TOP TIPS

1. Road users should give way to merging buses.
2. School students should stand well back from the road.
3. If you're chartering a bus use an accredited bus operator.
4. Older passengers should use priority seating and hand rails to avoid falls.
5. Everyone should respect the driver and other passengers.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

Welcome to the Bus Safety Week edition of Bus Safety News.

Recently I was privileged to present the best student performance prize for the 2015 Safety Management Course for Bus Operators. The award ceremony was held as a precursor to Monash University’s Institute of Transport Studies annual Odgen Lecture. The subject of this year’s lecture “Challenging Conventional Transport Planning Practice: Reflections on the real utility of travel” struck me as particularly relevant to bus transport and bus safety.

In her presentation, Professor Pat Mokhtarian from Georgia Tech Atlanta USA, explored a number of transport economic factors not normally taken into account by mass transport system models. In the traditional transport planning world the less time a journey takes the higher the allocated economic value (utility). Professor Mokhtarian’s argument, while recognising the importance people place on the time it takes them to go from where they are to where they want to be, also highlighted a number of benefits not normally measured, or taken into account of, by transport planners – such as the pure enjoyment some people gain from the journey itself or the new experiences the journey affords some travellers during the course of their trip.

These benefits or utilities struck me as particularly relevant to bus travel as buses are much more versatile and flexible in how they are operated and where they can go in comparison with rail and tram. While, in Victoria, all three modes share a strong safety foundation, bus transport offers its passengers more than just the opportunity of a quick journey. This very point was brought home to me the weekend after the Odgen lecture when I visited one of the wineries near Macedon. Also taking a local wine tour was a bus load of interstate tourists and, from their conversation, they were certainly getting more than just a speedy trip.

Their discussion ranged from the social to the exciting scenery they were observing to the comfort they were enjoying on the bus – all in all much more “utility” than the norm for traditional transport planning and modelling. Bus travel is very much more than just transporting people from one place to another as quickly as possible.

On 24 March the Victorian Supreme Court - Court of Appeal handed down a significant judgement (DPP vs Vibro-Pile Pty Ltd ) regarding duties to ensure safety so far as is reasonably practicable (SFAIRP). While the case concerned the Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004, the decision has relevance to all regulatory schemes that impose obligations to ensure safety SFAIRP, including the Bus Safety Act 2009. The court ruled that proving a breach of an obligation to ensure safety SFAIRP does not require proof that the breach caused actual harm to any person and that the breach occurs when the obligated party (for bus safety read bus operator) fails to eliminate or reduce risk SFAIRP. The occurrence of an incident is of evidentiary significance only.

The take away for bus safety is that all bus operators must identify the risks to the safety of their bus service and either eliminate those risks or, if not reasonably practicable to eliminate these risks, reduce them so far as reasonably practicable. Operators cannot rely on the idea that because they have not had a safety incident that they are not in breach of their bus safety obligations. To assist bus operators with meeting their bus safety obligations Bus Safety Victoria (BSV) and the Bus Association of Victoria have agreed to form a joint working group to identify and document bus safety risks. This work will commence in late July or early August. The outcome of this joint effort is expected to provide bus operators with a list of bus safety
risks and controls currently in place with which individual operators can review their the safety of respective bus services. While every effort will be made to produce a comprehensive list, it must be understood that no list can be absolute as bus services and their associated safety risks are constantly changing due to such things as changes in technology, the environment and business operations. Bus operators need to be constantly vigilant to emerging safety risks and pro-actively address known and emerging risks if they are to provide safe bus services.

In this edition of the newsletter we highlight our Bus Safety Week theme “Bus Safety – it’s a shared responsibility” and the five sub-themes covering shared roads, school bus safety, accessible safe bus services, safety behaviours of passengers and tour and charter bus safety. The main and supporting themes were developed jointly by BSV and the Bus Association of Victoria (BusVic). These collaborative regulator / industry activities are important to continuing the bus safety journey that springs from the introduction and implementation of the Bus Safety Act. If you have not done so already, I ask you to spread the bus safety themes within your communities and networks. By working together we all will benefit from the public value of safe bus services.

Also this newsletter highlights the joint industry / government work being undertaken to address the impacts of anti-social behaviour by bus passengers and other members of the public and initiatives to remove red tape in bus operations.

