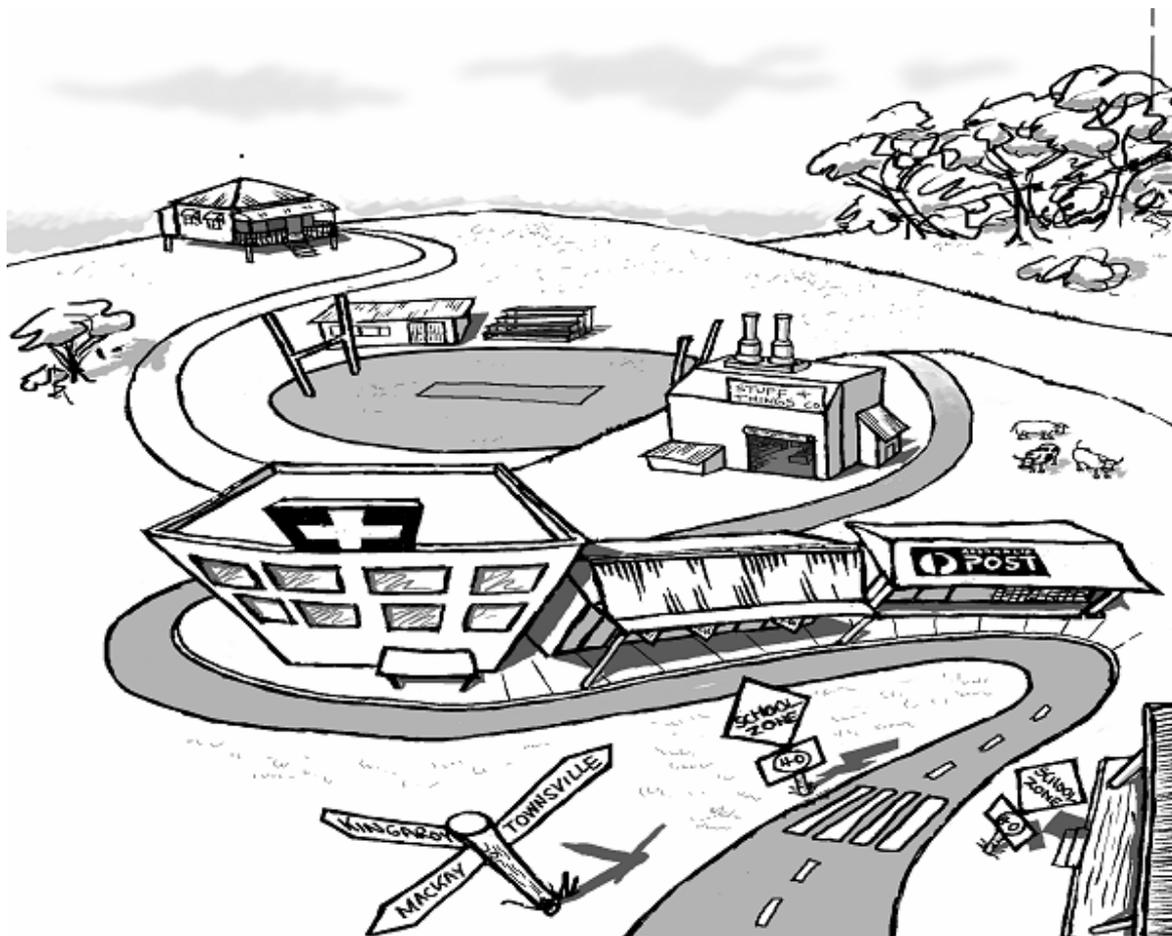


PERSONAL ACCESS AND MOBILITY

Strategic Policy Issues and Insights
from Regional Queensland



Queensland Council of Social Service Inc
Unmet Transport Needs Forum

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About the UTNF

The Unmet Transport Needs Forum (UTNF) is a coalition of organisations and individuals sharing a concern about the impact of unmet transport needs upon the lives and well being of Queenslanders and Queensland communities.

Vision

A Queensland that supports the quality of life for all through the provision of safe, affordable, and equitable access to goods, services, opportunities and infrastructure which meet the needs of all individuals.

Purpose

1. To engage all affected, interested and responsible parties in and around strategic issues of unmet transport needs.
2. To identify and promote the cross-government cross-sector and community analysis of strategically significant issues relevant to advancing the vision and to address those issues by:
 1. promoting the vision of the forum
 2. influencing public policy and planing processes and decision-making;
 3. promoting and facilitating the sharing of information and networking;
 4. being a critical friend of the government; and
 5. strategically connecting people and their organisations at all levels.

Key Task Areas

- Influencing / Advocacy
- Linking / Networking
- Policy and Planning Development

Executive Summary

Transport is a concern everywhere and the implications of unmet transport needs in regional and urban communities continue to be recognised and to grow in importance and scope.

Consistent with its vision and purpose, the Unmet Transport Needs Forum (UTNF) conducted a program of regional forums with a view to identifying the strategic policy issues and insights that underpin the unmet transport needs and concerns of regional Queensland. These forums, conducted in Kingaroy, Townsville and Mackay, provided a space in which the current unmet transport needs of regional Queensland could be discussed and debated.

In the view of the UTNF there were seven broad themes or areas of concern emerging from the forums:

1. Social and economic impacts of unmet transport needs

Unmet transport needs impact on the social and economic fabric of regional communities. Impact on the social fabric of the community occurs because people are unable to participate in society and interact with others. Impact on the economic fabric of the community occurs initially because businesses and services are not easily accessible to their full customer base and ultimately as people move to other areas where they have better access to goods and services.

2. Concerns about the use, recruitment and management of volunteers in community services

Community organisations are often reliant on attracting volunteers to their service to carry out their activities. Community services are, however, struggling to mitigate the risk issues associated with employing volunteer labor and there are consumer concerns about the training and skills of volunteers.

3. The level of awareness of essential information and knowledge about existing transport services, programs and resources

Generally, the community has a low level of awareness of essential information about existing responses to unmet transport needs. Lack of information and knowledge about existing transport services, programs and resources is an unnecessary contributor to unmet transport needs.

4. An absence of networking, co-operation and partnerships at local and regional levels

An apparent lack of networking, co-operation and development of partnership responses is another unnecessary contributor to unmet transport needs. Networking with others around issues of unmet transport needs is important because it leads to recognition of similar issues and the development of partnership responses to unmet transport needs. Although individuals, community services, businesses and governments all have a role in developing responses to unmet transport needs key stakeholders are often absent from the development of partnership and co-ordinated responses.

5. Overlaps/gaps in existing government services and programs when viewed as a whole

The way government programs are designed and delivered, including their eligibility criteria, affects the development of innovative solutions to unmet transport needs. There is also no incentive from government funders to encourage community services to think outside their squares and create services to benefit not only their target group but also other groups within the community.

6. 'Thinking inside the square' – conventional conceptualisation of the issues and solutions

Unmet transport needs are a problem for all Queensland communities, urban or non-urban. But in regional communities there are the added dimensions of the tyranny of distance, a dispersed population base and a small resource pool. These mean that solutions like fixed route, fixed timetable bus services that are designed for high population density areas are often unsuitable for regional communities. Despite this, these services are too often seen as the solution in regional areas.

7. 'It's more than the trip' – other concerns beyond just meeting the transport need

The nature of the transport service, the vehicle used, infrastructure at either end of the journey, personal characteristics and the integration of transport services with non-transport services all play major roles in affecting people's ability to move around. The trip itself is only part of what may be needed to meet certain unmet transport needs.

The UTNF considers that the key policy issues underpinning these themes in turn are:

- 1.** Unmet transport needs are more than just a transport issue. Because of their impacts on communities as a whole, concerned individuals, community services, local businesses and government agencies at all levels are all essential stakeholders in developing responses to unmet transport needs. Each of these stakeholders has a vested interest in ensuring that all other stakeholders are actively involved in local responses to unmet transport needs. Furthermore, the many stakeholders within government share a particular vested interest in the development of a whole of government approach to access and mobility issues that is supportive of viable local solutions to unmet transport needs.
- 2.** Government programs consciously fund community organisations on the assumption they will employ volunteer labor to deliver their services. Accordingly, these same government programs should be responsible for ensuring that the community organisations they fund have the capacity to adequately support and resource volunteers and to manage the associated risks.
- 3.** The low level of awareness of essential information and so on means that government is not getting the best value for its existing funding because community services cannot function at optimum effectiveness. Responding to this and improving unmet transport needs requires a mechanism at the regional level that can disseminate information, assist in building knowledge, promote awareness and encourage understanding.

