



YOUTH JOBS STRATEGY REPLY

October 2023

Community Transport Services Tasmania



www.ctst.org.au

Prepared in response to the Youth Jobs Strategy 2023



Have your say

YOUTH JOBS STRATEGY



Let's connect!

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Background



Community Transport Services Tasmania Inc (CTST) is a not-for-profit community transport provider, the biggest in Tasmania and one of the biggest in Australia. CTST delivers community transport under contract to the Commonwealth and Tasmanian governments, supporting older Tasmanians, and those younger but with a disability, to remain connected with their community while continuing to live at home. In this context, we deliver an average of around 15,000 trips per month statewide, using nearly 350 volunteer drivers who provide over 12,000 days of their time per year.

Area Connect is well established community-focused transport service that aims to provide flexible, demand-driven transportation in areas with significant transport challenges throughout the state. We offer our service to people who live in areas where regular public transport is unavailable or too far from the nearest public transport to connect with other services. Our transportation service has been critical in supporting individuals in regional and remote areas, empowering them to access employment and training opportunities and bridging the gap in transport disadvantage.

Case-managed transportation is offered by Area Connect Jobs and Training Transport, which provides clients with comprehensive support. Our coordinators work in collaboration with passengers and service providers across the state to determine the most suitable service. The service not only provides logistical support but also a degree of mentorship and guidance to ensure our clients reach their destination with confidence.

Area Connect Jobs and Training Transport is an affordable or free transportation service that helps individuals reach their workplaces, training programs, or educational institutions. The service is available in areas that correspond to the Jobs Tasmania Regional Jobs Hubs, but it is not limited to them. We have a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of transport barriers, especially for young people. This has allowed us to develop a market-leading model and service in regional transport.

Our team has extended its networks and support services to various community-based organisations and initiatives associated with employment services, training, job preparation, and employment opportunities. We are the established leader in regional transport and have designed and delivered our services to cater to the needs of the most vulnerable youth in our community.

As the leading provider of community transport services, we possess the knowledge and expertise to assist disadvantaged youth throughout the state. Our funding is secured until April 2024, and we're eager to continue expanding our services. With our wealth of experience, we're committed to making a positive impact in the lives of young people in our communities.

Focusing on our Area Connect Jobs and Training transport services, we've identified three specific questions contained in the Youth Jobs Strategy proposal where we feel we can draw on our historical and current data along with our transport and broader industry expertise by way of response to contribute towards positive outcomes for our youth.

Q. How can we improve access to services and support for young people in our regions?

To empower young people and help them reach their full potential, it is vital to improve their access to services and support. One effective approach is to raise awareness of the available services and how to access them. We are proud to have established partnerships with various local networks, including Jobs Hubs, Trade Training Centres, training providers, local government bodies, Workforce Australia, and other employment agencies. Our shared commitment to creating local success has enabled us to establish strong, collaborative relationships.

At Area Connect, we provide tailored transport and support to meet the unique needs of young people. This involves consulting with them to identify their needs and preferences, as well as referring them to professionals who work with youth. Our skilled drivers act as mentors and provide individualised transport plans, which is another innovation we have developed to provide the best possible service to all passengers.

We understand that certain barriers may prevent young people from accessing services and support, such as geographic isolation, cultural or linguistic barriers, and financial constraints. That's why our statewide coordinators work closely with passengers and service providers to determine the most suitable transport service that meets their specific needs. We believe that everyone deserves access to safe, reliable, and affordable transportation, and we are committed to making that a reality for our passengers. To that end, we have created an online enquiry/booking portal for all of our partners, which is linked directly to the appropriate coordinator. This has resulted in less stress for our passengers, as we find a suitable transport solution on their behalf, regardless of their location in regional or rural Tasmania. Online bookings and transport plans are among the reasons why we have become the market leaders in community transport for work and training opportunities.

Our team of coordinators is highly skilled, knowledgeable, and committed to serving those with transport disadvantage by providing access to reliable and efficient transport services. Our coordinators are flexible, agile, and responsive to the needs of clients, and possess a deep understanding of the market, challenges, and local nuances. Through daily communication with network members, our coordinators share and gain information about local opportunities, ensuring that everyone has the chance to seize them as they arise. Network members, in turn, advocate for Area Connect Jobs and Training Transport services to jobseekers, trainees, employers, and training organisations. With a shared purpose, we work together to create a better future for all. Whether the need is for assistance getting to a job interview, a training program, or any other destination, our team is here to help. We understand that transportation is more than just a means of getting around - it's a vital component of building a better life. That's why we go above and beyond to provide industry best practice support to our passengers every step of the way.

