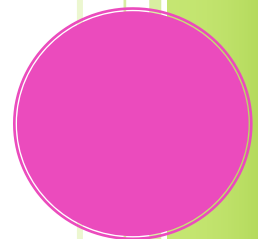




ANNUAL REPORT 2020/2021

Peninsula Transport Assist Incorporated



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INTRODUCTION

Transportation is something most people take for granted. The ability to get to places beyond a gentle return-walk requires wheels: for PTA this refers to both cars and buses.

Assisting residents get to where they need to go, yet do not have the ready means to do so, is the community transport PTA provides.

If a community member cannot get out and about, for whatever reason, this is a disadvantage. PTA was established to address this disadvantage. A disadvantage that may be due to age, physical ability, inability to drive, lack the means to afford their own car or other forms of financial hardship to get to a medical appointment, to church, see friends, do shopping or get out of the house to ease social isolation. Often, what is not realised, more generally, is that for some, the inability to get to, or from, public transport, if any is available at all, is a disadvantage (what is known as ‘the first mile and the last mile’): they are unable to get to places such as the City, or to see relatives further afield – all very important in easing the sense of isolation.

To meet the transport needs of an increasing number of residents within our community, PTA has been able to provide highly valued transport assistance due to the efforts of a team of highly committed volunteer drivers.

➤ Our Mission

The mission of **Peninsula Transport Assist Inc** is to promote and provide affordable and accessible transport and support options to residents of the Mornington Peninsula Shire and the City of Frankston who experience the disadvantage of lack of transport. Peninsula Transport Assist Incorporated is a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) and Public Benevolent Institution (PBI), established in 2013.

➤ Our Business

PTA provides volunteer assisted transport and community bus hire services through an innovative, self-sufficient approach to community service.

➤ Principal Activities

The principal activity of PTA during the 2020/2021 financial year was to provide community transport drawing on the goodwill of a team of volunteer drivers.

➤ Our Services

PTA's overriding aim is to assist the community by helping those in need of transport to ensure they retain access to important community connections. There are two 'arms' of what PTA offers:

- An individualised, 'door-to-door' transport service; and
- A 'community enterprise' arm where we hire out mini-buses to community groups, individuals and organisations, with or without a PTA volunteer driver, to earn the necessary income to fund the operation and keep us 'on-the-road' without other funding.

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Drivers Using Their Own Vehicles (DOVs)

Volunteers use their own cars to drive clients to a wide range of destinations and for varied purposes – medical appointments, to local shopping centres, aged and disability services, and personal needs such as church services, travelling to organisations such as U3A, and social engagements. PTA ensures –

- **Safety** – All our volunteers are police-checked and have completed a driving assessment through an independent driver instructor. All vehicles are suitability-assessed and must meet minimum safety standards.
- **Assistance** – Our trained volunteers provide door-to-door, personalised service. If required, the volunteer driver can stay with the client at appointments to provide support.
- **Reliability** – PTA prides itself on punctuality – all drivers arrive on time, they phone the client the night before the drive to confirm the appointment, pick-up time, parking arrangements and any support requirements the client might have.
- This service is available to all residents and to community organisations within the Mornington Peninsula Shire and the City of Frankston.

Community Buses for Hire

PTA offers 11-seater and 25-seater buses for hire. Buses are available either as self-drive or with a volunteer PTA driver. We have a mini-bus stationed at each of the following locations: Hastings, Rosebud, Mornington and Baxter. In addition, at Baxter, we have a wheel-chair-enabled mini-bus for either personal or group use.

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Why is readily accessible transport a problem in our area?

Retirement Belt – Where we live is becoming increasingly attractive for retirees – to move away from the ‘big-smoke’ to a quieter and more relaxed lifestyle.

Connecting Socially – It is now well-accepted that a person without access to transport is left isolated within their local community. In our area, transport remains widely reported as the number one issue of concern.

PTA is leading the way to a more socially connected community.

PTA seeks to be financially self-supporting, not relying on ongoing support from government or other agencies. However, donations are always welcome to support PTA initiatives, or commence new ones!



All waiting for the Starter's gun!

REPORTS



From the President

October 2021

The past year proved to be yet another difficult one for PTA, with our small organisation experiencing the fickle challenges faced by most areas of business activity across our nation: beset with uncertainty, unpredictability, and the ongoing financial pressure of remaining sustainable. PTA was able to withstand the continued pressure on our small not-for-profit operation, sustained due to our good community standing: we received considerable support from all areas of government – Federal, State and Local. All have been keen to assist us amidst a myriad of demands on them from all sectors of our society. PTA has stayed the distance, with sustainability challenges always at the forefront of our thinking – from the availability of our Volunteer Drivers, well-being of clients, through to maintaining employment for all of our staff. These uncertainties have seen us end the financial year with tasks still to be completed, and in one instance, still waiting until Lock-Down measures are greatly eased, if not fully lifted, before work on the parking area at Baxter can begin.