4. Community services need to be encouraged to network and co-operate with other agencies and stakeholders to see how they could benefit the broader community whilst servicing their own client groups. Without the development of a mechanism in the local community that can systematically deal with issues raised and support the development of partnerships, responses to unmet transport needs in regional Queensland will continue to be piecemeal.
5. The development of flexible, innovative services from government funded service providers with a focus on delivering benefits more broadly than the funded target group is one of the keys to responding to unmet transport needs. Inflexible government programs inhibit the development of such services. Government programs should be set up with attention as to how they fit in with and relate to other programs and services. This will support the development of a supportive whole of government response to unmet transport needs
6. Solutions to unmet transport needs in regional Queensland need to be seen firstly in terms of access and mobility rather than transport *per se* and then in terms of passenger transport rather than public transport. Innovative solutions to unmet transport needs services that utilise all the available local resources and focus on service delivery options as well as on the movement of people need to be developed at the community level. All stakeholders in the problem must be involved in this process.
7. Accessible modes of service delivery, improvements to the built environment at either of a journey and the integration of the journey with other non-transport services are all needed in a holistic response to unmet transport needs.

The UTNF believes that the insights presented in this document are powerful tools for informing and shaping policy development and decision making at local, regional and state program and government levels. These policy insights will help people to look outside their squares and develop innovative responses to unmet transport needs in their communities. These policy insights will also help people to realise that whilst no one person has the capacity to deal with unmet transport needs on their own, every one of us is capable of taking action and every one of us should encourage others to do likewise.

Introduction

Background

Every Queenslander's ability to access employment, housing, health, recreation, education and other community services is critically reliant upon their ability to move around the community in ways that are affordable and sustainable. In the broadest sense unmet transport needs create barriers to personal access and mobility.

Unmet transport needs are especially significant for:

- urban fringe and rural communities who are isolated from services because of a lack of public transport services;
- residents in urban fringe and rural communities who have no access to private cars; and
- particular population segments such as people with disabilities, older people and youth who have difficulty accessing available public transport services because it is not designed to meet their needs.

The essential concern of the Unmet Transport Needs Forum (UTNF) is the impact that unmet transport needs have on Queenslanders and Queensland communities. By highlighting some of the impacts, this paper is designed to generate debate about unmet transport needs in Queensland with a view to influencing or shaping policy development. Whilst the issues in this paper are not new, the discussion of the issues does aim to present unmet transport needs in a new light and to generate new debate and insights.

Project Aim

In developing this research paper, the UTNF convened a series of three regional forums in Queensland. The purpose of these forums was to provide a space in which the unmet transport needs of regional Queensland could be discussed and debated.

Previous research and consultation has been extensive in Queensland in detailing the nature of transport impediments and in prioritising unmet transport needs as an issue of concern (Attachment 1). The growth and spread of community-based responses to unmet transport needs is another indication of the priority the community places on this issue (Attachment 2).

There has not been, however, any contemporary discussion on the policy issues that underpin the access and mobility issues affecting regional Queensland. Consequently, the aim of the UTNF project was to move beyond identified unmet transport needs and explore the policy issues and insights that these needs raise for key decision-makers in our communities and within government.

Methodology

Funding

Funding for the project was provided by the Queensland Council of Social Service (QCOSS) from profit made at the joint QCOSS / Queensland Transport Community Transport Conference and Expo held at Conrad Jupiters on 29 – 30 July 1999. QCOSS also provided an auspice for the project worker on behalf of the UTNF. The project worker was employed part-time from March 2001 – August 2001.

Program Details

The three regional unmet transport needs forums held in Queensland in partnership with local organisations were:

Date	Location	Forum Partner
10 April 2001	Kingaroy	South Burnett Community Integrated Transport Service
14 June 2001	Townsville	Townsville City Council
15 June 2001	Mackay	Mackay Regional Council for Social Development

Forum Structure

Topics covered at the regional unmet transport needs forum included:

1. **Who is Who:** Identification of who the forum sponsors were and why regional unmet transport needs forums were being held.
2. **Regional Roundup:** Presentations from local community transport operators and community organisations about their services and their responses to unmet transport needs.
3. **New Thinking about Community Transport:** Innovative approaches to developing capacity building solutions to transport disadvantage and unmet transport needs.
4. **Discussion:** Opportunity for the participants to ask questions of any of the forum speakers.
5. **Closing the Gaps:** Exploration with the forum participants of the unmet transport needs affecting in their region.

Planned Outcomes

The key outcomes of the regional unmet transport needs forums were intended to be:

1. building community networking and information sharing at a local level;
2. identifying common regional access and mobility policy issues;
3. promoting awareness of QCOSS, CTAQ (Community Transport Association of Queensland) and the UTNF at a regional level; and
4. getting people to think outside the squares that they work in.

Forum Outputs

Participants at each forum identified the unmet transport needs/issues of most concern in their communities (Attachment 3).

Forum Participants

More than 100 organisations and individuals participated in the three forums (Attachment 4).

Structure of Paper

Underpinning Issues/Policy Insights

The forum outputs are representative of the expressed access and mobility issues impacting upon regional Queensland. The UTNF working group reviewed these outputs and reflected upon the forums themselves to identify the strategic policy themes underpinning the expressed issues.

Seven broad themes or areas of concern were identified:

- the social and economic impacts of unmet transport needs;
- concerns about the use, recruitment and management of volunteers in community services;
- the level of awareness of essential information and knowledge about existing services, programs and resources;
- an absence of networking, co-operation and partnerships at local and regional levels;
- overlaps/gaps in existing government services and programs when viewed as a whole;
- 'thinking inside the square' – conventional conceptualisation of the issues and solutions.
- 'It's more than the trip' – other concerns beyond just meeting the transport need.

This paper presents a brief discussion of each of these themes in turn. It provides examples of how the themes are linked to the issues raised in the forums. And it identifies the key policy issues implicit in the above themes.

Audience

The intended audience for this document is policy and decision-makers at all levels of government as well as key community and industry stakeholders and opinion leaders.

Additionally anyone who shares the vision and purpose of the UTNF's vision are encouraged to use this document to advance their issues.

1. Social and Economic Impacts

Issue 1:

The social and economic impacts of unmet transport needs.

Discussion

- **Changing the fabric of communities; social and economic impact** - The lack of transport services and the existence of unmet transport needs impacts on the social and economic fabric of communities, especially regional communities.

Impact on the social fabric of the community occurs because people are unable to participate in society and interact with others; e.g. the youth who cannot access sporting events, young adults who have to move away to access educational opportunities, the aged who cannot access community services and interest groups. Because people are unable to participate in society, this influences connections being made between different groups and individuals in the wider community.

Examples

- *'There is social isolation for unemployed youth and older people in regional areas that do not have access to transport services.'* (Mackay Forum)
- *'Lack of transport limits opportunities for personal growth; opportunities for employment; opportunities for social contact and peoples ability to access services.'* (Kingaroy Forum)

Impact on the economic fabric of the community occurs initially because businesses and services are not easily accessible to their full customer base and ultimately as people have to move away from their communities to other areas where they have better access to goods and services.

Examples

- *'As people age they have to sell up and move closer to services because of their unmet transport needs, this rips the heart and fabric out of small communities.'* (Townsville Forum)
- *The youth in our communities have to move away because they cannot access further educational and training facilities.* (Kingaroy Forum)

- **Unmet transport needs affect the whole community** - The social and economic impacts of unmet transport needs in regional areas are broad reaching. In regional areas, unmet transport needs affect groups such as the youth, elderly, unemployed, disabled, isolated, financial disadvantaged and mothers with children, i.e. potentially every resident in a regional community without access to a private motor vehicle. The accumulative impact of unmet transport needs on all these groups are such that access and mobility is a serious concerns for all regional communities

Policy Insights

Unmet transport needs are more than just a transport issue. The ability to access goods and services and to be able to move around are fundamental factors in maintaining the social and economic fabric of regional communities. The impact of unmet transport needs on the whole community means that local businesses and a broad range of government programs/agencies at all levels of government as well as concerned individuals and community services are all essential stakeholders in developing responses to unmet transport needs.

Yet many of these stakeholders were conspicuously absent from the forums. Where were the local government town planners and works engineers? The local businesses and business leaders? Property developers? Hospital administrators? Retirement village and nursing home proprietors? Government program managers in general? They were absent precisely because unmet transport needs are too often viewed as just a transport issue and one that impacts upon a handful of marginalized individuals and groups within the local community at that.

