

Indigenous solidarity ride NSW

update for confirmed and interested folks (#1)

Zane Alcorn, NUSA enviro/ bus organising collective

Intro

Firstly I want so apologise for taking so long to send this out. I've been busy with various tasks associated with the bus trip plus uni so I haven't had a chance to do this mailout til now.

Meetings

From the outset I would encourage **all Newcastle bus crew**, that is everyone who has signed up to come on the bus, to come to our weekly meetings which are on Fridays at 3pm in Civic park and in the City hub (aka university house) if its raining. These meetings are important to discuss the trip and also to divvy up tasks for making the trip happen and in a successful way. If you're there at 3 on the dot and cant see anyone else stick around/ go to the hub...

People **not from Newcastle** are encouraged to send any ideas/ updates/ questions to myself or 'reply all' to the big list this has been sent to.

Proposed Itinerary

Please see the proposed route and detailed itinerary below.

Feedback is encouraged.

The dates and route shown are pretty 'firm' but not 'set in concrete' i.e. there is some flexibility. The Adelaide and Alice springs dates can't be changed.

BASIC ITINERARY:

WED JUN 30: Depart Newcastle via Hornsby. Head To Mutawinji.

SAT JUL 3: Arrive Adelaide for start of 'Students of Sustainability' summit

TUE JUL 6: Leave Adelaide for Alice via Coober Pedy

WED JUL 7: (Evening) Arrive in Alice Springs

JUL 12,13: Visit Alyawarr walkoff camp

JUL 15: Depart Alice Springs to head back to Newcastle (via Roxby Downs)

JUL 20: Arrive home: drop offs in Hornsby, final destination Newcastle.

There is no escaping the fact that we are going to be going a huge distance on this trip. Part of the reason that it is three weeks and not two is to try and break up the journey a bit.

There are two stops (Mutawinji and the Alyawarr walkoff camp) where we are stopped for two nights and one day; and in Adelaide we are stopping for three nights and two full days; and in Alice Springs we are stopping for five days.

The Coober Pedy- Roxby Downs - Port Augusta - Broken Hill part involves shorter travel days than the rest of the trip. Six of the 21 days will involve travelling more than 600km; of these the first day (780km) and the trip from Alice to Coober Pedy (850km!) will be exceptionally long. So it is worth preparing yourself mentally for what we are about to embark on.

Fundraising

On Saturday June 5 we had a fantastic fundraiser ("Twisted Twivia") in Newcastle and raised \$800. A good time was had by all.

Right now it is really important for everyone who is coming on the bus to talk to a couple of your waged friends and relatives and see if you can get some donations for the bus.

Think of it like this- the 'real' cost of your bus ticket is more like \$200 (or maybe more) and if you can get some donations, your friends and family are in effect sponsoring you to come on the bus. It's a good opportunity for you to talk about the Intervention and the Walkoff house and why it is that we are going.

The more self sufficient we can be by doing this, the sooner we can be sure that all our costs are covered and we can hopefully then pass some extra money to IRAG (the Intervention Rollback Action Group) in Alice Springs. This is important because it will allow IRAG to arrange transport for people from outlying communities in to Alice for the convergence.

We have access to a rocking half hour DVD about the 'protest house' that was built at the Alyawarr walkoff camp back in February with assistance from trade unions including the Maritime Union (MUA), Construction Union (CFMEU), Hospitality and cleaners union (LHMU), and Manufacturing workers union (AMWU).

The DVD is really good and looks at the issues around the intervention; its also a really positive film about activists coming together in solidarity. The DVDs are available for \$4- please email me if you want a copy. They are a great way to show what the bus trip is about and raise money, not just in big groups but in small groups too.

Union donations

We are hoping to get donations from some of the aforementioned unions. This will help cover the cost of our bus and of extra convoy vehicles carrying traditional elders. Potentially if a bunch more people want to come we may have a convoy of several vehicles or maybe a mini bus coming along!

Any surplus money raised will go to IRAG as mentioned prior so they can get people from around the NT affected by the intervention along to the convergence.

Media

The bus collective discussed this and sometime in the near future we want to get a photo near the bus and send out a media release; part of the point of this trip is to use the spectacle of the bus trip itself to draw attention to what a horrible racist thing the intervention is; part of the purpose is to show solidarity to those campaigning against the intervention in the NT.

If we can do good media work this helps us achieve those outcomes. **There will be an update soon about getting a photo of a bunch of us gathered at the bus for the 'launch' photo- we might do this as soon as Friday Jun 11.**

If people can document the trip this would be great- photos, drawings, interviews, video... One of the things for us to discuss is doing some sort of report back type meeting when we arrive back in Newcastle, again to share what we saw on the trip, who we met, and draw attention to the campaign to scrap the Intervention.

