



MEDIA RELEASE

Date 20, February 2020

Driverless shuttle BusBot begins Phase 3 at North Coast Regional Botanic Garden

Busways has begun operating the award-winning Coffs Harbour Automated Vehicle Trial in the North Coast Regional Botanic Garden with the innovative trial entering its third exciting phase on 20, February 2020.

Affectionately known as BusBot, the driverless electric vehicle will traverse the city's beautiful gardens, engaging the local community and testing a range of use cases and capabilities over the 4-month phase.

Coffs Harbour is the first regional town in Australia to trial a driverless vehicle. The project, managed by Busways in partnership with Transport for NSW (TfNSW), EasyMile and Coffs Harbour City Council, is testing new vehicle features in the Garden's controlled surroundings. This phase will offer plenty of opportunity for growth and development as the technology is tested.

"It's exciting to bring BusBot to a new area of Coffs Harbour where we're able to further test elements of driverless passenger transport and give the community the chance to ride the vehicle and participate with their feedback Managing Director of Busways, Byron Rowe, said.

"The zero emissions BusBot is a great match for places like the Botanic Gardens where it can carry passengers quietly and unobtrusively, enabling people of all mobilities to enjoy the peaceful and pristine garden environment," Mr Rowe said.

"I'd like to congratulate the Coffs Harbour community for playing such a vital role in providing public feedback for the BusBot trial so far, which has been nationally recognised, winning the 2019 Australian Intelligent Transport Systems Award for Automated Vehicles."

Phase 2 of the pilot in Marian Grove Retirement Village was a world first for a driverless shuttle to operate on demand inside an independent living village. The Busways team worked with the elderly community to gather their perceptions of driverless technology and how a vehicle such as BusBot could benefit them in the future.

Over 2,500 passenger trips were made during the phase, bringing the total trips made by BusBot so far to over 8,000.

"We're excited to see the award-winning Coffs Harbour BusBot enter Phase 3. It's amazing to see this futuristic technology enter the natural landscape of the Botanic Gardens, offering customers a new way to view the natural forests and gardens while testing more complex functions," a TfNSW spokesperson said.

The BusBot Trial will operate 9-5pm Monday-Saturday (except Wednesdays and public holidays).

To follow the BusBot journey:

Facebook, Instagram and Twitter: @BusBotAU. **Website:** www.busbot.com.au



Media Release Ends

Background information

The BusBot Trial began in December 2018 along Coffs Harbour's picturesque Northern Breakwall and operated until February 2019. The Breakwall offered an ideal testing location for the first phase as it was a high profile and controlled environment for residents and tourists to experience the vehicle.

In March 2019, BusBot entered Marian Grove Retirement Village to test the vehicle and its features in a more complex environment while testing the ability of an AV to address various mobility needs. The vehicle was the first shuttle in the world to provide an on demand service in an independent living village.

After 11 months of testing, BusBot was awarded the Automated Vehicle Award at the 2019 Australian Intelligent Transport Systems Awards ceremony in November 2019.

The trial was realised through Transport for NSW's Future Transport Strategy 2056 which sees TfNSW shaping the future of transport and continuing to work with industry, government and academia to enable their vision for a connected and automated future that benefits our customers.

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Media contact:

Jade Aliprandi
Communications Officer
Phone: 9497 1943
Email: jaliprandi@busways.com.au

About Busways

Busways is a leading family owned bus operator in NSW with more than 77 years' experience providing exceptional standards of public transportation to communities in Sydney, the Central Coast and the NSW North Coast. With over 750 buses in the fleet, over 22 million passengers travel on a Busways journey every year. Busways is interested in how innovative transport solutions can enhance mobility and access for customers groups in the rural and regional communities we serve.

Busways manages The Coffs Harbour Automated Vehicle Trial, overseeing all aspects for the safe and successful execution of each phase. Through effective evaluation and community and stakeholder engagement, Busways facilitates community participation and input.

www.busways.com.au