Bus operators, in particular, may wish to give some added attention to How to survive a bus safety audit and What happens at an in-field compliance inspection as these articles offer some helpful information for operators and their workforce. Key incident statistics included in this edition of Bus Safety News paint a positive picture as they indicate that most bus incident types are trending down. This is encouraging and, I believe, demonstrates in quantitative terms the benefits that flow from implementing a modern safety outcomes based regulatory regime such as the Bus Safety Act.

Lastly, we have included an article on bus rollaway incidents which is a serious safety risk, particularly applicable to operators providing route bus services. The results of our research into this matter will be made available to the industry through a research paper and a presentation at the 2016 Bus Maintenance Conference.

STEPHEN TURNER
Director, Bus Safety
The inaugural Bus Safety Week focuses on the shared responsibility of being safe around buses. Bus Safety Victoria (BSV), BusVic and the industry are using this week to shine the light on bus safety and how everyone has a role to play.

How did Bus Safety Week come about?
The idea to highlight the important contribution safe bus services make to the Victorian community and economy came about through feedback BSV received over a number of years in its engagement with stakeholders - particularly from the many bus operators and bus safety workers who have participated in BSV’s Bus Safety Forum program.

What do you hope Bus Safety Week will achieve?
Bus Safety Week has two main aims. Firstly to highlight that bus safety is not simply the responsibility of any one person or enterprise - it is a responsibility that we all share. This doesn't mean that we all have an equal responsibility rather it highlights that we each contribute to bus safety to the extent that we are able to control any risks involved in a particular bus service. Bus operators contribute by ensuring that their buses are roadworthy and suited to the nature of the bus service. Bus drivers contribute their competence, experience and safe driving skills and practices. Bus passengers contribute to the safety of a bus service through their behaviours and by taking care when on a bus or boarding or getting off a bus and their awareness of any safety risks around bus stops. Other road users contribute by acting in a way that doesn't adversely impact the safety of a bus service. For example, car drivers not cutting in on a bus, or pedestrians not stepping out into the path of a bus causing drivers to brake heavily to avoid a collision. This sort of incident can result in passengers on buses suffering slip, trip and fall injuries.

Secondly, Bus Safety Week highlights the safety of bus travel and the important contribution this makes to Victorians. Whether it's getting to work or school or their local shopping centre or to a wealth of other social activities. Getting to Victoria’s many scenic and natural wonders and events is also important to our interstate and international visitors. Even simply enjoying a stress free trip to or from Melbourne or Avalon airports. Bus safety’s contribution to Victorians and our economy is worthy of celebrating.
Why is the future of bus safety important?

Bus services provide a real contribution to the safety of our travelling public whether they are local residents going about their daily business or sporting clubs getting their teams to venues or community groups going to social activities or visitors journeying to Victorian unique attractions, such as the 12 Apostles or the fairy penguins at Phillip Island. Safe bus services contribute to the prosperity of Victoria’s economy. The bus industry is a significant employer in Victoria and one that we rely on to transport more than 180 million passengers each year.

Why do Victorians need to recognise that it is a shared responsibility?

Bus safety does not happen by itself. All Victorians - whether their connection to a bus service is as an operator, or as a driver, or maintenance staff, or as passengers or other road users - have the potential by their behaviour to impact bus safety. Understanding our part in bus safety helps each of us to contribute positively to Victoria’s bus services whether they are route bus services, tour and charter bus services, commercial mini-bus services or community and private bus service. It is in all our best interests to work together to continue to improve the safety of bus services.

Craig Spurr, General Manager, Industry Development and the team at BusVic have been coordinating Bus Safety Week. We asked Craig why the event is relevant to everyone.

How will people be able to identify their responsibilities with bus safety?

We saw that everyone, at some time, will engage with bus transport. Even if people do not physically get on buses – as a road user you will be playing a role in bus safety.

We found that there are five areas or themes to bus safety:

- sharing the road with buses
- safe school bus travel
- elderly and accessible bus travel
- safety behaviours for all bus passengers
- chartering a bus and your safety responsibilities

Everyone will be able to identify with at least one or more of those themes.

What does Bus Safety Week look like?

We have our official launch at Southern Cross train station at 10.30am on 20 June. We would love to see everyone there. We have school activities in Morwell, Warrnambool, Geelong, Shepparton, Ballarat and Bendigo. We are launching a suite of animated bus safety videos. Plus we are running the ‘favourite bus driver’ competition. I encourage people to check out what is on offer at www.busvic.asn.au/public/bus-safety.

