Using Transport In Regional Communities To Enable Workforce Participation In South Australia

Co-design Workshop Debrief

DELIVERY PARTNERS

SUPPORTING PARTNERS

CO-DESIGN WORKSHOP DEBRIEF - Using Transport in Regional Communities to Enable Workforce Participation in South Australia

1. The Co-design Workshop – a testimony to regional collaboration

On 6 July 2026, a co-design workshop was held at the South Augusta Football Club in Port Augusta. The event brought together 30 participants representing 25 organisations, including State and Local Government, employment service providers, TAFE SA, and regional NGOs. The primary objective was to leverage local expertise to address the transport and licensing barriers that currently limit workforce participation in the Mid North and North West Country regions.

The day was defined by a high level of professional collaboration and positive energy. We utilized three rounds of facilitated co-design sprints, moving from a discussion of regional "pain points" to the development of actionable project prototypes. While the five-hour timeframe limited the depth to which every idea could be explored, the collective effort resulted in a robust portfolio of 25 practical pilot concepts.

2. Snapshot of Conceptual Proposals

The following is a summary of the diverse range of ideas generated during the workshop which stand as a tribute to the contribution everyone has made:

Licence Attainment

1. Regional Driver Training Directory: A centralized digital "Front Door" for regional instructors and mentors. The directory will start out with links to driving instructors, volunteer mentors, training centres, tests and other resources to facilitate the driving licence journey and eventually expand to link other transport related services in the region.
2. Targeted fines and licence related information: One-off messaging to all drivers/licence holders to raise awareness of existing fines repayment support through FERU – there is a general lack of awareness particularly in the regions.
3. Driving Academy Study: Benchmarking a centralized academy model to improve regional licence pass rates and improve access to larger segments of the community.
4. On The Right Track (OTRT) Expansion: Assessing the feasibility of extending the "On the Right Track" mobile model to more Aboriginal communities and other disadvantaged cohorts.
5. 3rd-Party Testing: Accrediting trusted regional educators to host Learner’s Permit theory and Hazard Perception tests for those who struggle with the digitalised tests. The first registration still requires a trip to Service SA.
6. Funding Alignment: Streamlining employment funding specifically to support supervised driving hour requirements across various employment service providers.
7. ID Support: Rapid-response assistance for birth certificates and foundational 100-point identity checks.

8. School-Based Driver Education: Integrating driver licensing and safety units directly into the regional high school curriculum.
9. Employer Incentives: Incentivising regional businesses to actively support their staff in obtaining or retaining licences -changing the focus at hiring to skills, aptitude and commitment rather than on driver licence.
10. Concession Scheme: Practical financial support for attaining driver licence specifically for jobseekers. State-wide concession/voucher system to subsidise learner licence, supervised driving and professional lessons.
11. Expansion of Concession Scheme: for driver licence renewals and vehicle registration.
12. Vehicle Recycling: Evaluating the legal and safety pathways to repurpose safe, impounded vehicles for regional driver training fleets.

Licence Retention and Reinstatement

13. Enhanced WDP: A regional implementation of proven debt-offset schemes through education and treatment similar to schemes available in NSW and Victoria.
14. Apprentice Work-Link: An education and support scheme for all apprentices and trainees. Comprises a mandatory induction programme on responsible driving and a separate restricted driving licence programme to keep apprentices employed while resolving administrative fines.
15. App Integration: Utilizing proactive digital notifications to alert users before they reach critical demerit point thresholds.

Vehicle Access

16. Fuel Vouchers: Flexible, distance-based support to bridge the financial gap during the first month of new employment.

Passenger Transport

17. P2P Transport: On-demand, flexible micro-transit solutions using minibus or cars tailored to regional shift-workers facing difficulties with employer support.
18. Employer Transport: Collaborative mobility solutions funded through regional industry partnerships. User paid, employer organised transport solution.
19. Coordinated Work-Travel: An expanded supplementary transport network to connect regional commuters with similar routes and shift times supported by state funding.

Remote Work and Digital Literacy

20. USG Skills Portal: A remote/hybrid employment flag to better connect residents with metropolitan-based digital roles using the existing Spencer Gulf Skills platform website.

21. Digital Hubs: Establishing secure, town-based community workspaces for remote workers and students by repurposing existing government facilities such as TAFE campuses and school facilities.
22. Remote Ventures: Fostering regional startup and freelance activity through collaborative hubs as a joint venture between government & private enterprise.

System Integration and Coordination

23. Vehicle-Mentor Coordination: A systematic approach to matching volunteer mentors with under-utilized community vehicles with strong partnerships of cross NGO support.
24. Local Service SA: Exploring "Pop-up" licensing and other Service SA assistance hosted within local council infrastructure to help those in regions who do not have affordable transport options.
25. National Harmonisation: Long-term advocacy for the seamless recognition of licensing and training across state borders.

3. Overview of the Innovative Ideas Landscape

The innovative ideas generated at the workshop were generally varied and spread across six thematic pathways, reflecting a comprehensive approach to regional mobility. Following the workshop, the project management team reviewed the 25 conceptual proposals, merging highly related ideas to form a strategic register of 23 top-tier pilot opportunities as shown in the matrix in Figure 1.

4. 10 August Project Webinar Outcomes

On 10 August 2026, the project team hosted a stakeholder webinar to validate and strengthen the co-designed pilot strategy. Building on the July workshop, which brought together 30 participants from 25 organisations, the webinar opened the next stage of consultation with stakeholders across government, transport, employment, education and community services.