The short 're-start' phases from Lock-Down saw a heartening rebound in the level of bookings, particularly for our buses, so this remains a very positive focus for when we are able to return to a 'smooth driving' business pattern. Groups of all kinds remain keen to book, and get out and about. Once again, throughout the COVID lock-downs, a small band of DoV drivers continued to provide assistance for essential, medically-related reasons. A big Thank You to you all is heartily deserved. Still languishing through a full-year of significant curtailed movement for all living within our part of the world, and beyond, a large number of our drivers have remained hampered due to prevailing conditions, so their keenness to get back to 'PTA work', as well as frustration, is acknowledged. 'Hang in there', as all drivers will be needed as soon as the long-term lifting of restrictions eventuates!

In my report to you of last financial year, I mentioned then-delayed plans to improve both access and parking facilities at Baxter. Again, I have to report my continued frustration that this project was unable to make any progress with actual work. Nonetheless, everything is at the 'take-off' stage, with additional small grant funding provided by the Shire, Hillview Quarries extending the availability of their offer of assistance, and a key local contractor eager to start, based on his original quote. Goodwill remains strong! We are all waiting for the starter's gun to be fired!

A big positive of the year was the huge importance of CATS, our computerised bookings and invoicing system, with refinements continually made to ensure it was kept in peak condition. Negotiations are well advanced with the Centre for Community Participation, based in Horsham, that has been trialling a locally developed adaptation to suit the purposes of a community transport system in a far-flung rural operations area. Work is well-advanced on a marketing strategy, and this should be ready for implementation as soon as we are 'Lock-Down free'. Work has been progressing on this strategy with the generous support of the Bendigo Bank.

It must be noted that the JobKeeper Allowance enabled all our office team to continue, so **'Thank You'** to the Federal Government for this 'life-saving initiative'. Also, the State Government Department for Transport added to this 'keeping us going' funding through the generous COVID Recovery Funding for 2021. PTA remains hopeful it can re-activate an earlier submission to the Department completing the second phase of innovation funding. Although huge economic recovery demands face the State Government, we still look forward to their continued high interest in how we provide community transport.

Mornington Peninsula Shire effected the transfer of their two mini-buses to PTA just prior to the end of the financial year, this gifting being to the value of \$75,000. This was a most significant contribution, aimed at the core of what our community enterprise arm is all about – establishing a strong base through which we can earn sufficient funds to provide an on-going capacity to earn sufficient income to fund our operations. This extremely encouraging contribution demonstrates the Shire's commitment to an improvement to essential transport access for those whose needs cannot otherwise be met. A very sincere Thank You to all who made this gift happen.

The PTA Board continued to meet, remotely, but regularly, using Zoom. Board Members remain very keen to resume 'normal' business as soon as possible. All Board Members have done their utmost to ensure the viability of the organisation, with all optimistic about a strong rebound for PTA. As a small team, every Board Member has provided both myself, along with each other, encouraging support: a warm Thank You to Nick Jones, Nicola Belcher, Andrew Morse, Lisa Knightbridge, Clare Harwood and Tom Haines-Sutherland.

A special mention is made of Clare Harwood's untiring work as our Volunteer Driver's direct link to the Board: her work with The HubCap has nurtured an excellent means of keeping all informed - Drivers as well as PTA supporters. Of course, restrictions curtailed recruitment efforts during the year, but we welcomed a number of new Drivers on board. Andrew Morse has continued his valuable assistance in overseeing PTA finances, along with a valuable contribution from Neville Green. I am hopeful a new volunteer offers to join the Board, as Treasurer at the next AGM. The new Treasurer will be ably supported by our Bookkeeper, Sheridan.


As experienced by countless workers across Australia, the past year was tough for the PTA staff, with the entire team remaining intact even while working remotely. Manager Sarah, Tim, Chris, Sheridan and Louise managed the challenges posed by remote working. For much of the past year it has proved most frustrating, with several false starts, each leading to much work to be undone, and then re-done again. It is essential for the Office Team to get back to the Baxter office as soon as practicable – a place where we have firmly established a local presence: the 'local face' of PTA. Throughout the Lock-Downs, Tim has kept a watchful eye over the bus fleet, ensuring the batteries kept that special spark, and ensuring the buses 'keep up appearances'. All the Team have been keeping contact both with our Drivers and regular clients. This 'reaching out' has been greatly appreciated by all.