Why is Bus Safety Week important to BusVic members and the bus community in general?

BusVic’s members’ have a trans-generational commitment to getting their customers home safely. This is the ultimate promise member operators make to each other, to their customers, to their staff, and to the various stakeholders in the communities in which they operate. Safety is at the heart of everything that BusVic member operators do.

BusVic engages in a number of safety initiatives in the quest to continually improve bus safety. This includes school bus safety educational programs for school students; driver safety and respect campaigns; educational and systems assistance for our member operators when required; and setting the industry standard for bus safety inspections via Road Safety Inspections.

BusVic also works in partnership with BSV on a number of different safety initiatives, including Bus Safety Week. BusVic sincerely thanks Stephen Turner, Director, BSV for inviting BusVic to be the principal partner in Bus Safety Week. BusVic has been very proud to help deliver this initiative on behalf of our industry members.
BUS SAFETY AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Anti-social behaviour in and around bus services presents a real safety risk to bus drivers, passengers and other members of the public. Disruptive and threatening behaviour by bus passengers risk distracting the driver from safely manoeuvring their bus on the roadway. Rocks thrown at passing buses risk injury to those on the bus and, if it causes the bus driver to lose control of their bus, to other road users and to pedestrians.

Bus services are one of the safest forms of transport. Buses in Victoria transport almost two hundred million passengers each year across all bus service types – route, tour and charter, community and private, school and courtesy. Safe bus services are an essential component to the prosperity, productivity, well-being and inclusion that all Victorians, and visitors to Victoria, rely on.

Over recent years BSV, the Bus Association of Victoria (BusVic) and other relevant agencies have identified a number of anti-social behaviour incidents that need to be combated in order for our bus operators to continue to provide safe bus services for the benefit of all Victorians. In 2014-15 BSV along with BusVic, Public Transport Victoria (PTV) and the Transport Workers Union jointly funded research into bus driver assaults which led to an industry sponsored bus industry well-being program.

Following a number of rock throwing incidents in the outer western areas of Melbourne during the latter part of last year and earlier this year, BSV joined with BusVic, Victoria Police, PTV, the Department of Education and Training and the bus operators most affected by these incidents to identify and implement strategies and programs to combat the safety risks these incidents cause. From this work, experts from the Transport Accident Commission were engaged to developed a number of educational tools that can be delivered in schools.

The Addressing Anti-Social Behaviours program was trialled in a number of schools in Term Two. Following assessment of the pilot and any adjustments, the program will be rolled out to schools in areas where it has been identified the most incidents of anti-social behaviour affecting bus safety are occurring.

BSV is proud to be partnering with BusVic and other relevant agencies in contributing to this joint response to combat anti-social behaviours that may adversely impact on the safety of bus services.
BSV continues to search for ways to improve the administration of bus safety regulations. Over the past few years, BSV has implemented a number of changes to bus operator accreditation processes in order to reduce the administrative burden of operators, thus allowing them to give more attention to ensuring they provide safe bus services.

BSV has recently been working with Victoria’s Red Tape Commissioner, the NSW Cross Border Commissioner, policy areas of the Department of Economic Development, Transport, Jobs and Resources, VicRoads, the Taxi Services Commission and the Bus Association of Victoria. From this joint agency / industry efforts several potential improvements in cross border bus operations have been highlighted. BSV’s policy is to support any proposed improvement where bus safety is not diminished or where it is improved. BSV vigorously opposes any changes that adversely impact the safety of cross border bus operations.

One matter the joint parties have identified for further consideration includes simplifying the bus driver accreditation / bus driver authority processes that currently apply in Victoria and NSW. Both jurisdictions require bus drivers to undergo criminal checks and meet the national “Fit to Drive” medical standard. Working towards a mutual recognition scheme for bus driver accreditation / authority would benefit both Victorian and NSW bus drivers without diminishing safety. Another matter that impacts cross border bus operations is the slight difference in school bus lights and signage requirements in Victoria and NSW. BSV believes that school bus safety would improve if Victoria adopts the NSW regime.

BSV also believes a process to mutually recognise the accreditation of bus operators accredited in either NSW or Victoria would improve cross border bus operations. BSV has compared the NSW and Victorian bus operator accreditation schemes and believes there are more similarities than differences. With this in mind there are benefits to both jurisdictions in investigating ways to enable an easier pathway to mutually recognise each other’s accredited bus operators.