The forums highlight that the reverse is true. The full cast of local stakeholders needs to be actively involved if viable local solutions to unmet transport needs are to be developed. Because of the broader social and economic impacts of unmet transport needs, all local stakeholders have a vested interest in ensuring this is so. The many individual stakeholders within government share a particular vested interest in ensuring that their traditional silo-specific responses fit together to form a whole-of-government approach that supports, rather than inhibits, the development of viable local solutions.

Summary

- Unmet transport needs impact on the social and economic fabric of communities.
- The social and economic impacts of unmet transport needs in regional areas are broad reaching and affect the whole community. For this reason unmet transport needs are more than just a transport issue.
- Concerned individuals, community services, local businesses and government at all levels are all essential stakeholders in developing local responses to unmet transport needs. Each has a vested interest in ensuring that all other stakeholders are actively involved.
- Viable local solutions to unmet transport needs also require movement away from the traditional silo-specific response of government towards the development of a whole of government approach to personal access and mobility.

2. Volunteers

Issue 2:

Concern about the use, recruitment, management and support of volunteers in community organisations.

Discussion

- **Volunteers and the delivery of community transport services** – Volunteers and the provision of community transport services are inextricably linked. The ability to provide community transport services is often underpinned by the ability to attract volunteers to the service.

Two different examples provided by community services present at the regional forums support this reality:

Example 1

A community transport service receives government funding only for a part-time coordinator. By only funding a part time coordinator position this funding agreement assumes this service will be able to provide its transport services through volunteer labor. (Kingaroy Forum)

Example 2

A community service receives no government funding. This service provides general support including transport services to people in their community who have a particular disability. This service operates entirely on volunteer labor. This service only receives financial assistance through donations and fund raising activities. (Townsville Forum)

- **Risks associated with employing volunteer labor** – The activities of community organisations are crucial to the delivery of a broad range of services, and without volunteers many of these services simply could not be delivered.

Across the community sector, and especially in community transport services, volunteers are consistently represented in the following roles:

- management committees;
- coordinators of services;
- drivers;
- escorts; and
- general service roles – i.e. administration, bookings.

At the same time, the community is concerned about the risk of employing volunteers who may not have the competency to deliver services.

Example

'Skilled and suitable volunteers are needed for high needs groups.' (Kingaroy Forum)

At a broader level community services such as those described in example 1, with little resources apart from a salary for a part or full time coordinator, are struggling to meet the resource and support needs of volunteers.

Example

'Community organisations have recruitment, training, orientation and management issues associated with using volunteers.' (Kingaroy Forum)

Furthermore risk management control, resource and support responsibilities, duty of care and insurance issues are other fundamental concerns for organisations having to employ volunteers to deliver services.

Example

'There are additional insurance costs for volunteers using their own vehicles.' (Kingaroy and Townsville Forums)

- **Move to purchaser/provider funding model** - The shift by both the State and Federal governments away from providing funding for services in the form of grants to becoming a purchaser of services raises serious concerns. Government agencies routinely purchase services from providers with volunteer coordinators, or staff who are volunteers or voluntary management committees. They do so in the full knowledge that many of these service providers struggle to manage the risks associated with employing volunteers and to discharge their duty of care to their volunteers.

Policy Insights

The contribution of volunteers is undoubtedly an essential strength of the community service industry. However, the combination of being dependant on both volunteer efforts and government funding creates vulnerability for the community sector. This is because it makes the viability of many community services subject to the continued 'good will' of elected governments and the dedication of individuals. Furthermore, dependence on volunteer labor to deliver services also has associated risk issues as well as support and resource implications for community services.

The push from both the Federal and State governments is to move away from the community continually relying on governments to solve social problems. The increasing reliance on volunteers has been the cornerstone of this push, integral to the successful transformation of much of the delivery of social welfare away from the state to the community sector.

Government programs are able to reduce the overall funding to community organisations on the expectation services can be delivered using volunteer labor. Many of these community organisations are, however, unsophisticated and lack the resources to systematically and competently train, support and resource their volunteers. Yet government still contracts with them knowing this to be the case. Quite reasonably, the community holds both the funding program and the funded organisation accountable for the quality and standard of the services being delivered. If within the purchaser/provider model the provider hasn't the capacity to adequately support and resource the volunteers who are delivering the service and to manage the associated risks, surely that responsibility should then rest with the purchaser.

Summary

- Community organisations are often reliant on attracting volunteers to their service. Without volunteer labour many community transport services could not be delivered.
- Community services are struggling to meet the resource and support needs and to mitigate the risk issues associated with employing volunteer labour.
- Governments programs are able to reduce the overall funding to community organisations because they expect service to be delivered using volunteer labour.
- Responsibility for supporting and resourcing volunteers and mitigating other risk issues should be on the government programs that fund community organisations on the assumption they will employ volunteer labor to deliver their services.

3. Information and Knowledge

Issue 3:

Level of awareness of essential information and knowledge about existing transport services, programs and resources.

Discussion

One of the striking issues obvious at the regional forums was the low level of awareness of essential information and knowledge within the community of existing transport services, programs and information resources.

- **Community information** – Generally the community has a low level of awareness of essential information and knowledge about what other people, organisations, networks and government programs in their community are doing in response to unmet transport needs. This even extends to a lack of awareness and knowledge of the existing transport services and related assets within the local community.

The problem is that information is available but the community often does not know about it. This is to be expected because concerned individuals and community services are not well-placed or resourced to access the information. The community should not be blamed for their lack of information and knowledge, therefore, but the contribution of this problem to unmet transport needs must be acknowledged and explored.

Example

The forums provided an opportunity for presentations from local community transport operators and community organisations about their services and their responses to unmet transport needs. The forums also provided opportunities for participants to network with one another. Common outcomes of these presentations and this networking were statements such as 'I didn't know you existed,' or 'I didn't know that transport resource existed in our community.' Participants in the forums clearly learnt new information about what community services, government personnel and other stakeholders were doing in response to unmet transport in their community. (Kingaroy, Townsville and Mackay Forums)

- **Government information** – To have the capacity to improve local transport options, the community needs to be fully informed about all relevant government programs. It also needs to be aware of how to utilise these programs in the development of local solutions. Again, regional communities generally lack the necessary information and knowledge about government policy guidelines, funding commitments, administrative processes and appeal mechanisms.

This situation is further complicated by the fact that government tends to disaggregate information to the community about the rules and regulations attached to transport-related funding, fare concessions and programs.

Example

A forum participant who was a worker in a community transport organisation, with all appropriate Queensland Transport certification, i.e. operator accreditation and driver authorisation was unaware that their service could collect a fare from passengers for a transport service. This participant was under the impression that only fixed route, public transport services could collect a fare and community transport organisations could only ask passengers for a donation for the transport service. This is a common misunderstanding

With the right information then, this community transport services now understands that they are able to collect a fare. Consequently, this community transport organisation could now collect fares from all passengers, thus raising their revenue and potentially raising their ability to service people beyond their target group. (Kingaroy Forum)

Policy Insights

The lack of information and knowledge about existing transport services, program and resources is an unnecessary contributor to unmet transport needs.

Program managers and governments need to be concerned that they are not receiving the full return on their outlays because community services do not have enough information and knowledge about existing transport services, programs and resources in their community. The result of this lack of information and knowledge is that community services are not functioning at maximum effectiveness, either individually or in a collective sense. It may also be that they are unable to alter outdated work practices.

As previously acknowledged the community sector is under-funded and the resources they have available are usually stretched to maximum capacity. The impact of this for community organisations is that they may not have the time or the capacity to gather new information about existing transport services, programs and resources.

Further, this lack of information and the corresponding lack of knowledge may mean that any attempts by community stakeholders to respond to unmet transport needs will be of limited sophistication and sustainability and lacking in social and structural complexity.

Government seems committed to engaging with communities to develop local solutions in partnership. But not all communities have the capacity to respond in kind. This particular issue/theme is a case in point. In the absence of an enhanced community capacity/mechanism to access and disseminate information, assist in building knowledge, promote awareness and encourage understanding, government programs will continue to receive a lower return on their outlays than otherwise might be the case. This should be of concern not just to individual government programs but also from a whole-of-government perspective.