Considering all of the above, PTA remains a viable, and highly valued community organisation, with a healthy 'bounce back' anticipated once greater certainty for us all arrives. Of course, the 'yo-yo' business experience was widespread. We all have experienced hopes dashed through false-starts: a very demoralising experience for us all. New bookings either had to be cancelled, or postponed, when strict curtailments were reinstated by the State Government. Fortunately, PTA staff were able to work from home to keep things 'ticking along': only several days were able to be spent at the Baxter office during the past year. 'Zooming' became the means of working, with the Board not being able to have any face-to-face meetings during the twelve months.

However, PTA was able to maintain 'door-to-door' (DoV) drives for 'essential appointments' via the continued availability of a small group of PTA drivers to continue this essential community work: the drivers remained keen and supportive and this group of clients being ever so appreciative.

To meet the transport needs of an increasing number of residents in our community, PTA has delivered strongly, and has every intention of continuing to do so! PTA continues to provide highly valued transport assistance due to the efforts of a team of highly committed volunteer drivers: a caring team who remain passionate about what they do. So, we can all remain very optimistic for re-building a very sustainable business operation. Nonetheless, the months, and year, ahead are likely to remain highly unpredictable, with our earnings capacity remaining under severe pressure until a new sense of stability is reached.

After nine years in the PTA drivers' cabin, the first five years as Vice President and the past four years as President, it is time for the baton to be handed over. As an inaugural Member of the initial Committee of Management, which then became the Board, it has been a delight to see a community transport concept blossom into a well-established service that has done much to ease 'transport disadvantage' across both the Shire and the City, with well-deserved recognition along our journey, including The Victorian State Government's Age-Friendly Award in 2016, and recognition by our State Transport Ministry in supporting our unique model of operations. I have been privileged to be a lead player in our progress, and I look forward to a continuing involvement. Thank You to everyone associated with Peninsula Transport Assist.



Dr Don Reeves,

President



PTA Drivers catching up for a chat over a 'cuppa' at Harvest Café, Sages' Cottage



From the Manager

2020/21 has been another interesting year riding the rollercoaster that is COVID-19.

The first half of the year saw us working from home due to the lockdown. We are fortunate that we can do this very easily and that we are still able to assist those in the community who require our services. DOV bookings were limited to medical only from July.

Toward the end of the year and into 2021, we saw an easing of restrictions and lockdown. This allowed us to return to the office and it was wonderful to work alongside each other again. This also resulted in an increase in bookings, both DOV and bus hire, as people ventured out and about again.

In late December, we received confirmation from the Department of Transport for *Post Covid-19 Support* funding which replaced our original application for the second stage of our grant under the *Developing Community Transport Operational Capabilities* project. This funding is being used to support marketing and promotional activities; to undertake further updates to our CATS system to improve functionality and service efficiencies; to undertake a business development study/marketing plan to look at activities to boost sustainability in a post-COVID environment; and to support staff administration costs for an operational ramp up of services in a post-COVID environment.

Staffing:

Our team includes Timothy Dodds, Christine Jansen, Louise Renshaw and Sheridan Wallington. As always, they continue to be a dedicated and flexible team despite the ups and downs of the last 12 months and alternating between the office and working from home. I thank them all for their dedication, resilience and positivity in these trying times.

PTA progress: (1.7.20 – 30.6.21)

From July our DOV bookings were limited to medical only right through to later in the year when restrictions eased and we were able to transport people for other reasons again. There was a steady increase in DOV bookings each quarter but ultimately our numbers were lower across the board due to the ongoing impact of COVID-19 in general.

Our bus hire has taken a significant hit from COVID-19 with no buses, except our wheelchair bus, being able to be used at all during the first half of the year. Bus hires increased slowly from late 2020 and we had some promising hire numbers in this second half of the year. However, we are still approximately 50% down when comparing with the same time period in 2019.

Refer to our At a Glance! page in this report for a detailed breakdown of statistics.

In the office we made welfare calls to clients to have a chat and check on their wellbeing, as well as checking in with our drivers from time to time to say hello and see how they were coping during lockdown.

Continued funding from the Mornington Peninsula Shire for hardship cases has allowed us to offer subsidised DOV trips to those on the Peninsula who are suffering financial hardship.

Looking Ahead:

As evidenced by the upturn in both DOV and bus hire bookings from December, we know there will be a high demand for our services again once vaccination rates increase & restrictions ease. We hope we can continue to work in the office for the remainder of 2021 however we know that ongoing lockdowns may see us alternating between the office and the home office for a while to come.

