

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**-FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE-**

**6 September 2022:**

### **SAFETY ISSUES RAISED BY BUS OPERATORS**

Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council's (CGRC) Road Safety Officer (RSO), Kylie Grybaitis has conducted meetings in Cootamundra and Gundagai, with local school bus operators.

Ms Grybaitis was appointed as Council's RSO, three months ago and hit the ground running with road safety programs and initiatives being implemented across the LGA. One initiative Ms Grybaitis was keen to implement was to meet with local school bus operators to discuss the Draft School Bus Route and Bus Stop Policy. The policy formulated to provide Council with means to assess requests and consistently and objectively for rural school bus routes and bus stops. The draft policy was given to operators for their feedback before it is presented to the CGRC Traffic Committee for adoption.

Operators were also informed of funding opportunities with the Country Passenger Transport Infrastructure Grants Scheme (CPTIGS). Annual grants are available from CPTIGS to provide subsidies to support the construction or upgrades to bus stop infrastructure that is generally maintained by councils across the state.

The meetings were attended by local operators, who raised concerns about the safety, particularly around schools and irresponsible parents/carers, who were parking illegally and dangerously whilst dropping off or picking up students. One operator stated it was just a matter of time, before a serious if not fatal incident occurred.

Other issues raised in the meetings included road maintenance at informal bus stops, overhanging branches on trees, safe turning zones and negotiating narrow streets.

The overwhelming issue was that of safety, and the often-unreasonable acts being carried out by parents/carers in relation to road safety in general.

Ms Grybaitis took on board all the issues operators raised and was pleased that the lines of communication had been opened and these issues have come out in the open.

"I spent some time at a local school after the meeting and was shocked at what I saw going on. Children being dropped off on pedestrian crossing, double parking, illegal parking. The operators certainly weren't exaggerating when they raised these points and what was happening at schools that are ultimately putting children's lives at risk, I have contacted local police and we should see an increased police presence to curb this behaviour," Ms Grybaitis said.

CGRC mayor Charlie Sheahan said these initiatives go a long way to keeping road users safe.

"The role of RSO is extremely important, raising awareness for road users and educating motorists on road safety. This agenda, meeting with and discussing school bus issues has raised a need for focus on pedestrian and passenger safety at local schools. I'm urging parents to take care, take a little extra time and ensure that

you are doing the right thing when dropping or collecting your children from bus stops and school bus zones,” Cr Sheahan said.

#### Picture and captions

1. School bus operators in Cootamundra met with CGRC RSO to discuss matters regarding school bus safety. (Left to right), Tracy Tregear, Lyal Twyford, Rod Jones, John Chamberlain, CGRC RSO Kylie Grybaitis, John Harper).
2. School bus operators in Gundagai met with CGRC RSO to discuss matters regarding school bus safety. (Left to right), Annette Makeham, Lindsay Makeham, CGRC RSO Kylie Grybaitis, Mick Eccleston.



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**Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council**  
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