Summary

- Lack of information and knowledge about existing transport services, program and resources within communities is an unnecessary contributor to unmet transport needs.
- The under-funding of community services affects their capacity to gather new information and develop new knowledge.
- Government also contributes directly to this situation through its tendency to disaggregate information to the community about transport services, programs and resources.
- Lacking essential information and knowledge, community services cannot function at maximum effectiveness.
- Community attempts to develop sophisticated and sustainable responses to unmet transport needs with an appropriate degree of social and structural complexity are similarly constrained by this lack of information and knowledge.
- A consequence of this is that government is not getting the best value for its substantial existing outlays targeting unmet transport needs.
- Community capacity in this respect needs to be built through a mechanism at the regional level that can disseminate transport information, assist in building knowledge, promote awareness and encourage understanding and co-operation.

4. Networking, Co-operation and Partnerships

Issue 4:

The absence of networking, co-operation and partnerships about unmet transport issues at local and regional levels.

A separate but similar issue to Issue 3 also obvious at the regional forums was the critical lack of networking, co-operation and development of partnerships responses to unmet transport needs.

Discussion

- **Absence of essential stakeholders** – Unmet transport needs affect the whole community. Whilst some community services and individuals were doing a great deal to develop responses to unmet transport needs, the absence at the regional forums of other obvious partners (i.e. business, mainstream transport suppliers, local councils, chambers of commerce, service clubs) has already been noted.

As discussed in section 1, unmet transport needs are more than just a transport issue. The ability to access goods and services and to be able to move around are fundamental factors in maintaining the social and economic fabric of regional communities. This is why the development of co-operative responses to unmet transport needs by all relevant partners is necessary.

Example

The Committee on the Ageing at the Townsville forum spoke of the shared taxi transport scheme they had developed in partnership with Townsville Taxis.

The scheme offers a door-to-door pre-booked transport service to two shopping centres in Townsville on Thursdays and Fridays each week for a \$4 return fare.

The Committee on the Ageing was only involved in the initial development of this scheme. This scheme is now delivered through co-operation between the shopping centres that take the bookings for the service and Townsville Taxis who provide the transport. (Townsville Forum)

- **Lack of common / shared issue identification** – Many community services are failing to recognise that they share similar issues.

Example

The need for the youth to get from Sarina to Mackay may be different to the need for the aged to get from Sarina to Mackay but the issue is the same, a lack of appropriately timed transport options. (Mackay Forum)

This means that stakeholders, by each vying for an exclusive solution to their ‘unique’ problem, disaggregate the size of the underlying problem. A contributing factor to the failure to recognise common unmet transport needs issues is the lack of local and regional networking that was evident at the regional forums. The lack of networking also affects the development of partnerships and coordinated responses to these unmet transport needs.

- **Solution restrictions** – Even where community services recognise that common unmet transport needs exist in their community, they often argue that their program funding guidelines restrict their capacity to network on these issues and develop partnership responses.

This approach is problematic because community services fail to see how partnership approaches and networking with other stakeholders and community services may lead to the development of broader thinking and broader solutions to unmet transport needs. Broader solutions can allow different community agencies to meet their program funding guidelines and assist their client group whilst also being able to provide assistance to a broader range of individuals. Furthermore, because these solutions could involve partnership arrangements between several community services and stakeholders, the resource outlay for each service and stakeholder may be reduced and consequently their individual client groups could be supported for less money.

- **Protectionism and territorialism** – Community services often seem to be reluctant to broadly network with other stakeholders and share information about what they do and who they do it for. Community services may feel they have to protect this information out of a concern that networking with others and advertising what they do may result in increased or unmanageable demand for their services.

Policy Insights

The critical lack of networking, co-operation and development of partnerships responses is another unnecessary and avoidable contributor to unmet transport needs.

Although certain stakeholders are doing what they can to respond to unmet transport needs, their work does not form a cohesive response to the whole problem. Networking with others around issues of unmet transport needs is important because it leads to co-operation and the development of partnership responses to unmet transport needs.

This co-operation and development of partnership responses to unmet transport needs must involve all essential stakeholders and not just community services and concerned individuals. Businesses especially should be essential players in these partnerships because they are often responsible for creating the demand for transport services and benefit financially when solutions to unmet transport needs are developed.

The need for co-operation also relates to government's response to unmet transport needs. Government departments often lack the resources and processes to systematically identify community needs and strategies to improve the well being of communities through residents being better able to move around and access facilities and services. Without more consistent networking and co-ordination across government departments, community responses to unmet transport needs in regional Queensland will continue to be piecemeal.

Funding agreements that restrict the provision of community service support to a specific target group reinforce territorialism and protectionism. This means services are developed without community agencies having to think about or network with other community programs and stakeholders to see how their service may be developed to benefit a broader group within the community whilst still being able to support the service's target group.

Co-operation or partnership arrangements requiring people to relinquish some of their funding and/or territory are doomed to fail however. At the same time community services need to be encouraged to network with other agencies so they can see how they might be able to benefit others whilst still servicing their own target groups. The key to this, therefore, is the development of partnership arrangements that are to the mutual benefit of all stakeholders and which do not require the surrender of any party's territory.

Furthermore, a lack of networking, co-operation and partnerships means the ability to achieve best practice for a service provider is often hindered. Service providers know what they are doing and how their service is being administered but they often have a lack of concern or interest in understanding how their program or service fits in to the bigger community picture. Better networking then is a way of addressing the lack of information and knowledge discussed in section 3.

The tighter relationship implicit in the purchaser/provider split between the government and service providers has resulted in bigger pools of money being given to single providers. Furthermore, the shift to contract funding means that these bigger pools of money are now more tied in nature. Service providers, consequently, are often only willing to network and co-ordinate with other services that are receiving funding from the same purchaser because they believe this will be seen as legitimate use of their contracted money. The consequent lack of broad networking has the same result as silo-specific information provision in impacting upon a service provider's ability to think outside the square about how to develop sophisticated responses to unmet transport needs.

Although distance and funding can be legitimate constraints upon the networking capacity of regional service providers, there is no case for networking to be constrained by the issues themselves. Unmet transport needs are common across geographical areas, community interest groups and funding programs. Greater flexibility in service provider attitudes and funding guidelines, plus recognition of the value of networking and co-operation and of shared access and mobility concerns would encourage the development of broader solutions to unmet transport needs within regional communities.

Both sections 3 and 4 of this paper highlight areas where unmet transport needs could be improved by mechanisms other than increased investment in individual services. What would assist in both instances is a mechanism in the local community that can systematically deal with the issues raised and support the development of partnership responses.

Summary

- The lack of networking, co-operation and development of partnership responses is an unnecessary contributor to unmet transport needs.
- This holds true not just of community networking but also of networking inside government.
- The absence of essential stakeholders from what networks exist further constrains the development of partnership and co-ordinated responses to unmet transport needs.
- A lack of networking and co-operation affects recognition of similar issues and disaggregates the underlying unmet transport need.
- Perceived funding and program guideline constraints restrict the capacity of community services for networking and the development of partnership responses to unmet transport needs.
- Co-operative or partnership arrangements requiring people to relinquish some of their funding and/or territory are doomed to fail.
- Community services need to be encouraged to network and co-operate with other agencies and stakeholders to see how they could benefit the broader community whilst servicing their own client groups.
- It would assist if there were a mechanism at the regional level to support networking and the development of partnership responses to unmet transport needs.

5. Government Services and Programs

Issue 5:

Overlaps/gaps in existing government services and programs when viewed as a whole

It is not as if government is doing nothing to respond to community concerns about unmet transport needs. Unmet transport needs are as much a barrier to the delivery of government services and programs as they are to accessing them. This is why there are so many government programs targeting unmet transport needs. Government is to be applauded for the diversity and scale of its response. At the same time, a recurrent theme in the discussion to this point has been that the existing government response is as much a part of the problem as it is a part of the solution.

Discussion

- **The design of government services** – The way government services are designed and delivered, including their eligibility criteria, affects the development of innovative solutions to unmet transport needs. Given the broad-ranging impact of unmet transport needs on the delivery of government services, it is appropriate that government has developed a multi-program response. The problem is that each of these programs has been developed in isolation from the others. Each targets the specific access and/or mobility problem(s) of that particular program's client group, without reference to how they might all fit together as part of a coherent whole-of-government response.

Example

Whether HACC vehicles can be used in downtime was a query raised at several of the regional forums. HACC services are perceived to be somewhat protective of their resources. Non-HACC eligible services and people expressed problems with this protectionism and believe that the community should have access to the vehicles in downtime and/or access to any spare capacity seats that HACC services may have.