Sarah Muir
Manager



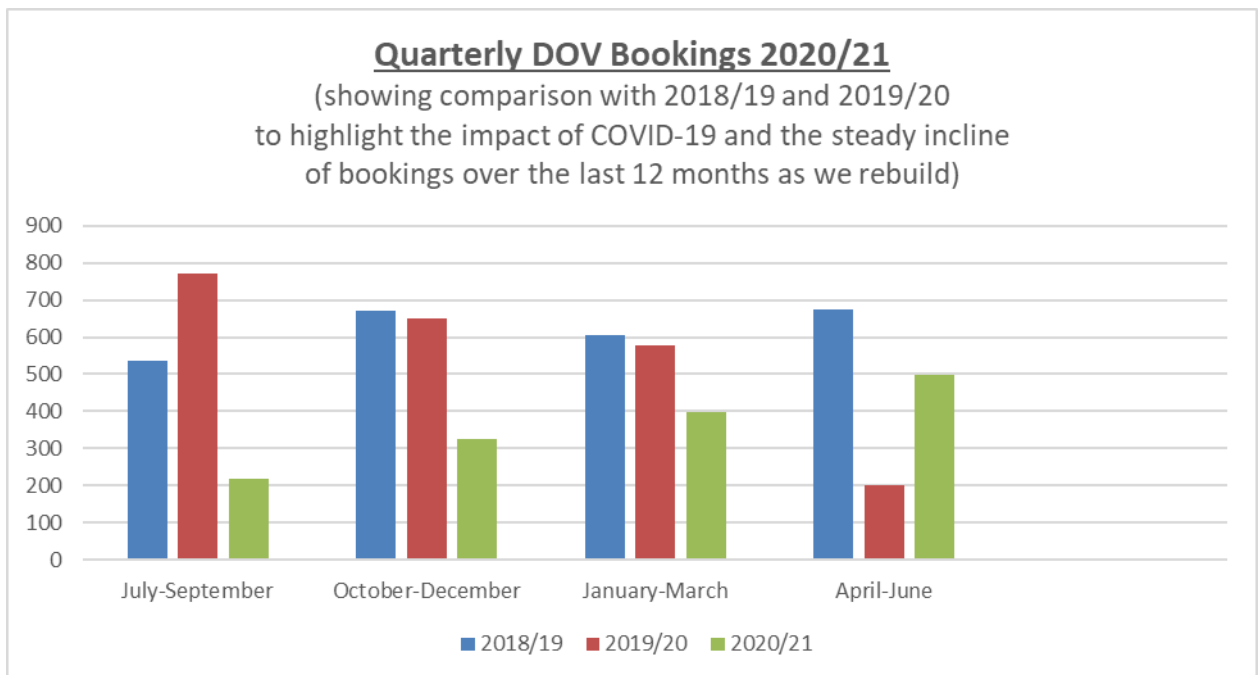
At a Glance!

The statistics and graphs below provide a 'numbers picture' of activities over the past year

Driver in Own Vehicle (DOV):

Total Bookings:	1440
New Clients:	254
Total Volunteer Drivers:	72
New Drivers:	20
Hardship Fund Bookings:	68
Average Monthly Kilometres:	3399
Total Kilometres Driven:	40798
Bookings cancelled or deleted due to Covid-19	952

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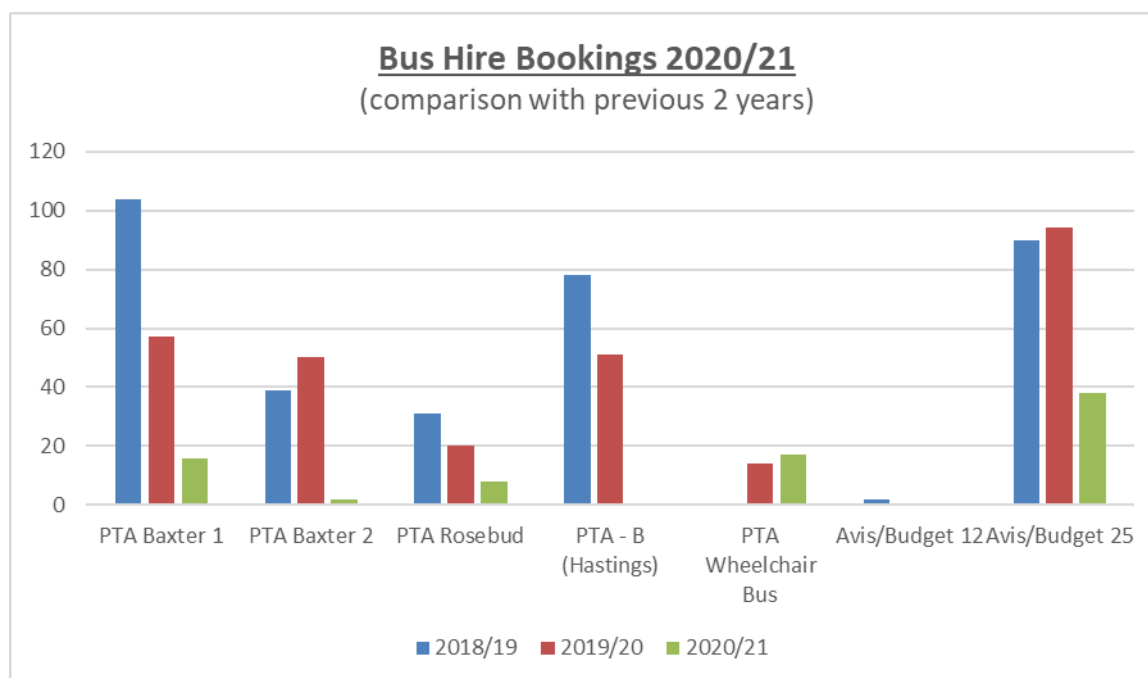
Bus Hire:

