



Addressing Transport Needs of Aboriginal People

Project no. 184: Aboriginal people travelling well

What's the project about?

Mobility is a basic human need, and transport – walking, driving, travelling as a passenger – is the way that it is achieved. The starting point for the work carried out in this project was the proposition that safe and sufficient transport should be accessible to everyone. Lack of safety can be a consequence of insufficient or inadequate transport. For example, given a need to travel – for work, education, medical services, family or cultural reasons, or recreation – and limited transport options, a person might travel in an unsafe way rather than not travel at all.

The study themes and approach were informed by a series of forums held between 2005 and 2007, involving representatives of Aboriginal organisations and officers of government agencies. Consultations with focus groups and personal interviews were conducted, and case studies recorded, in several Aboriginal communities.

Who's involved?

- Aboriginal communities (Adelaide and Far West Coast region, SA)
- Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB)
- CRC for Aboriginal Health
- Flinders University
- Aboriginal Health Council of SA
- Australian Red Cross (SA branch)
- SA Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure
- Office of Indigenous Policy Coordination
- SA Fire and Emergency Services Commission (SAFECOM)
- SA Metropolitan Fire Service (SAMFS)
- SA Police (SAPOL)



Road from Eyre Highway leading to Yalata community, Far West Coast, SA

- TAFE SA
- Tullawon Health Service
- Zebra Finch Men's Group
- Kura Yerlo Centre

Outcomes

The program resulted in numerous actions aimed at improving the safety or sufficiency of transport for Aboriginal people in South Australia. For example:

- The establishment of an informal forum of representatives from agencies and organisations across a diverse range of areas.
- The National Indigenous Working Group (auspiced by the ATSB) formed a taskforce to review, update and redistribute Aboriginal road safety material.
- The SA Thinker in Residence, Professor Ilona Kickbusch, is recommending to the SA Premier and Cabinet that driver education and licensing be added to the State Strategic Plan as a key strategy to improve mobility, to establish identity, and to provide improved employment and life opportunities for Aboriginal people.

Implications of findings for policy and practice

The availability of safe and sufficient transport has diverse implications for safety, health and welfare. Recommended actions include:

- Improving access to driver licensing education in different learning styles, and increased availability of driver training and driving supervision to overcome barriers to obtaining a driver's licence.
- A long-term initiative on seat restraint education that promotes user behaviour and improves access to, and use of, infant and child car restraints.
- Establishing a regional passenger service to run regularly from Yalata and other outlying communities to Ceduna.
- Development of a joint program between road safety, drug and alcohol, and licensing agencies to reduce the likelihood of drink/drug driving.

The project commenced in 2005 with a seeding grant from Flinders University, and the most recent work was completed in 2007 with a grant from the ATSB.



Ceduna foreshore, Murat Bay

Safe living, safe transport at Ceduna Town Camp

Ceduna Town Camp, Wangka Wilurrara Accommodation Centre, provides safe, secure temporary accommodation for Aboriginal families or individuals in transition between communities and permanent accommodation. Alcohol, drugs and violence are prohibited, and the centre is staffed 24 hours, 7 days a week.

The camp manager contacted us with an urgent request—a baby capsule was needed to safely transport a new resident and infant to health and other appointments. The same day, the Red Cross was able to supply an ex-hire capsule, anchor bolt and extension strap to suit the people mover vehicle used by the camp staff, enabling safe travel for that mum and bub, and others to come.



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