The HACC program does not have a comprehensive policy on these issues. This contributes to tensions between HACC and non-HACC services and individuals. Additionally there are no incentives for HACC agencies to co-ordinate their services and develop collaborative approaches with non-HACC services to common issues of unmet transport need.

The absence of this policy has the most impact in rural and regional communities where HACC-funded vehicles are the most likely vehicles to act as 'quasi' rural public transport options because no other transport options exist. (Kingaroy and Townsville Forums)

- **Unintended effects of government programs** – In providing a targeted service to a specific group of people, government programs often create unintended adverse effects. For example, government funding often segregates individuals into groups such as youth, aged, disabled. This leads to the government tendency to disaggregate information referred to in section 3 and discussed further below. It also contributes to the lack of recognition of similar issues discussed in section 4. Ultimately, it inhibits the development of community-wide responses to unmet transport needs and reduces the efficiency of any solutions that are developed.
- **Government failure to facilitate community understanding** – One of the central issues obvious at the forums, as discussed in section 3, was the lack of standardised information and policy guidelines being made available by the government to community services and individuals. This contributes directly to the low levels of community understanding of government programs, policies and funding processes. Government can't expect the community to have a holistic awareness and understanding of its response to unmet transport needs until it able to present the details of that response in an accessible whole-of-government form.
- **Inflexibility of government programs** – Many unmet transport needs are created in regional communities not by the absence of government programs, but by the inflexibility of these programs. Government programs are inflexible because they target particular needs/groups within the community and are designed in isolation from other government programs without regard to developing solutions that have wider benefits to the community.

Example

Queensland Council of Carers highlighted how some of the gaps in government programs can affect the lives of people who are carers. For example, the government's Taxi Subsidy Scheme cannot be used by the carer of an eligible person without this person in the taxi. This means even when carers are doing the shopping or banking or going to the chemist on behalf of the person they care for they are not able to receive a discount on their travel. (Mackay Forum)

Policy Insights

The shift within government from providing funding in the form of grants to community services to providing contracted funding to produce specified outputs means community services receive no acknowledgment for providing any form of extra activity they can't count as an output. This means there is no incentive from government funders for community services to think outside their squares and create services to benefit not only their target group but also other groups within the community. Government funding programs only want to know what fits into their output based funding models. They see as inconsequential anything else a service provider may do at the same time as meeting their prescribed outputs.

The development of flexible, innovative services from government funded service providers is one of the keys to responding to unmet transport needs. But flexible, innovative government funded services are difficult to develop in the absence of flexible, innovative government funding programs.

Government funding programs that encouraged and rewarded community organisations for developing access and mobility services with a broader community focus, would lead to a decrease in unmet transport needs and the demand for more government services. They would also achieve a better equity of access to available transport services, especially in regional and rural areas.

Government programs set up with attention to how they fit in and relate to other programs and services will reduce responsibility shifting within government departments and programs. They would also support the development of a whole of government response to unmet transport needs

Transport demand is not a static concept and unmet transport needs change over time. Solutions to unmet transport needs must be able to capture this movement in transport demand. Government policies and funding guidelines that allow the development of flexible, innovative responses capable of adapting to the movement in transport demand over time are a key to responding to unmet transport needs.

Summary

- The way government programs are designed and delivered, including their eligibility criteria, affects the development of innovative solutions to unmet transport needs
- Government funding often segregates individuals into separate target groups, disaggregating information and contributing to a lack of recognition across community groups of similar unmet transport needs issues.
- Government generally fails to facilitate community understanding of its programs, policies and funding processes.
- Government programs are generally inflexible because they are developed in isolation from other government programs and services.
- Flexible, innovative community services need flexible, innovative funding programs.
- There is no incentive from government funders for community services to create services that benefit not only their target group but also the broader community.
- Government programs set up with attention to how they fit in and relate to other programs and services will support the development of a whole of government response to unmet transport needs
- Transport demand is not a static concept. Government policies and funding guidelines need to be developed that enable community services to adapt to changes in unmet transport needs over time.

6. Conventional Conceptualisation of the Issues and Solutions

Issue 6:

'Thinking inside the square' – conventional conceptualisation of the issues and solutions

Discussion

- **Dispersed populations** – Unmet transport needs are a problem for all Queensland communities. In regional communities, however, the dispersed population base, the tyranny of distance and the reduced resource pool all mean that solutions to unmet transport needs developed in high population density urban areas, such as fixed route, fixed timetable public transport services, are often not appropriate for rural and remote communities.
- **Collective response** – Just as individual rural and remote communities don't have the population base to sustain standard public transport solutions, there often aren't enough people in individual target groups, i.e. aged, youth, disability, etc, across local communities when taken as a whole to sustain separate service responses to their specific unmet transport needs. Whilst this dispersal of target group members explains why there are no services for separate target groups, it does not explain why unmet transport needs for different groups aren't viewed as a collective need and collective service responses between relevant stakeholders developed.
- **The problem is the perceived solution** – Because the problem is conceptualised in terms of a perceived lack of public transport services, there is also a tendency to see the solution only in terms of standard public transport options. Some of the solutions people have in mind to respond to their unmet transport needs are just not sustainable in regional areas where there is a dispersed population base, low population numbers and services which are centralised in a regional centres. Nor are they necessarily even appropriate to the actual unmet transport needs of the communities in question.

Example

- *'Get the train to stop in St Lawrence.'* (Mackay Forum)
- *'We need a bus route that will run through all the communities outside Kingaroy.'* (Kingaroy Forum)

Communities need to start thinking about realistic solutions to unmet transport needs that reflect the contextual realities of their regional setting.

- **Access to a private vehicle** - In regional and urban fringe communities unmet transport needs are mitigated by ready access to a motor vehicle. People without access to a private motor vehicle in these areas are particularly isolated. Community-based solutions that utilise the private motor vehicle, for example, may be more realistic and sustainable options in regional areas than a fixed route, fixed timetable public transport service.
- **Lack of community catalysts/motivators** – Regional communities often don't have the capacity to mobilise and motivate stakeholders across the community to get together and develop innovative solutions to issues of unmet transport need.

Example

An example of the Home Service Directory, an information product designed by the Transport Options Project was shown to forum participants in the 'Thinking Outside the Square' session of the day. This Directory from the Wynnum area in Brisbane is a list of services that will home deliver their goods and services in the area.

This information product provides a lateral solution to a perceived issue of unmet transport need, i.e. an inability to access services, by highlighting that the 'transport' response does not always have to involve taking people to the service, it can also involve taking the service to the people.

Although many forum participants had not thought of this as a solution they could easily see how this innovative information product could be used in their community to solve some access issues.

This is a good example of something that could be a possible solution to unmet transport needs in a regional community. (Kingaroy, Townsville and Mackay Forums)

Policy Insights

There is a tendency for stakeholders to be trapped inside the square by how they conceptualise the underlying problem and hence the solutions. Unmet transport needs arise from barriers to personal access and mobility rather of which the absence of suitable transport options is just one. They can be overcome just as much by bringing the service to the person as by taking the person to the service.

Conceptualising the problem solely in terms of an absence of suitable transport options traps stakeholders inside the square in two ways. Firstly, it directs their attention away from responses that are access or service delivery-based and encourages stakeholders to consider mobility or transport-based solutions only. Secondly, having conceptualised the problem in terms of the absence of standard public transport services they tend to see the possible solutions in the same narrow terms.

Both access or service delivery-based responses and mobility or transport-based solutions to unmet transport needs should be given consideration. Further, mobility or transport-based solutions need to be seen in terms of passenger transport rather than public transport, i.e. in terms of the movement of people by any available means and not just standard public transport solutions such as fixed route, fixed timetable bus services. This is especially so in regional Queensland where the dispersed population and resource base cannot support such mass transit solutions.

Innovative solutions to unmet transport needs must be developed at the community level and all stakeholders in the problem must be involved. These solutions need to take into account the characteristics of the regional area. These solutions need to have access to the full range of applicable government subsidies and funding.

The difficulties encountered in responding to unmet transport needs in regional Queensland because of the dispersed population base are exacerbated by the retraction of services, such as banks and shops, from many local communities. Government policy, which has resulted in service delivery being withdrawn from rural areas and located in larger regional centers, is similarly a direct source of the unmet transport needs of rural and remote communities. This points to the conclusion that a consequential onus or obligation falls upon government to work with the affected communities in overcoming the unmet transport needs these service delivery decisions have created.