Total Bookings: 81 (↓ 111.72%)

- Bus Baxter 1: 16
- Bus Baxter 2: 2
- Bus B (Hastings): 0
- Bus Rosebud: 8
- PTA Wheelchair Bus 17
- Avis/Budget (12 seater): 0
- Avis/Budget (25 seater): 38 (↓ 84.85%)

Self-Drive: 39

PTA Driver: 42





From The Treasurer

Andrew Morse

Needless to say the 2020/21 financial year was challenging. Like many business and not-for-profits it would have been very difficult, if not impossible, to survive without the Federal government assistance of \$129K, in addition to the 2019/2020 assistance of \$47K. Over the last two financial years a total of \$187K in Federal and State COVID specific support has been provided to PTA. In addition we continue to receive the support from our longest continuing benefactor, the Mornington Peninsula Shire, of \$25,000 per annum, which is always received with thanks and provides a foundation from which we can plan our year ahead.

We were also fortunate this financial year in securing further funding from the State government under its Flexible Local Transport Solutions Program 2020-21 - Peninsula Transport Assist Post-COVID Support Project. This strategic funding is valued at \$75,000 (excl. GST), \$50,000 of this cash was received in the 2020/21 financial, the balance of \$25,000 will be received in the current 2021/22 financial year.

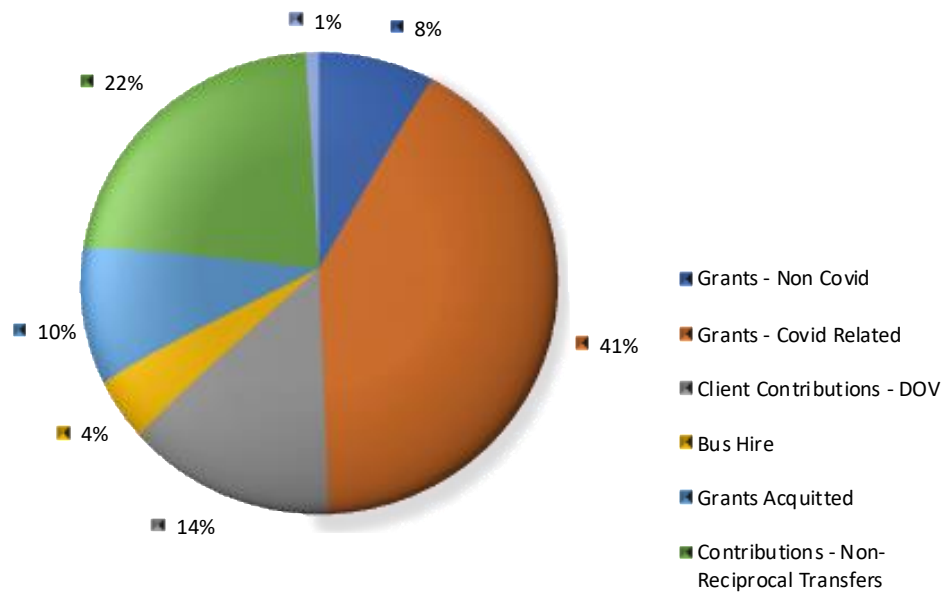
Both Driver in Own Vehicle (DoV) and Bus Hire revenues have been reduced significantly by the consequences of continued COVID lockdowns and perhaps a lack of certainty within our client base. Is it safe to use DoV services even though PTA adheres to the highest standards of COVID safe practices and regulatory requirements?