Readers are reminded that, while the above work is encouraging, it is early in the reform process and much work is yet to be done before these changes can be implemented.

Further information about red tape matters can be found at:
HOW TO SURVIVE A BUS SAFETY AUDIT

We have developed and tested an improved audit process, which will be rolled out across the industry from 1 July 2016.

Why change?
Our improved audit methodology will:

• better promote Bus Safety Act objectives
• contribute to more efficient and effective regulation
• make better use of our limited resources
• focus on safety outcomes rather than compliance output.

What’s new?
Where previous audits focused solely on bus operator compliance with legislative requirements, the new process also reviews compliance but focuses on operators’ risk management ability and safety culture/safety maturity.

What are the new audit elements?
There are now three elements to safety audits:

Compliance performance element
Checklist items are extracted directly from legislation.

The audit is not heavily focused on administrative non-compliance but is more interested in safety outcomes.

Risk management performance element
The risk management element investigates how well operators are managing applicable safety risks. Sub elements include:

• Knowledge of safety duties
• Risk management process
• Stakeholder involvement; and
• Communications.

Safety maturity assessment element
Management and leadership-How the organisation behaves with respect to safety.
Just culture-How the organisation views incidents and accidents.
Information flow and feedback-How the organisation manages the flow of information and feedback about safety issues.

Learning culture-How the organisation learns from failures.

Staff and stakeholder involvement-How the organisation involves key stakeholders in safety improvement.

What’s the process?
Bus Safety Compliance Officers (BSCOs) will conduct audits as previously, but the on-site aspect of the audit may take several hours and is much more conversational and interactive than previous audits. BSCOs will not simply want to see records etc. but will use focused open questioning to allow them to form an objective view of the overall safety of the operator.

How can I prepare for the audit?
We will put our checklist on the TSV website to allow all bus operators to see exactly what we will be asking during these audits. Operators can best prepare themselves by reviewing the checklist and ensuring they have valid and visible responses to the checklist elements. Operators should...
pay particular attention to the risk management and safety maturity elements as they have not been encountered before and they may not yet have processes in place to effectively meet those requirements.

What outcome can I expect from the audit?

An audit report will be produced which clearly identifies operators’ performance in all three elements. Reports may also contain recommendations for improvements and/or Non Compliance Reports (NCRs), Improvement Notices or Prohibition Notices.

Has there been any feedback from operators on the new methodology?

Yes.

“...the new methodology and areas of discussion provided an ability to articulate our safety management system, culture and commitment more effectively than in the past.”

“...the new methodology provided the opportunity to discuss and relate the objectives of the Act into tangible processes and actions. We were able to describe at each level (from the governance and policy levels through to the functional level) what we do and how it relates to the various requirements of the Act.”

“The format of the new program produced significantly more two way discussion around the objectives of the Act and our method of compliance than what was previously experienced. Through these discussions we were able to reflect on areas of our safety system and identify areas of possible improvement.”

“The identification of improvements may not have been realised if open discussions hadn’t taken place and the audit followed a rigid evidence based compliance methodology.”

“We found our recent safety audit experience to be collaborative and proactive with a real focus on continuous safety culture improvement.”

Questions?

Contact Shaun Rodenburg, Manager Audit at shaun.rodenburg@transportsafety.vic.gov.au

MONTHLY STATISTICS

Time frame is the year indicated and up until March 2016.

Collisions refer to all other vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

Bus security relates to incidents such as assaults.

### INCIDENTS

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<td>Slip, Trip or Fall</td>
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<td>Bus Security</td>
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### FATALITIES

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### INJURIES

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### SERIOUS INJURIES

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<tr>
<td>Bus Security</td>
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### FATALITIES

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### INJURIES - LAST 24 MONTHS

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<td>Slip, Trip or Fall</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bus Security</td>
<td>40</td>
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</table>
In January 2016, the Director, Bus Safety wrote to 87 operators advising them that their deemed accreditation had ceased and they were required by the end of January, to return their certificate of accreditation to Bus Safety Victoria (BSV) and their accredited bus operator number plates to VicRoads.

BSV has identified that 22 of the 87 operators written to have not complied with the direction and their bus/es continue to display accredited bus operator number plates.

Regulation 10 (2) of the Bus Safety Regulations 2010 (Vic) prescribes that a person must not display accredited bus operator number plates on a bus unless that person is accredited to operate that bus.

