDVs and formulars for the evergreen contracts			
g) Resourcing of School Bus Services division with the PTA:				
Is the SBS division sufficiently resourced to appropriately manage the STAP?	How do we find out this info? Obtain examples of under or mis-resourcing and impacts of this.			
Has there been any change to the resourcing of SBS division in the last 10-15 years?	Focus of response to recommend positive / consultative relationships with SBS			
If so, how has resourcing changed, and on what basis?				
h) The appropriateness of the conveyance allowance as an alternative to transport assistance:				
see a) and b) above	<i>Conveyance is paid at a rate well under current rates of using a private car</i>			