In terms of revenue, we saw DoV drop \$31K or 40% and Bus Hire saw an even more dramatic drop of \$45K or 76% year-on-year. Despite the decrease in core revenue, Payroll as a percentage of Income remained virtually unchanged at 49.9% in 2020/21 and 49.2% in 2019/2020. As is the case in most, if not all, not-for-profit organisations, labour costs are normally the largest cost in the organisation, however this is an area where particular fiscal attention should be focused upon both by the Manager, and where required, the Board. I congratulate Sarah and the whole team in doing their utmost in keeping other overhead costs to a minimum which fell 43% or \$38K year-on-year – a great result.

Although this will be my last report as Treasurer after eight and a half years in the role, I am very confident that PTA will move forward on an increasingly sound financial footing. As we move out of COVID lockdowns, we will see both Bus and DoV revenue increase. We are also heading into the Summer and Christmas periods which should also see a boost in revenues. I am also keen to see my “pet” project of a 25-seat bus come to fruition at some stage so that we retain more profit on these bookings.

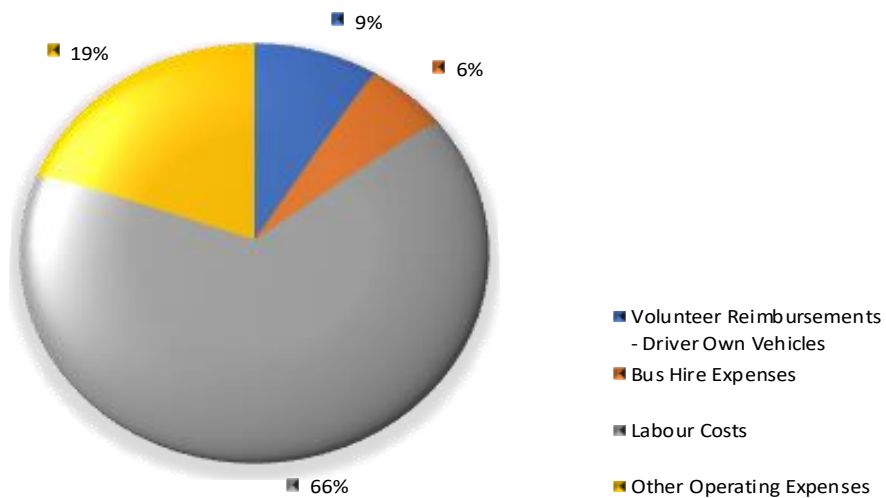
Andrew Morse
Treasurer

Where Our Funds Came From In 2020/2021

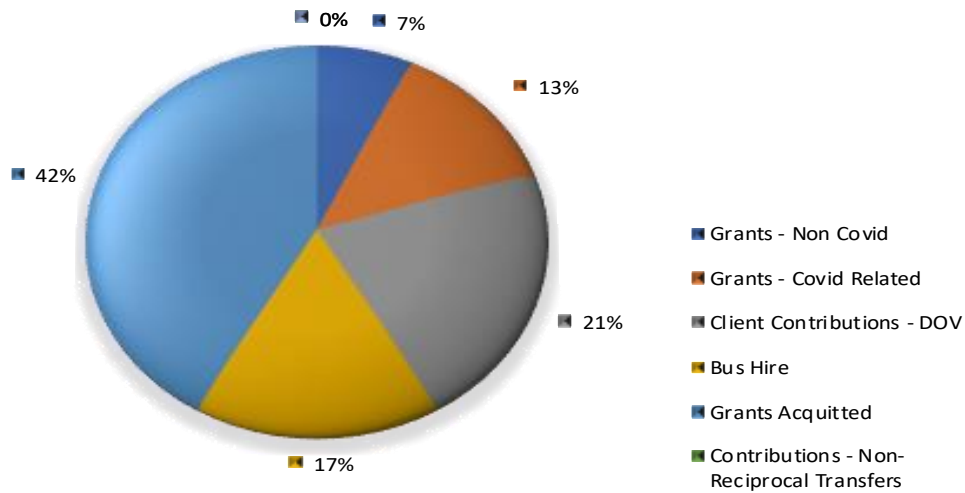


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Where Our Funds Were Spent in 2020/2021