BSV officers have visited the owners of these buses and where the officers confirmed the number plates were displayed on the bus/es, the bus owners were issued with a $303 infringement notice.
WHAT OCCURS AT AN INFIELD COMPLIANCE INSPECTION

Bus Safety Victoria (BSV) conducts compliance inspections on buses at various locations including Melbourne Airport, Twelve Apostles National Park, Penguin Parade at Phillip Island and the Yarra Valley.

A compliance inspection which consists of an inspection of the bus and documents required to be carried by the driver is one method for BSV to assess bus operators compliance with the Bus Safety Act 2009 (Vic).

The following is what occurs during a compliance inspection:

• The BSV officer will approach the bus driver and identify themselves and produce their Identification Card.
• The officer will announce that they are carrying out a compliance inspection and request the driver to produce their driver’s licence and driver’s accreditation. If the BSV officer is with an officer from Victoria Police or VicRoads the driver will also be requested to produce their Driver Work Diary.
• The driver’s licence and accreditation will be checked for currency and correct category and recorded by the officer. Should there be issues with either document the driver may be prohibited from driving any further. Should there be an issue with the driver’s work diary the matter will be addressed by the Police or VicRoads officer.
• In some cases the driver will be asked various questions about the operation of the bus service to ascertain whether it is being legally operated.
• The officer will conduct an inspection of the bus and check:
  • all lights for condition and operation
  • all road tyres for tread depth and bulges and cuts in the sidewall
  • windscreen for cracks, chips and sandblasting
  • seat belts for frayed webbing and the operation of the buckle and retracting device where applicable
  • that emergency hammers are fitted and No Smoking signs are displayed
  • that the fire extinguisher/s are secured and operational. Operational means the fire extinguisher is within its six month test cycle and the gauge is within the green band
  • the body for any loose panels
• If the officer identifies an issue with a driver’s document or defect, the officer records the details and the matter is followed up with the operator. This may also result in the bus operator being issued with an infringement.
• Should a defect be an immediate risk to safety the officer may prohibit the bus from continuing its journey.

Where BSV identifies an adverse trend with an operator this will also trigger a safety audit of the operator’s safety management systems.

BSV plans to increase the number of compliance activities and join forces with officers from the Police Heavy Vehicle Unit in the future.
RECENT BUS COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES

Summary of compliance activities.

Since the last edition of Bus Safety News, TSV has, in conjunction with Victoria Police, Australian Federal Police, Parks Victoria and VicRoads conducted compliance inspections at Melbourne Airport, Mildura, Robinvale, Shepparton, Yarragon, Traralgon, Phillip Island, Twelve Apostles in Princetown and the Yarra Valley.

The most common area of operator non-compliance was not having fire extinguishers tested within the required time frame. Operators that fail to comply with this requirement may face an infringement notice of $303.

The table below details the outcomes of the compliance activities conducted January 2016 - May 2016 and the non-compliances identified.

Where non-compliance is found, bus operators and bus safety workers may be subject to enforcement action that ranges from fines and Defect Notices, to Improvement and Prohibition Notices and prosecution.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matter</th>
<th>Accredited bus operator</th>
<th>Registered bus operator</th>
<th>Bus operator - not accredited or registered</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of buses inspected</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire extinguisher not maintained in an operating condition</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>nil</td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Defective tyres</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers’ licence / driver accreditation issues</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>nil</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work diary issues</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>nil</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>TSV Infringement</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prohibition Notice</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defect Notice</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There have been more than 40 occasions on which a bus has ‘rolled away’ in Victoria since 2005 and 25 of those have occurred in the past three years.

Rollaways represent a safety risk to the public and bus drivers and must be managed so far as is reasonably practicable.

To successfully manage the risk it is important to understand the term and concept. A rollaway is an uncontrolled movement of a bus when the driver is not in control, due to gravity or the motive power of the engine.

When the parking brake is not engaged, the bus can roll if on a slope. When the bus is left in neutral gear with the engine running, the bus can ‘drive’ away.

As Bus Safety Victoria (BSV) requires bus operators to manage this risk, it has undertaken research into how and why rollaways occur and practical preventative measures.

The research paper is not intended to be a ‘silver bullet’ and or a ‘prescription’ from the regulator to solve this problem. Its purpose is to document the nature of rollaway risks and what has been done to address these risks – in Victoria and elsewhere.

Operators can use the research report to consider rollaway risks and controls as they affect or operate in their business with their bus types and services. There are so many different bus types, configurations and scope of operations it is not possible to produce a one size fits all template.