Summary

- Unmet transport needs are a problem for all Queensland communities but for regional communities there are the added dimensions of the tyranny of distance, a dispersed population base and a small resource pool.
- Stakeholders in regional Queensland need to think outside the square in developing responses to unmet transport needs
- The underlying problem should be seen firstly in terms of barriers to personal access and mobility rather than simply the absence of suitable transport options and then in terms of passenger transport rather than public transport.
- Unmet transport needs for different groups should be viewed as a collective need and consideration given to the development of collective service responses.
- Government agencies/programs whose service delivery decisions have directly contributed to the generation of unmet transport needs in regional Queensland have an obligation to work with affected communities to overcome these needs.
- Solutions aimed at bringing the point of service delivery closer to local communities need to be considered and not just solutions aimed at transporting community members to centralised points of service delivery.

7. It's More Than the Trip

Issue 7:

'It's more than the trip' – other concerns beyond just meeting the transport need

Discussion

- **Inaccessible infrastructure: the built environment** – Unmet transport needs in regional communities often continue to exist even when transport services are available. This occurs, for example, where the built environment itself is inaccessible and/or inhospitable. Examples include the lack of shelter at bus stops, inaccessible buildings and the lack of pedestrian crossings. It is of little comfort to an individual if transport services are available but the built environment prevents them from being able to make a journey using this transport.

Example

- *'Physical access to bus stops.'* (Kingaroy Forum)
- *'Not enough bus stops.'* (Kingaroy Forum)
- *'Inaccessible infrastructure – people who can use transport often find that they have trouble accessing where they need to go because of things like curb breaks, steep steps etc.'* (Townsville Forum)
- *Inaccessible infrastructure for people who are frail or disabled – this includes transport infrastructure as well as building and facility infrastructure.* (Mackay Forum)

- **Inaccessible infrastructure: transport services** – Similarly, unmet transport needs in regional communities will continue to be an issue if the vehicles operating transport services do not suit an individual's physical needs and requirements.

Example

- *'Lack of accessible services.'* (Kingaroy Forum)
- *'The physical design of trains and coaches is a problem for people who are larger sized.'* (Townsville Forum)
- *'Seat belts in buses, especially school buses.'* (Townsville Forum)
- *Lap sash seat belts need to be provided in taxis for people in wheelchairs – taxis should have lap belts that go over wheelchairs.* (Townsville Forum)

- **Co-ordination and integration of services** – What happens at either end of the trip can be just as important as the trip itself. A lack of co-ordination and integration between transport services and the services that people are travelling to access, such as medical services, can create unmet transport needs. It can mean, for example, that people are left waiting for hours for their appointment or to return home from their appointment. Increased co-ordination between the services people are travelling to and available transport resources will have positive effects on reducing unmet transport needs. Equally, excessive and/or prescriptive coordination can be a deterrent as well.

Example

- *‘The pre-planning, pre-booked nature of transport services takes away the spontaneity for clients.’* (Kingaroy Forum)
- *‘There is a needs to do more from non-transport service delivery point of view.’* (Kingaroy Forum)
- *‘Need for more co-ordination and communication between medical providers and transport services on behalf of clients.’* (Kingaroy Forum)
- *‘Transport problems are not necessarily solved just by knowing what resources exist in the community, there needs to someone that can co-ordinate these resources.’* (Townsville Forum)
- *‘Can already see that the answer is not necessarily more buses but somebody to undertake community development to see what the issues are and what resources exist in the community to respond to these issues.’* (Townsville Forum)
- *A possible solution to people needs to get out and about is to provide a transit lounge in the city centre and in all large shopping centres so that people can wait somewhere in air-conditioning, or leave their parcels somewhere, until they are picked up.* (Mackay Forum)
- *‘Post the transport needs of a person onto a community billboard and ask who can help.’* (Mackay Forum)
- *‘Bus service into and out of Mackay from Sarina is problematic. This raises difficulty for young people who are on probation who need to get into and out of Mackay regularly. They often have to wait a whole day to get a bus back to Sarina so they are left hanging around Mackay with little to do.’* (Mackay Forum)

Policy Insights

Every Queenslanders' ability to access employment, housing, health, recreation, education and other community services is critically reliant upon their ability to move around their community. The nature of the transport service, the vehicle used, infrastructure at either end of the journey, personal/impersonal characteristics and the integration of transport services with non-transport services all play major roles in affecting people's ability to move around. This is another reason that unmet transport needs should be conceptualised in terms of barriers to personal access and mobility.

To just make transport services available, if these transport services are not accessible or otherwise suitable, will make little difference to the unmet transport needs that exist. Transport needs must be viewed as door to door concerns, rather than just pick up and set down concerns. The transport services themselves need be accessible, affordable and inclusive of the needs of a variety of target groups within the community and the built environment at either end of the trip accessible. How effectively the available transport services coordinate and integrate with other services is another critical aspect of the door to door nature of unmet transport needs.

It is obvious then that many stakeholders need to have a role in responding to the access and mobility concerns of regional communities. For example, local council has responsibility for improving pedestrian and public transport infrastructure in an area, such as footpaths and bus stops, and businesses have a role in improving physical accessibility to their services. The more stakeholders who are involved in developing responses to unmet transport needs in the community the more integrated, coordinated and accessible these responses will be.

Summary

- The purpose of every journey is to access a service or a location. It is of little comfort if transport is available if a person cannot get to the transport, cannot use the transport or the transport arrives too late or too early for them to access a service or location.
- Transport needs must be viewed as door to door concerns, rather than just pick up and set down concerns
- Accessible modes of service delivery, improvements to the built environment at either of the trip and the coordination/integration of the transport service with other non-transport services are all needed to meet certain unmet transport needs.
- Achieving this should be a concern for all stakeholders including community members, service providers, businesses, local government and state government.

Conclusion

The broad aim of the UTNF is to promote non-adversarial debate about the strategic policy issues associated with unmet transport needs. The three regional forums provided a space in which the current unmet transport needs of regional Queensland could be discussed and debated and for networking between relevant stakeholders to occur. The output from the regional forums has enabled the UTNF to identify and explore the strategic policy issues and insights behind the unmet transport issues affecting regional Queensland.

It is clear from the forums that unmet transport needs are a major concern for regional Queenslanders. Because unmet transport needs impact upon the social and economic fabric of regional communities, all sectors of the community have a stake in the problem and should be involved in its resolution.

The UTNF is of the view that doing more of the same to respond to unmet transport needs in regional Queensland will not work. Innovative solutions are required. These solutions will need to be community-based, draw upon all the available resources and be appropriate to the local context. They should be informed by the understanding that the underlying problem is about barriers to personal access and mobility rather than simply the absence of suitable transport options. To the extent that the solutions need to be mobility-based, then they should be conceptualised in terms of passenger transport not public transport and take into account the door to door nature of unmet transport needs.

The insights raised in this document are intended as tools for shaping policy development and decision-making at local, regional and state program and government levels. The UTNF also hopes that they will contribute to helping stakeholders to look outside their squares and to develop innovative responses to the unmet transport needs in their communities.

Attachments

Attachment 1: Reports Produced Throughout Queensland in The Last 10 Years That Highlight Transport as an Issue of Concern in Regional and Urban Areas.

1. Watters, S. (1996) ***Going Places – Community Solutions to Transport Problems in Queensland***, QCOSS; Brisbane.
2. St John Ambulance (1998) ***Everyone’s Concern, No-one’s Business – Community Transport Research Project***, St John Ambulance; Brisbane.
3. Balmoral Uniting Community Centre (1995) ***Report of a Needs Survey in Balmoral, Bulimba, Cannon Hill, Hawthorne, Morningside, Murrarie and Norman Park***, Balmoral Uniting Community Centre; Brisbane.
4. Transport Options Project (1998) ***Transport for the Community in Brisbane South***, QCOSS; Brisbane.
5. Redland Shire (1995) ***Community Transport Study*** Redland Shire; Redland.
6. Ipswich Regional Family Resource Centre Inc (1997) ***The Ipswich Integrated Transport Strategies Project Report***.
7. Laidley Shire Council (1998) ***Integrated Local Transport Plan*** Laidley Shire Council; Laidley.
8. (1998) ***Bribie Island Co-ordinated Community Transport Pilot Report*** Unpublished.
9. South West Strategy (2000) ***Social Needs of South West Queensland – Windorah, Charleville, Quilpie, Cunnamulla, Thargomindah***, Westprint: Charleville.
10. Gold Coast City Council (1997) ***A Community Health Plan for the City of the Gold Coast***, Gold Coast City Council; Gold Coast.
11. Wood, P., & Daveson, C., (2000) ***Regional and Sub-Regional Issues***, Mackay Regional Council for Social Development; Mackay.
12. Stanthorpe Community Transport Project (1998) ***Report on Needs and Recommendations for Community Transport Model***.
13. Tableland Transport Action Group (1998) ***Atherton Tableland Community Transport Needs Analysis***.
14. Townsville City Council (2000) ***Townsville Public Transport Submission***, Epsell, Olsen & Partners: Brisbane.
15. AC Nielsen (1999) ***Collinsville – Transport Options*** (Internal to Queensland Transport).
16. Booz-Allen & Hamilton (1998) ***Potential Initiatives for Improving Public Transport in Regional Queensland*** (Internal to Queensland Transport).
17. Strategic Liaison Committee (1998) ***Issues in Rural Social Justice and Transport – Cooktown, Windorah, Injune, Blackall, Munduberra*** (Internal to Queensland Transport).

