

Tourist town bus service going now



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Beach bus run saved

THE tourist town of Mission Beach will keep its public bus service, weeks after fears for the elderly, teenagers and travellers.

Public transport users have once again been saved in the sprawling beachside community south of Innisfail, where the bus service has changed hands twice in the past year because operators have declared it unviable.

Beach Bus and restaurant owner John North reluctantly announced his intentions to shut down last month, saying there were regulars who needed the business but simply not enough "bums on seats".

Crisis meetings have led to a new service in the town.

Ray Bosnich of Calypso Coaches has begun a "mission impossible" bus run, adding tourist routes to swimming beaches, a popular rainforest walking track and to and from Tully.

The new service has been running for three weeks.

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Mr Bosnich said fares had been reduced to encourage more people to rest their cars and use the more environmentally friendly mode of transport.

"We've also taken over one backpacker hostel's transport arrangements, and a tourist company is going to support us, taking courtesy buses off the road, so we can see there's potential there," he said.

The company is calling on Mission Beach businesses to help keep the service operating by buying advertising space on the bus.

Elderly residents appealed to Cassowary Coast councillors last month, saying they relied on the town's only public transport option to get them to the medical centre, post office and supermarket.

Mission Beach councillor Jennifer Downs said the news was a relief after hopes of securing government funding for the bus service were dashed.