Attendees were invited to provide input against three key questions:

- **What is missing?** – Are there additional solutions, gaps or opportunities the project should consider?
- **Who else should be involved?** – Are there organisations, experts or champions who could strengthen or help progress the pilots?
- **What should the project deliver**? – What would make the research and its final outcomes valuable and useful beyond the life of the project?

The discussion generated practical feedback to strengthen, prioritise and sequence the pilots, improve the evidence base, broaden stakeholder involvement and ensure the project remains focused on solutions that can be progressed and scaled beyond the current project timeframe.

Pathways	Idea 1	Idea 2	Idea 3	Idea 4	Idea 5	Idea 6	Idea 7	Idea 8	Idea 9	Idea 10
Licence Attainment	**Regional Driver Training Directory / Website / App** **Potential Champion (PC): AU/ACTA/Local Jobs** **Targeted Licence & Fines Information** *I(inked to Regional Training Directory & SA Gov App)* in future **PC: Local Jobs**	**Regional Driving Academy Feasibility Study** **PC: UCSA/Local Jobs**	**Study Expansion of On the Right Track Regionally** *Additional locations and learner cohorts* **PC: DIT/Jack- local Jobs/AU**	**Accredited Third-Party Learner Testing** *Including suitably trained teachers/ providers* **PC: TAFE SA Lisa/Andrea**	**Align National Employment Funding for Driver Mentoring** **PC:**	**Identity Document and MyGov Access Support** **PC:**	**School-Based Driver Education and Vehicle Access** **PC:**	**Employer Incentives for Learner-Driver Support:** **PC:**	**Driver Licence Concession or Voucher Scheme** *Including* **renewal and registration** **PC:**	**Redirect Suitable Impounded Vehicles to Training Programs** **PC:**
Licence Retention and Reinstatement	**Enhanced Work & Development Permit Scheme** **PC: DIT, and or, Fines Recovery Unit/Treasury and Finance**	**Licence Reinstatement Programme for Apprentices** **PC: Skills Commissioner Lisa/Andrea/Jack**	**SA Gov App Integration** *fines and suspension information access* **PC:**							
Vehicle Access	**Fuel Vouchers linked to Work Distance** **PC:**									
Passenger Transport	**Point-to-Point Employment Transport** **PC: Workskills, At Work and Care In Motion – Lisa, Murray and Daniel.**	**Employer-Supported Passenger Transport** **PC:**	**Coordinated Transport-to-Work Solutions** **PC:**							
Remote Work and Digital Literacy	**Upper Spencer Gulf Skills Platform Enhancement** **PC: RDA Lisa/Andrea**	**Community Digital Access Hubs** **PC: TAFE/Enabling Country Hub**	**Regional Remote-Work Joint Ventures** **PC:**							
System Integration and Coordination	**Integrated Vehicle Access and Driver Mentor Coordination** **PC:**	**Localised Service SA Access** **PC:**	**National Driver Licensing Harmonisation**							

Ready to Pilot – Relatively quick wins. *Some evaluation possible by the end of project*	**Ready to Pilot – longer lead time** *more time to establish and evaluate*	**Further Development Required** *Requires additional planning, coordination or partner agreement.*	**Transformational Opportunity–** *significant multi-agency involvement and funding; recommended for future development.*	**High Implementation Complexity–** *substantial policy, operational or stakeholder barriers.*

Figure 1: A matrix of the pilot ideas generated across six thematic pathways, assessed by their relative ease of implementation.
Note: *Some pilot idea names have been changed to better reflect the scope of the pilot projects. Definite naming conventions are assigned and outlined in the 8 pilot projects.*

4. The Shortlisting Process

The 23 pilotable ideas were analysed further using a strategic filter focused on three criteria: immediate impact, operational feasibility, and potential for strategic championship.

While actionable plans will eventually be developed for all the conceptual pathways discussed, this study has shortlisted **8 Pilot Priorities** for immediate investigation and potential implementation. These represent a balanced portfolio of "Quick Wins" and "Long-term Reform" candidates.

The Shortlisted 8 Pilot Priorities

1. **Regional Driver Training Directory**
2. **Regional Driving Academy Study**
3. **On the Right Track Expansion Study**
4. **Third-Party/Teacher Accreditation for Testing**
5. **Enhanced Work and Development Permit Scheme**
6. **Licence Retention/Reinstatement for Apprentices**
7. **Point-to-Point Employment Transport**
8. **Spencer Gulf Jobs Platform – Remote Work Gateway**

5. Assessment and Implementation Framework

To transition these ideas from concepts to executable pilots, we have established a standard framework for the next phase of the project:

- Design & Validation: Refining the pilot mechanics in consultation with regional "Champions."
- Governance Check: Identifying the necessary legislative "sandboxes" or Ministerial directives required.
- Stakeholder Commitment: Finalising formal MOUs and "Ownership" across regional agencies.
- Pilot Execution: Commencing 3 to 12-month trials with embedded monitoring and evaluation.

Conclusion

The 6th of July workshop provided the definitive proof that regional South Australia possesses the expertise and the drive to solve its own mobility challenges. We have moved from a fragmented understanding of the problem to a structured roadmap for change. We thank all participants for their time and ingenuity. The next phase will focus on turning the strongest concepts into practical pilots, testing what works, capturing evidence and building the partnerships needed to take successful solutions beyond the life of the project.