18. Care Balonne Association Inc. (2000) ***Transport Project of the Balonne Shire***, Care Balonne: St George.
19. Families Youth and Community Care (1999) ***Queensland Framework for Ageing 2000 – 2005*** (Consultations undertaken all over Queensland that highlighted transport at a community infrastructure and community participation issues).
20. (2000) ***Place Profile – Sunshine Coast***.
21. Goldsmith & Johnson (2000) ***The Youth Entertainment Study – Noosa***, Noosa Shire Council; Noosa.
22. Gibson Associated (1999) ***Strategic Regional Plan 1999 – 2001***, Sunshine Coast Regional Economic Development Board; Sunshine Coast.
23. Central Public Health Unit Network (2001) ***Sunshine Coast Young People – A Profile 2001***, Central Public Health Unit Network; Sunshine Coast.

<insert map 1>

Attachment 2: Services in Queensland with a Core Focus on Responding to Unmet Transport Needs in their Communities

1	Blue Nursing Service Stanthorpe Transport Service	Stanthorpe
2	Caboolture Innovative Transport Service	Caboolture
3	Calliope Shire Council	Calliope
4	Chinchilla/Miles HACC & Community Transport Service	Chinchilla
5	Gracie Dixon Day Respite Care Centre	Bundaberg
6	LANDS	Logan
7	Lions Club of Crows Nest Community Care Committee	Crows Nest
8	Mackay HACC Transport	Mackay
9	TransCom Care	Hervey Bay
10	Maryborough Escorted Transport Service	Maryborough
11	Monto Community Development Council	Monto
12	Roma & District Neighbourhood Centre	Roma
13	South Burnett Community Transport Assoc.	Murgon
14	St John Ambulance Community Participation Assistance Service	North Brisbane
15	St Mary's Care & Concern	Beaudesert
16	STAR Community Transport	Cleveland
17	Transcare - Toowoomba Community Transport	Toowoomba
18	Transcord	Southport
19	Beenleigh & Districts Senior Citizens Centre	Beenleigh
20	Waroo HACC Transport Service	Waroo
21	Home & Community Care Longreach	Longreach
22	Mt Isa Area Transport	Mt Isa
23	Lowood/Esk Respite Care Centre	Lowood
24	Bribie Island Voluntary Community Help Association Inc	Bribie Island
25	Jimboomba TASS	Jimboomba
26	Queensland Council of Carers, Regional CDW	Brisbane Maryborough Townsville Cairns Gladstone
27	Cairns HACC Transport Worker	Cairns
28	Transport Options Project	Brisbane

<insert map 2>

Attachment 3: Issues Raised at the Regional Forums

Kingaroy Forum

Issue	Local Regional or State Issue	Priority
Group 1		
Having a knowledge of what other services etc. are available in the local area	Local	1
Skilled and suitable volunteers are needed for high needs groups	Local	2
Recruitment, training, orientation and management issues associated with using volunteers	Regional	2
Need for more networking, both regional and local	Local / Regional	3
Transport needs of younger people, younger mums, especially mums with disabled kid, or mothers who are disabled	Local / Regional	4
Tyranny / challenge of distance / dispersed population	Regional	5
No public transport as such	Local / Regional	5
The pre-planning, prebooked nature of services takes away the spontaneity for clients.	Local	
Need to do more from non-transport service delivery viewpoint	Local	
The transition of driving to not driving	State	
Group 2		
Minimal inter and intra town transport	Regional	1
Difficulty in disseminating information	State	2
Service gaps for non-HACC people	State	3
Encourage more community and personal involvement and responsibility in decisions within the community.	Local	4
Physical access to bus stops	State	5
Not enough bus stops	State	
Queensland Health do not allow any transport as homecare	Local	
Group 3		
Distance	Regional	1
No public transport	Local / Regional	2
No regular bus services to provincial areas	Regional	2
Down time of government vehicles, access to government vehicles	State	3
Down time of vehicles in other community services	Regional	3
Lack of accessible vehicles throughout the region	Regional	4
Volunteers additional insurance costs for own vehicles	State	5
Transport to specialist , education, recreation, youth services within local and urban areas	Regional	
Mental health / medical clients excluded from private vehicle use	Regional	
Focus on transport tends to be marginalised, needs to include all members of the community.	State	
Group 4		
Inadequate transport services	Local / Regional	1
Lack of accessible services	Local	2
Lack of information and co-ordination	Local / Regional	3
Unwillingness to share resources	Local	4
Need for more co-ordination and communication between medical providers and transport services on behalf of clients	Local / Regional	5

Group 5		
Lack of transport limits: opportunities for personal growth; opportunities for employment; opportunities for social contact and ability to access services.	Local / Regional	1
Collection and distribution of information	Local / Regional	2
Geographical location of towns and the lack of inter and intra town transport	Regional	3
Lack of partnerships between services, ad hoc responses to transport disadvantage	Local / Regional	4
Resources in the area are fully committed during peak times, ie school runs	Local	5
Seems to be financially unsustainable for business to operate transport services in the area	Local	
High transport costs for organisations needing to provide transport in emergency situations, ie DVA	Local / Regional	

Townsville Forum

Townsville Group 1 – Closing the gaps within your own agency		
People with disability trying to find employment find that one of the major hurdles is transport – getting to and from work opportunities. Public bus access is limited. Often have to try and negotiate to develop a work timetable that fits in with the bus timetable.		
Inaccessible infrastructure – people who can use the transport often find that they have trouble accessing where they need to go because of things like curb breaks, steep steps, etc		
Downtime of HACC vehicle is always raised as a concern. The logistics of using these vehicles in their downtime is very complicated; eg. the time available, who drives, what happens in the vehicle is damaged.		
Social nature of transport services – services provide people with social contact.		
Trying to respond to the problems of isolated areas is difficult – need to network more to help think outside the squares		
Townsville Bus Company provides free bus pass for people to assist them with travel training other individuals.		
Low floor buses can be scheduled in the area by prior arrangement		
Need to recognise and promote out of the box solutions		
Transport problems are not necessarily solved just by knowing what resources exist in the community, there needs to be somebody that can co-ordinate these resources.		
Need to explore alternative uses of the HACC bus		
Can already see that the answer is not necessarily more buses but somebody to undertake community development to see what the issues are and what resources already exist in the community to respond to these issues – much cheaper than buying a new bus.		
There are additional insurance costs for volunteers using their own vehicles.		
Pool transport funding with one agency and let them co-ordinate all the responses.		
Townsville Group 2 – Closing the Gaps at a Regional Level		
As people age they have to sell up and move closer to services this rips the heart and fabric out of small communities.		
Relationship between Townsville City Council and the other councils fringing Townsville.		
Different concept of public transport for towns of small populations.		
No flexibility in the fixed route system especially after hours, eg. work days system is not designed to center on the weekends. On the weekends were you want to go is not the CBD it is to places like soccer fields.		
Concept of concessions being for use in taxis too.		
PROMPT – Promoting Public Transport; Action pressure group via Garth Harrigan.		
Need to do something so can 'head off' worse problems arising from pollution and congestion.		
What defines a region?		
Affordable public transport between regional centers.		
A once off forum can't do much to change things – there is a need for a community-based group to keep raising the issues to do with any form of transport needs. However this group needs access to resources to do this work and there is little access to funding to keep these groups going.		
Public transport and how it is conceptualised and raised.		
Change of mindset in people who are used to driving a car towards using public transport more frequently.		
Townsville – Thuringowa Strategic Plan Goal 1 says it all as an ideal.		
The physical design of trains and coaches is a problem for people who are larger sized.		