We recognise that a collaborative impact strategy is essential for providing effective and sustainable learning and career pathways in Tasmania. Our priority is to enable partner organisations to deliver their programs effectively by focusing on safe, reliable, compliant, and cost-effective transport solutions. Together as we continue working towards improving access to services and support for youth we appreciate the importance of a collaborative and holistic approach involving government, community organisations, and youth themselves. By working together, we can ensure that all young people have access to the resources and support they need to thrive.

Q. What type of support do our young people outside larger metro areas need to succeed?

Lack of transportation options in rural and remote areas can be a significant barrier for individuals to access jobs and training opportunities. This can further exacerbate the financial and social challenges faced by these individuals. To address this issue, Area Connect's service delivery model is specifically targeted towards areas with the greatest need for transport services. Our local coordinators have a deep understanding of the local cultures and issues, which helps in easing the transitions beyond the classroom.

Area Connect have identified the following areas where we can assist.

- Transport services that align with work and training schedules to support punctual attendance.
- Coordinated transport to career advice sessions that are available in multiple locations.
- An accessible transport service that is hassle free and reliable.
- Cost-effective transport to encourage usage.

Area Connect Jobs and Training Transport is funded to provide an affordable or free transportation service statewide.

At Area Connect, we're constantly exploring innovative transport solutions and believe in collaborating with our partners as they provide opportunities for students to explore future work and career possibilities. For instance, coordinating transport for industry site tours, educational visits to TasTAFE and UTAS, as ways we support participants in gaining exposure to current and future work opportunities in their region.

The continued funding of the Area Connect Jobs and Training Transport service will allow us to leverage our infrastructure and expertise to provide further outcomes in removing transport as a barrier to employment. We believe that our service is a critical element in empowering rural and remote communities to access job and training opportunities, which will have a positive economic and social impact on the wider community.

Q. What are some innovative approaches to address transport issues for young people that keep safety as the highest priority?

Despite the numerous iterations of driver mentoring programs over the last two decades, the need for such initiatives persists, particularly among young adults without a driver's licence. These individuals often face significant obstacles in securing employment. They may lack the necessary support from family or friends to complete the required hours of driving experience to meet licencing requirements. In some areas, there are cars available, but no volunteers to serve as mentors. In other regions, neither cars nor drivers can be found.

Area Connect's CTST linkages can provide a consistent, fully in-house driver mentor program that meets safety and resourcing requirements to better address this issue. We have a statewide footprint of service delivery and governance from which we can leverage existing resources in our areas of operation.

As a reliable provider in a closely regulated industry with an in-depth knowledge of transport logistics. We prioritise compliance with regulations, including WWVP, Public Passenger Vehicle, full drivers licence, safe driving practices, and technology to monitor usage and vehicle tracking. Moreover, our drivers receive ongoing training, and our dedicated booking portal and phone contacts team ensures everyone gets the best possible service.

In addition, we believe that safety should always be the top priority when addressing transport issues. We have identified several innovative approaches that could be effective in ensuring safe and reliable transport for our youth:

- **Ride-share:** Passengers can coordinate with each other to arrange shared transport to and from training or extracurricular activities. This not only helps to reduce traffic congestion but also ensures that our youth are in the company of familiar faces during their commute.
- **Ride-sharing Apps:** Passengers can use ride-sharing apps with enhanced safety features, including background checks for drivers, real-time tracking, and emergency response systems.
- **Exclusive Shuttle Services:** Providing shuttle services exclusively for students, jobseekers or trainees is a great way to ensure that they are transported to and from their destinations safely.
- **Road Safety Education:** Educating young people on responsible road behaviour and the importance of using in vehicle safety mechanisms is crucial. Awareness campaigns, workshops, and training programs can be organised to promote responsible commuting habits.

By prioritising safety, we can ensure that young people can travel with confidence. It is important for parents, educators, and participants to work together to guarantee that young people learn responsible road behavior and follow safety protocols.

We value innovation as a means to cater to the diverse age groups and their expectations. Our services are tailored to exceed generational expectations, making it effortless for all users.

Area Connect's Jobs and Training Transport service plays a vital role in supporting critical government initiatives, particularly the Youth Jobs Strategy. By collaborating closely with our partners, CTST, through Area Connect, is committed to delivering high-value services that coordinate and facilitate programs, leading to a seamless transition into the workforce.

Our extensive network of employers, training providers, and community organisations rely on us to provide transport solutions and provide necessary assistance for job seekers to thrive in their chosen careers.

Additionally, our transportation services bridge the gap between job seekers and employment opportunities, providing easier access to jobs located outside of their immediate area.

We believe that everyone deserves the chance to flourish in the workforce, and at Area Connect, we're dedicated to helping individuals reach their career aspirations while contributing to their communities' growth and prosperity.

Lyndon Stevenson

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Area Connect is powered by Community Transport Services Tasmania (CTST) and supported by the Tasmanian Government through Jobs Tasmania.