



Transport  
for NSW

# Using the Transport Narrative

*Guidelines and requirements  
for communication professionals*

2019

# Introduction

Feedback from the NSW public, stakeholders and our employees tell us that people want to know the big picture of roads and public transport in the state; our vision and our plan to achieve it.

That's why we developed our consistent core content pillars and the Transport Narrative – to tell a consistent story about what we are delivering for our customers and the NSW public.

## Your role

As a communication professional at Transport, it's your role to help us get consistent messaging out to the public, industry and stakeholders.

As a minimum, you need to align new communications to a content pillar and as much as you can, use the Transport Narrative when you write for external audiences.

This document provides you with guidance on the different ways the Transport Narrative can be used, it outlines solutions to some common challenges and it sets out the minimum requirements for different types of communications.

Also refer to [The Big Picture site](#) for more instructions, resources and guides for communication professionals.

# Using the Transport Narrative

## Narrative 'full' version



All of the structure and most of the core messaging

## Narrative 'light' version



Key parts of the narrative e.g.

- [Use overall structure](#) in your piece (1-6)
- Use key messaging (e.g. you've told us improving transport is a priority, we're focused on making it faster, easier and safer, we have a plan for NSW...)
- Use parts of the structure like 4 & 5 'we've already delivered, what's coming'
- Ensure you use best practice proof points balancing facts and benefits.

# Guidelines and requirements by communication channel/ type

Always make sure you're balancing facts and benefits so it resonates with the audience!

Channel/ type	Challenges	Solutions	Minimum requirements
Social media	Limited space/ character numbers in a post Repetition in the feed Different channels need a different approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use a 'light' version in the first few lines and link to a 'full' version e.g. Metro article on Trippr</li> <li>Hone in on what we've already delivered and what's coming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure you integrate the Transport Narrative into at least two posts each month around key initiatives and put them in the bigger context, the bigger story for the public</li> </ul>
Community relations	Repetition with the same audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the 'full' version in the first notification, then 'light' versions in subsequent updates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include part of the narrative in every community notice /update i.e. faster, easier, safer</li> <li>Always explain how this work fits in the bigger picture in the opening paragraph and use the tested language and key messaging that's available to you</li> </ul>
Media releases	The 'big news' needs to come first Writing for a journalist vs the public Multiple changes and approval stages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We need to have a consistent story and consistent messaging come through</li> <li>Don't try to use the narrative to manage media issues</li> <li>Use the narrative on longer term or set-piece opportunities. Get the story across, especially with local and regional press</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrate as much as possible of the narrative messaging in all releases.</li> <li>Try to refer to what we've already done that's relevant to your topic – e.g. if a tech piece, talk briefly about tech already delivered and check out the proof points for this topic that work and have been tested.</li> <li>Ensure the narrative is integrated for iconic project media releases e.g. metro, light rail etc</li> <li>As a minimum, put it in context with a sentence or two about it being part of our exciting plan for roads and public transport (ie the bigger picture) and make sure you check for an effective balance of facts and benefits when you review releases – the public are clearly telling us that using too many facts just doesn't connect and they switch off when it's not clear what's in it for them and what it means for them (the real benefits)</li> </ul>

# Guidelines and requirements by communication channel/ type

Always make sure you're balancing facts and benefits so it resonates with the audience!

Channel/ type	Challenges	Solutions	Minimum requirements
Speeches	Talking to a different audience i.e. industry about a specialist area Trying to apply a the narrative structure within a speech structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrate key messaging about the big picture i.e. Transport is a priority for the people of NSW and we have a plan (remember, industry have told us that we need to be clearer that we have a long term plan and vision and that what they see is a part of this)</li> <li>Use key parts of the structure: we've already delivered and what's coming</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrate the narrative into every speech that you write or review – every industry interaction must be in context of what we're doing in roads and public transport for NSW</li> <li>Play the video Our Exciting Future to set the context and add some energy</li> </ul>
Ministerial briefings, minister speeches	Writing for an audience who has their own agenda Limited space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use a light version that contains the key parts of the structure including we have a plan and what that is, we've already delivered and there's more to come</li> <li>For communications to the public or industry, talk about the plan for NSW to make trips faster, safer, easier and put the bigger context up front</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrate the narrative into all speeches and ministerial briefings</li> </ul>
Customer communications	Limited space Tight, measurable outcomes needed to be achieved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use a few key message points to put it in context e.g. we're creating a connected roads and transport network, it's all part of our plan to make it faster, easier, safer to get where you need to go</li> <li>Refer to what they told us – acknowledgement is powerful – you told us to make it a priority because it has been neglected for too long</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Customer responses and marketing communications need to cover high level benefits: to make trips faster, easier, safer.</li> <li>As a minimum acknowledge what they've told us, show what we've already delivered but that there's more to come</li> </ul>