



**Queensland Bus Industry Council Inc.**

September 20, 2018

**Media Statement**

**School bus services set for disruption as QLD Govt abandons drivers**

A new State Government wages deal has provided increases and parity to some government contracted bus drivers across the state, but has ignored others including school bus, long distance and rail replacement drivers who often work within the same companies.

The peak body representing bus operators, Queensland Bus Industry Council (QBIC) said while it welcomes the move to ensure drivers working on TransLink and *qconnect* routes will come under the new wage structure, the decision to ignore a large percentage of the driver pool, who also work under government contracts, makes no sense and is discriminatory.

QBIC executive director David Tape said the creation of the “haves and have nots” will likely lead to school bus drivers seeking jobs on non-school routes, resulting in a lack of drivers that could disrupt school services.

“You’d think that the drivers who carry the state’s most precious cargo – our children – would be important to the Government, but they have basically told us – in writing – that they don’t ‘deserve recognition’.”

Mr Tape said parents will naturally be concerned that less drivers working in the school sector may affect the quality of drivers.

“Obviously when an operator has many drivers to choose from, they can pick the best and the quality increases, but equally it’s not a stretch to think that when only a few are willing to work for less money, the quality may be lower,” he reasoned.

“Who wants to work for less money, especially when the same job is available down the road for more pay?”

QBIC says the new plan is an example of policy on the run and demonstrates a lack of understanding by transport minister Mark Bailey. It is also expecting claims to the Fair Work Commission.

“We have written to the minister and asked him if the Government will indemnify operators for employment claims made due to this blatant discrimination, but he has failed to respond to this specific question,” Mr Tape said.

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