The trip itself

What to bring

This is a long trip and we will look into some sort of clothes washing option. Suggestions welcome. We have limited luggage space so bringing 20 shirts and 20 pairs of socks is prob not an option.

BRING WARM CLOTHES. This is extremely important. The desert gets very very cold, as in sub zero, at night. We are looking into a gas heater or two and if anyone has one please email me. There will be campfires at some points but not all. We will be camping each night. You also need to bring a bed roll, sleeping bag, and pillow.

In the name of easier cleaning up, people are requested to bring your own plate, bowl and spoonfork or similar space age eating tool, i.e. a 'mess kit'. This saves us having to find people to do 40 peoples dishes each night.

In Adelaide and in particular in Alice we will need to pitch in for the general running of the convergences. Please be prepared to do a couple of one or two hour roster spots

We need tents! If you have a big tent you can bring this would be appreciated. If you don't have a tent we need to know sooner rather than later.

Money

Registration for the bus is \$150 unwaged/student and \$250-350 waged depending on your level of income. If you do a small amount of casual work and are on centrelink that is not really what we mean by 'waged' although I would urge you to consider paying a bit more than the \$150 if you can afford it.

Bus Rego can be paid to (Newcastle Permanent building society):

**NUSA BSB 650 - 300,
A/C No. 980157408**

and don't forget to include 'anti nuke bus rego' or something like that in the "from" description and send an email to azane83@gmail.com to confirm you have made donation /rego of \$blah.

I would like to propose that people try and pay a \$50 deposit by Fri June 18 and the remainder by Mon Jun 28. If you are unable to meet these deadlines or would like to request a discount due to financial hardship please email me azane83@gmail.com

Please be aware that \$150 is pretty cheap for 3 weeks including food and we have other cars to subsidise (the bus is basically full with more people booking) and we also want to subsidise the Intervention Rollback Action Group (IRAG) to be able to get people on Basics cards from outlying communities to the NT.

Food donations

If you have some spare tinned food or juice or rice or lentils... or can raid some from your parents/ friends/ ex's place... that would be most appreciated. We need food donations sooner rather than later, this way we can see what meals we can make and what we have to buy.

Working bees

Keep an eye out because we are going to have some working bees to get the bus ship shape and to do fundraising stuff and other bus related malarkey. There is still a lot to be done in coming weeks and your help would be appreciated to make this trip a success.

IF you can think of stuff you can do or you can see stuff that needs doing please put your hand up. Some concrete things that need doing right now are:

- **More fundraising! If all 30 or so ppl booked for the bus can raise an extra \$50 thats \$1500.** If more people book we need to pay petrol money/ hire mini buses etc. If we are at the last minute going to make this a bit bigger than just 'the bus' we need to raise more cash. And its important to get money to IRAG so they can get ppl in to Alice. There is not much time but its enough to still get some money in. So far only unions have been contacted, not churches and not individuals on any major basis.
- **Contacting indigenous community groups, land councils, activists, individuals etc.**
It would have been good to have done this weeks back but we have only had limited time and resources. Even if its too late for indigenous organizations to actually attend the convergence its still good to build networks out of this project and those groups can still send greetings.
- **Media.** If we can get a media team of a few people together to do media now and on the trip this would be great. If we can have a blog that we are updating as we go this wothis could make the trip really interactive. For now we could really do with a draft press release to launch the trip.
- **Nuts and bolts:** we need to clean out the bus (Which lives at Morrow park near the Lass o'gowrie in Wickham). We need to contact a coach company (eg Sid Foggs) and get some second hand bus tyres. These companies have very high safety standards and regularly throw out tyres that still have 70% tread. The type we need are 2x 9.00 R20 tyres.
- We are also looking for 'L' section steel to make roof racks and luggage space for the bus; and we need some big cooking pots and a stove to cook dinner each night.
- We need a medical officer for the trip and need to put a first aid kit together.

Anyhow that's about if for now I've probably left some stuff out but anyhow if you have any questions or want to get some protest house DVDs or posters or have some ideas for how to make this a rocking and politically deadly trip please contact me. Also feel free to send stuff to the whole list- 'reply all'.

Cheers,

Zane Alcorn

*Convenor,
Newcastle University Students Association
Environment Collective*

*E: azane83@gmail.com
M: 0401 466 831*

*NB the convergence website is
defendingindigenoustrights.wordpress.com*