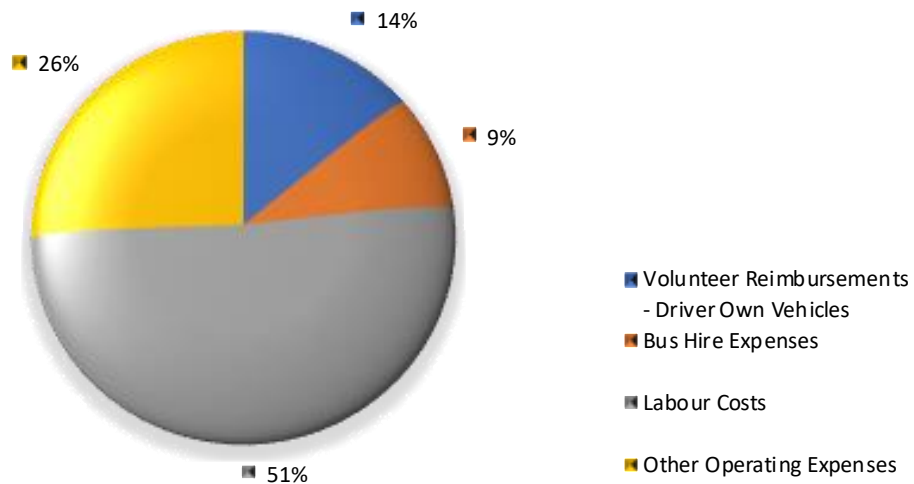


Where Our Funds Came From In 2019/2020



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Where Our Operating Funds Were Spent In 2019/2020



NOTE – COMPLETE TREASURER’S REPORT AND SIGNED STATEMENT OF INDEMNIFICATION AND INSURANCE OF DIRECTORS & OFFICERS IS CONTAINED IN ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENT.

Our Board

Role of the Board

The Board is responsible for establishing and reviewing policies as well as charting the strategic direction of PTA. It is responsible for monitoring the performance of PTA, overseeing its financial well-being and management of risk, and supporting the office team (via the Manager) to deliver an excellent service to clients.

Board Members



Dr Don Reeves

President

**PhD & MA [London], BEcon & BEd
[Monash]**

Commencing his career as a teacher in rural schools, Don progressed through a varied career in education and then in human resource management. After three attempts, he retired as National HR Manager at the Royal College of General Practitioners (in August 2010), and prior to that was Director of Human Resources at the University of Newcastle. Don held executive level positions in Victorian Education before his move to New South Wales.

Don has a long local involvement in voluntary community organisations since settling on the Peninsula in 2001. His passion is in rebuilding and strengthening community organisations, returning the Mount Eliza Neighbourhood House to a fully functioning and viable House during his thirteen-year Presidency, establishing a successful business framework. Don has been an executive member of PTA since its inception, and President since 2017, and, prior to this role, was with Peninsula Advisory Committee for Elders (PACE) from 2009 – 2013. In 2017 he was recipient of a Mayoral Commendation for community work.

Being a self-taught builder of many things, Don was the instigator of the Mount Eliza Men's Shed, and its inaugural President for six years.

Don plays an ongoing, active role in the interview and welcoming of volunteer drivers for PTA.

Nick Jones

Vice President

M.Pub.Health (Monash) [Specialising in health service management and health policy, B.Orth (Hons) [Latrobe], Cert 4 Training & Assessment [Chisholm]

Nick is managing Director of Melbourne Primary Health. He has had 20 years experience working within the health sector and understands the most effective ways to encourage health providers and the local community.

Nick chairs the PTA Task Force steering implementation of both the Innovations Grant and the COVID-19 Recovery Grant.



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Nicola Belcher

Secretary

BEng (Mech) Hons [UNSW], MBA [AIM], M.Main'ce Management & Reliability Engineering [Monash]

Nicola is a multi-disciplinary engineering manager with diverse experience spanning Defence, State and Local Government. She is strategically focussed and enjoys solving complex problems in a collaborative environment. Her previous experience working at the Mornington Peninsula Shire as a Traffic Engineer has provided her with a sound appreciation of transport challenges on the Peninsula.

Nicola currently is employed as a Director of Rail Asset Management and Project Delivery at the State Department of Transport.

Andrew Morse

Treasurer

BCom, LLB (Melb), GradCertCounselling (Mon), GradDip TheolSt (ACU), CPA, MAICD

Andrew is a Member of the Taxation Institute of Australia, former Regional Business Manager & Bursar at the St Columban's Mission Society, a large not-for-profit, and Former Chair of its International Audit Sub-Committee.



He was the recipient of the CBA Not-for-Profit Treasurer's Award in both 2017 and 2019 (Certificate of Appreciation), and a recipient of the 2014 Rotary Club Of Mount Eliza Shine-On Award. Prior to moving to the Mornington Peninsula he also received the City of Booroondara Outstanding Community Engagement Award for his work with residents at Eva Tilley Residential Care in North Balwyn.