Bus operators will be in a better position to eliminate or minimise the risk of bus rollaways when they have all the information in one document. Operators can register their interest in obtaining a copy of the completed research paper by contacting us on 1800 223 022 or by email information@transportsafety.vic.gov.au.

BSV would like to thank the organisations that provided input to the research:

Bus operators
- CDC
- McHarry’s
- Ryan’s
- Skybus
- Transdev
- Ventura

Bus manufacturers
- Mercedes-Benz
- Scania
- Volvo

Industry groups
- Bus Association Victoria
- Bus Industry Conference

State departments
- Department Planning, Transport and Infrastructure SA
- Office of Transport Safety Investigations NSW
- State Transit Authority NSW
- Transport for NSW
- Public Transport Victoria
- VicRoads

3 March 2016, driverless bus crashes into hairdressing salon in Knoxfield
**FEATURE OPERATOR: BUNYIP TOURS**

We spoke to the managing director of Bunyip Tours, George Josevski...

**Tell us about your organisation and describe your tourism transport service.**

Bunyip Tours is a multi-award winning Melbourne based day and extended small group eco tour operator. We have been operating tours to Victoria’s premier destinations for over 19 years. Tours include the spectacular Great Ocean Road and Grampians, as well as Phillip Island and the penguin parade, Wilsons Promontory National Park, Mornington Peninsula and we are the Official tour operator of the TV soap ‘Neighbours’. Tours are operated in small coaches with a maximum of 24 people, ensuring personalised, educational and interactive experiences for all guests. Bunyip Tours is very proud of its standing as a 100% carbon balanced business, which encompasses its entire operation.

**How have you worked to make your safety management systems compliant with the Bus Safety Act?**

At Bunyip Tours the safety of our customers as well as our staff is our number one priority. Our business successfully completed the Safety Management Course offered by Monash University and subsequently trained the Bunyip operations team on the information ascertained during the course. A comprehensive framework for our Safety Management System (SMS) was set up based on the information provided during the course, as well as the requirements set out during the accreditation process. The end result is an SMS that works for the company and all the employees that use it, whilst fulfilling all our legal obligations. The system has been successfully implemented and is used on a daily basis by all staff.

**What was the greatest learning for you from the process?**

The streamlining of all the operational information has been fantastic. Generally speaking all the information was already there prior to going through the process, but it was not stored in one central system. The streamlining and easy monitoring ensures everything is always up to date as there are regular reviews and maintenance of the system.

It’s a costly exercise to maintain compliant procedures, and we believe an SMS needs to be implemented across the board including the registered vehicles sector under 12 seats. The safety standards enforced for paying passengers should not be limited to Licensed Tour Operators. Otherwise it defeats the intentional purpose of the system to protect every passenger.
Furthermore it has also resulted in greater communication between the various departments in the company as regular meetings are part of the new system. Regular internal audits also ensure that nothing important is ever missed. The operations team has also gained considerable knowledge in the area of risk assessment, mitigation and management which is vital for us.

**Why is it important for a service such as yours to have such high safety standards?**

This is crucial for us. As we deal with members of the public every day high safety standards and risk management strategies are absolutely vital. Each and every day we have groups of 24 people per bus and on any given day we can have up to 12 vehicles travelling around Victoria. Having an SMS in place ensures that we have done everything possible to ensure that our guests as well as our driver/guides are safe on the road.

**Can you provide any good examples where your safety systems have ‘saved the day’ or helped avoid an incident?**

Nothing major. On the rare occasion when we have minor breakdowns here and there, all our inducted guides are well trained to handle any situation, as we have contingency plans in place for customer safety, service and to minimise delays. We have never had any serious incidents so we believe the fact that we have a great safety system in place is the best prevention!

**Does a focus on administration help or hinder your operation?**

Administration systems including the SMS are vital to protect not only the customer but also the company. Our organisation employs a full time operations person as well as HR representative to make sure we have our systems in order.

**What does the future hold for Bunyip Tours?**

Bunyip Tours is always striving to showcase new regions to our international guests. We have just begun our new Ballarat/Daylesford tour as well as our Healesville/Puffing Billy/Penguins day tour. We also encourage our guests to take up our overnight extended tours throughout Victoria.

Our main focus is sustainability and to continue giving great service and making sure our customers feel safe, informed and entertained!
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