Townsville Group 3 – Open Topic
Seat belts in buses, especially school buses.
Lap sash seat belts need to be provided in taxis for people in wheelchairs – taxis should have lap belt that goes over wheel chair or harness.
Providing community transport to isolated areas.
Transport is a major concern for many unemployed people.
Community transport buses are used for limited groups – there seems to be a lot of downtime – this is divisive as bus is funded to only one sector.
Should have a general community bus in the local area to be used by all groups.
Often only one daily bus to outreaching communities – this may be changing soon.
Access to school bus to problematic
Funded buses could be owned by Queensland government not by organisations
Community transport should not just be for frail aged people and people with disabilities it should be for everyone.
Community transport is more than just transport ‘happy bus’ the social interaction that occurs on the bus is very important
What is happening in other areas?
Need to recognise that there is a cost involved in providing transport - nothing is free. There needs to be a broad perspective on funding
Insurance issues and costs associated with car-pooling need to be explored. Volunteers would need to be informed of this. Who pays for the petrol?
Solutions
Selling advertising on community buses
Polling community transport resources and giving one agency control or organising their use.

Mackay Forum

Mackay Group 1 – Innovative Solutions to Access and Mobility Problems

Brainstorm – possible solutions to peoples need to get out and about:

- Council cars
- School buses.
- Tap into under used coach service.
- Tell doctors when transport is available and arrange appointment time to suit rather than trying to get transport times to suit appointment times.
- Volunteer idea – volunteer driver used and clients pay some money for mileage.
- Create prepaid petrol vouchers with local garages that families or clients can give to the person that is transporting them
- Use the cars of people who can't drive and get a volunteer to drive them. Fill the car up with other people needing a lift and get these people to pay a donation fee for the transport.
- Postal service, e.g. Eungella courier
- Car pool, get people to use the spare seats in cars already making the journey. Get one local person to be the co-ordination point for this service.
- Ask all the businesses and shops that people go to how they can contribute to reducing the costs.
- Negotiate access to existing vehicles; HACC bus downtime, Blue Nursing Service, Other government cars, School bus runs.
- Golf buggies
- Using legs – walk small distances.
- Does the person need assistance for both parts of the journey or is it that they can get themselves there or home and they only really need assistance for one leg of the journey.
- Form a food co-op.
- Is there internet shopping opportunities available?
- Ask shops to deliver and if they deliver can they pick stuff up from other places as well.
- Share ride taxi from outlying areas in maxi taxis at a negotiated rate.
- Transit lounge in the city center in all large shopping centers so people can wait somewhere (especially if they are air-conditioned – good in the summer) until they are picked up.
- Map all the agencies providing transport into the city and bring them together to see if any better co-ordination can occur.
- Use empty run vehicles, school, taxi and COP cars.
- Agencies could give their vehicles to specific local services on the weekends.
- Post the transport need of a person on a community billboard and ask who can help.
- Negotiate with a doctor to come out and serve the community.

Don't seek a one size solution

If you don't ask you won't know

Get rid of words like 'Can't' 'Should' 'Yes, but' 'They should'.

Mackay Group 2 – Closing the Gaps at a Regional Level
1. Outlying Villages/Hamlets
A range of concerns were raised that all fall under the general regional issue of the barriers facing people who live in outlying locations (e.g. St Lawrence, Eungella, Calen) in accessing the services in Mackay. The specific issues raised follow.
Small communities on the railway line can't access QR's passenger rail services.
Inter-city bus services drop people off on the main highway (even in the early hours of the morning).
Even where services are available, the fares are expensive because of the distances to be travelled.
Locally operated "village to town" services either don't exist or are not commercial – there was quite a lot of discussion about the Calen – Seaforth situation with the suggestion being put forward that maybe by running a service that links several small communities to provide sufficient potential patronage to sustain a village-to-town service.
This led to further discussion about the difficulty of satisfying the travel needs of the various consumer groups (workers, young mums, unemployed youth, and older persons) with a single scheduled bus service.
The 'fly in/fly out', 'bus in/bus out' approach of mining companies and the potential for local government to make a contribution were tabled as untapped resources.
Better information about existing services/resources was also proposed. (Vanpooling as an option?)
Risk management concerns associated with community-based responses (vehicle insurance, out of pocket expenses, etc) were also raised.
2. Social Issues
The other broad area of discussion regarding Issue 1. Was in respect of the social dimensions of the problem – elderly people who rely on family/friends/neighbours for transport feeling pressured to move to the service centre – social isolation for unemployed youth, older people, etc.
The potential negative impact of improved transport connections on local businesses and services was raised in this context.
3. Regional "Community" Infrastructure
There was some brief discussion appropriate institutional arrangements (as per the MRCSD model) might be established to support/sustain local initiative/momentum.
Two main suggestions were put forward.
Firstly, it was noted that the Mackay-based Regional Managers Forum had a well established sub-committee structure that might form the regional interface between whatever community infrastructure that is put in place and government.
The second suggestion was that this level in the MRCSD model might need to consist of several networks/committees focused on different aspects of the underlying problem.
Mackay Group 3 – Closing the Gaps – Open Topic
Youth Issues Bus service into and out of Mackay from Sarina is problematic. This raises difficulty for young people who are on probation who need to get into and out of Mackay regularly. They often have to wait a whole day to get a bus back to Sarina so they are left hanging around Mackay with little to do.
Student Issues Village to town distances. Student transport to University problematic. Taxi Transit does service the students at the University but there are some glitches to work through with this service. No recognition of part time students for fare discounts on public transport. This is a real issue in this area as there are high numbers of part time students. There was agreement though for further discussion with Taxi Transit to occur on this issue.
Aged Issues Sarina has a very aged population and very limited transport options into Mackay Need to get the HACC service in Mackay involved in forums like this. Some existing services that need to be better utilised: Free bus service from Sarina to Canelands. May be a Transport Development worker recently employed in the local council who needs to be informed on these transport difficulties and encouraged to think outside the square about responses
Carer Issues Cost for 2 people to always have to travel. Frequency of transport use – people often have to regularly visit services. Emergency transport issues. Inaccessible infrastructure for people who are frail or disabled – this includes transport infrastructure as well as building and facility infrastructure.
Taxi Issues government funding and funding guidelines needs to be more flexible
Queensland Transport Lack of community knowledge about the rules and regulations involved in providing transport services.

Attachment 4: Forum Participants

- 60 & Better
- Arthritis Foundation
- Beenleigh & District Senior Citizens Centre
- Transport Service
- Broadsound Shire Council
- Burdekin Community Association
- CAG
- Capabilities
- CASA
- Centacare Fraser Coast
- Central Queensland University
- Student Association
- Caboolture Innovative Transport Service
- Collinsville Community Association
- Community Health
- Community Information Centre
- Community Options Program
- Community Resource Service Townsville
- CSNQ
- Disability Services Queensland
- Drive you Relax Travel
- ESA
- Ethnic Community Care
- Friends of the Blind
- Gayndah HACC
- HACC Training Needs Analysis
- HACC Wide Bay
- Kingaroy & District Meals on Wheels
- Lifeline Mackay-Whitsunday
- Lifeline North Queensland
- Community Care Transport
- Lifeline Resource Services
- Mackay City Council
- Mackay Life Enhancement
- Mackay Taxi's
- Mainstream Community Association
- METS BlueCare
- MIHD Survivors
- Mirani Shire Council
- MP for Thuringowa
- MP for Townsville
- Mackay Regional Council for Social Development
- Mundubbera Community Development Assoc
- North Burnett Health Service District
- Paraquad
- Primary Health Care Council

- Prompt
- Queensland Council of Carers
- Queensland Health HACC
- Queensland Shelter
- Queensland Transport
- Redcliffe Community Bus
- Regional Communities
- Sarina APSL & Woongabeena Aged care
- Sarina Shire Council
- Sarina Youth Centre
- SB Health Service
- SBCITS
- SBSCWA Inc Senior Citizens
- South Burnett Autism
- SQIT South Burnett TAFE
- St John Ambulance
- T&PI Association
- TAFE
- Townsville City Council
- Townsville Enterprise
- Townsville Region Committee on the Ageing
- Townsville Region Council on the Ageing
- Townsville Taxi's
- Trans Com Care
- Transcare
- Unemployed Workers Group
- Whitsunday Coast Coaches
- Whitsunday Community Services