Andrew was a long-term Treasurer at the Mount Eliza Neighbourhood House. Other interests include volunteering for Peninsula Home Hospice, being a member of the Monash Health Human Research Ethics Committee and formerly a Legatee at Mornington Legacy Club.

He has an abiding interest in community work with the elderly which is a research interest fostered by his return to post-graduate study.

Lisa Knightbridge



BAppSc(OT) [Lincoln], M.Assess & Eval., GradDip Child Dev. [Melb], Grad Cert (Higher Education) [Monash]

PTA Board Member since 2016 – and was a key driver of our program to transport early onset dementia clients to group programs. Lisa is a Senior Lecturer, Occupational Therapy (OT) at Monash University (Frankston Campus). Showing a very practical side to her academic role, one of Lisa's roles is to arrange practical placements for all the OT students. These students apply their learnings to problem-solving projects to support the host organisation. Several of these placements have been with PTA – with one very practical example being the creation of PTA's quarterly newsletter, The HubCap. Prior to her role at Monash, Lisa was a practising OT for 12 years, most recently as a program evaluator with the City of Frankston.

Lisa has a strong interest in self-help community organisations and has been keenly focussed on strengthening community connections of PTA.

Clare Harwood

Clare is a tireless worker for PTA providing a special link with volunteer drivers, an active recruiter of drivers for PTA and does the behind-the-scenes work to ensure our office at Baxter is spic-and-span. Along with the President, Clare ensures PTA keeps adding to its pool of drivers, and is organiser of all interviews and related procedures. She has been a volunteer driver herself since 2014.

Clare worked for 30 years as a medical secretary and was also an aqua-aerobics instructor for 17 years. She ceased work to devote herself to caring for her late husband for 14 years.

Clare loves to keep fit by walking her dog and attending fitness classes. Live theatre is a passion and she also enjoys working in her garden.



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Tom Haines-Sutherland

BE (Civil and Environmental)

Tom is passionate about all things transport – with a particular focus on road safety and equitable access to transport options for all.

Tom is Team Leader Traffic & Transport at Mornington Peninsula Shire. Tom ensures PTA maintains and builds on its valuable relationship with the Shire. This relationship benefits the communities of the Mornington Peninsula and Frankston areas, and is key to ensuring the ongoing growth of PTA. The upcoming, new Shire Positive Ageing Strategy will contain priorities for steady progress to enhance transport opportunities for older residents to ensure they are able to fully engage with opportunities for greater health and well-being: Tom is keen to assist PTA play its part to the utmost.

Board Member Who left PTA Board During 2020/2021

Neville Green – During Neville's short time on the Board, he brought to the fore his grasp of business financials, providing a perspective on the management of ongoing costs during a very difficult pause on PTA's income-earning community enterprise arm. Neville had an extensive business career extending across the car industry, in a number of finance and senior executive positions, specialising in financial and commercial management and business development. This work involved several overseas postings. Neville's stay as a Board Member, assisting with financial oversight and management, was from September 2020 to January 2021. He continues with PTA as a volunteer driver.

Volunteering Opportunities

Volunteer driving is an easy way to get involved in your local community. Become a volunteer driver in your own car, drive a bus, or both. It is a great way to 'give back' to your local community.

Benefits of volunteer driving:

- To get out of the house!
- Get to understand the enormous benefit you can gain from supporting other community members to improve their well-being.
- Improve your own health and well-being.
- Wonderful feedback from appreciative clients.

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Getting started – 5 simple steps:

STEP 1: Phone or email the PTA office for information pack.

STEP 2: Initial interview.

STEP 3: Police check.

STEP 4: Medical check.

STEP 5: Driving assessment.

What about your vehicle running costs?

- Easy, we offer a reimbursement at a rate of up to 50 cents per kilometre, plus reimbursement of tolls and parking fees, if applicable.

If you want to support the community service that PTA provides, you may choose less than the full reimbursement.

Other Volunteering Opportunities

Volunteering as a Board Member. If you are interested in guiding the direction of PTA as an elected Board Member, and you have special experience or expertise such as finance, fundraising, advertising/promotions, planning, capacity building, etc. to contribute to the Board's work, please discuss with the President.

Volunteering in another Support Capacity. If you would like to assist in other ways in projects such as garden maintenance or office support work, please contact the Manager.

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Contacting PTA

The PTA office is located at

13 Railway Road

BAXTER

Office Hours

9.30 am – 2.30 pm

Monday – Friday

Phone

9708 8241

Email

info@peninsulatransportassist.org

Website

www.peninsulatransportassist.org