

— MEDIA RELEASE: JULY 7, 2025 —

## **Tasmania needs real public transport reform and investment, not privatisation**

---

New research by the McKell Institute has found that Tasmania's public transport investment continues to lag the rest of the country.

The progressive research think tank makes a case for Tasmania's snap election to put a focus on better transport networks in *Driving Tasmania's Future: The Case For Public Transport Investment Over Privatisation*.

"Tasmania's public transport is patchy and unreliable after decades of under-investment. Budget repair is critical, but so is dependable public transport," said McKell Institute Executive Director Rebecca Thistleton.

Key findings include:

- Tasmania has the lowest per capita public transport spending of all Australian states.
- No meaningful new investment has been made in Hobart's bus network since the 2019 City Deal.
- Disadvantaged areas like Glenorchy face sparse and unreliable service, reducing access to jobs, education and healthcare services.
- Drivers face abuse, low morale and rising assaults, showing the need to criminalise harassment of transport workers.
- The government's own criteria show Metro Tasmania fails the test for privatisation.

The report makes several recommendations:

- Legislating a 10-Year Public Transport Investment Strategy with a clear funding plan, prioritising service expansion in growth corridors and integration with ferries and future rail.
- Overhauling Metro Tasmania's governance with mandatory public reporting on service reliability, coverage and workforce conditions.
- Amending the Metro Tasmania Act to enshrine community service obligations.
- Creating a Public Transport Workforce Charter to ensure safe, secure and fair jobs.
- Embedding public transport planning in all major housing and urban development efforts.

"This year's austere budget was the trigger for the fourth Tasmanian election in seven years. Some will treat this election as a referendum on Macquarie Point Stadium, but it could be an opportunity to vote for a stable, majority government with a bold plan public transport services.

"Many Tasmanians want to see their footy team in the national league, but they also want to get to a job interview, or home safely after a night shift. So long as buses remains patchy, infrequent and inaccessible to so many, the full benefit of everything else government spends money on cannot be fully realised."

**CONTACT:** Rebecca Thistleton, Executive Director, The McKell Institute  
0416510724 | [rebecca@mckellinstitute.org.au](mailto:rebecca@mckellinstitute.org.au)