

# A Short History of ITLS

*David Hensher*

In early 1991, David Hensher was asked by the Director of the then Graduate School of Management and Public Policy (subsequently the Graduate School of Business), Professor Murray Wells, to establish a Centre for Transport Studies. It was subsequently agreed that it should be called the Institute of Transport Studies (ITS), in recognition of a desire to be associated with the Institute of Transportation Studies at the University of California (Berkeley, Irvine and Davis), and the Institute for Transport Studies at the University of Leeds. ITS commenced in March 1991 with a Director (Professor David Hensher), three research staff (Dr Nariida Smith, Frank Milthorpe, Julie Gee), with Helen Battellino and Rhonda Daniels (now Dr) joining soon after. The initial funding was provided by the Very Fast Train Joint Venture who had already invested over \$1m in support to David Hensher and his team prior to setting up ITS, and who continued with another \$400,000. This money was the seed funding that secured the very beginning for ITS. Within a year of its existence, ITS had established a Master of Transport Management (with an initial intake of 23 part time students), and a doctoral program with its first doctoral student, now Dr Michael Nyathi, from Zimbabwe. In 1991 we also developed in partnership with The Bus and Coach association of NSW and the then Department of Transport a Certificate of Transport Management (CTM) (launched in 1991 by the then Director-General of Transport Max Moore-Wilton) which was linked to a requirement under the 1990 Passenger Transport act in NSW that a bus and coach operator required a designated manager in order to be an accredited operator, and this was attained through the CTM. Helen Battellino led the development and piloting of the CTM which has continued right up to today.

The initial success grew into a major recognition of its continuing role nationally and internationally when in 1995 ITS was recognised as a National Key Centre of Excellence by the Australian Federal Government and formed a partnership with Monash University's Transport Research Group, renamed ITS (Monash). A Masters Program in Logistics Management was added soon after the Key Centre status.

ITS changed its name to The Institute of Transport and Logistics Studies (ITLS) in 2005 in recognition of its diversified role, and in 2008 set up ITLS (Africa) in partnership with the University of Johannesburg. In May 2010 ITLS was successful in partnership with Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile (PUC), Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Technical University of Lisbon, and EMBARQ - The WRI Center for Sustainable Transport, in winning a major 5 year multi-million dollar competitive grant (extended to 10 years) from the Volvo Research and Educational establish the Bus Rapid Transit (ALC-BRT) Centre of Excellence.

ITLS is ranked amongst the top five institutes in the world in transportation and logistics research and education. It is home to some of Australia's, and the world's, leading academics in transportation, logistics and supply chain management. The Institute enjoys frequent visits from internationally renowned scholars and practitioners who come to teach in programs and work on collaborative research projects. In addition to the industry programs (including bus and coach operator accreditation) and executive courses locally (including the very popular Discrete Choice Analysis Course) and offshore such as the Jiaotong Shanghai supply chain program, ITLS offers a fully integrated and articulated coursework and research program for graduates and non-graduates with industry experience. ITLS alumni serve in senior management and advisory positions, within Australia and internationally, for prestigious organisations and as senior executives in national and state governments.

ITLS enjoys a high level of research success both in terms of winning highly competitive grants and contract funding from government and industry and in its influence on policy and practice by the dissemination of research outcomes through publication in prestige international journals and an extensive working paper series and Thinking Outside of the Box series, presentations and workshops at global conferences, active engagement with industry and government; and through a highly successful leadership and policy seminar series which draws speakers of renown from around the world to talk about their latest cutting edge research, attracting audiences from academia, industry and government. Research in fields as diverse as discrete choice modelling, geographical information systems, travel behaviour research, reverse logistics, value chain management, performance of transport businesses, institutional reform and contracting, global warming

and transport, social exclusion and mobility, and public transport reforms and bus rapid transit versus rail are areas where ITLS has made a significant global contribution to debate and practice.

ITLS has extensive links to leading transport and logistics institutes around the world and in Australia and has a number of quality partnerships with government and industry, including the NSW Government Funded Chair in Public Transport. The Board of Advice comprising leaders from the private and public sectors worldwide and academics actively supports the continued development and utilisation of ITLS as a centre of excellence, adding value to the community through advising the Director of new initiatives and funding opportunities. The academic and commercial membership of the Board gives ITLS a broad network for the sharing of expertise and experience.

The graduate coursework programs in transport and logistics have, in the last 30 years, graduated over 1,000 students. Currently there are 24 full time doctoral students, the largest program of its kind in Australia.



**Thank you from the ITLS team**



## ITLS Milestones 1990-2020

Year	Activity	Staff
1991	ITS established and first offering of a transport management program	10 staff
1994	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Announcement of the NSW Department of Transport Visiting Professor role</li> <li>• Board of Advice established (Paul Brown, CEO of TNT inaugural Chair)</li> </ul>	11 staff
1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awarded status of a Commonwealth Key Centre of Teaching and Research by the Federal Government in partnership with Monash University</li> <li>• Department of Transport Management established within the Graduate School of Business with Professor Hensher as Head of Department</li> <li>• Introduction of Master of Logistics Management (MLM)</li> <li>• Professor Hensher elected a Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia</li> <li>• Inaugural NSW Department of Transport Visiting Professor of Transport Planning, Jonathan Richmond</li> </ul>	18 staff
2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ITLS repositioned as a Centre of Excellence in Transport and Logistics with name change and new logo.</li> <li>• New Board of Advice established, chaired by Dr Alastair Stone.</li> </ul>	24 staff
2007	The NSW Government (through the Hon John Watkins, Minister of Transport and Deputy Premier of NSW) forms a partnership with ITLS-Sydney to establish a Chair in Public Transport.	22 staff
2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professor Corinne Mulley appointed the inaugural Chair in Public Transport</li> </ul>	27 staff

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MoU signed with University of Johannesburg (SA) establishing a partnership between ITLS Sydney and ITLS Africa.</li> </ul>	
2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professor Hensher honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award from the International Association of Travel Behaviour Research (IATBR)</li> <li>• Professor Hensher presented with the award for Outstanding Contribution to the NSW Bus and Coach Industry</li> <li>• Release of ITLS Strategic Business Plan, 2010-2014</li> </ul>	27 staff
2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Transport Opinion Survey (TOPS) launched</li> <li>• Highest ranking for Excellence in Research for Australia assessment</li> <li>• Establishment of a Volvo Research and Educational Foundations Grant for a Centre of Excellence in Bus Rapid Transit (US\$3.5 million)</li> </ul>	26 staff
2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move to CBD (Philip St Law Building)</li> <li>• 21st Year Celebration</li> </ul>	30 staff
2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professor Hensher awarded SMART Premier Award for Excellence</li> <li>• ITLS launches new logistics, transport, infrastructure, aviation and maritime specialisations</li> </ul>	27 staff
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ITLS involved in the establishment of the Training Centre for Food and Beverage Supply Chain optimisation</li> <li>• Master of Logistics Management rebadged as Master of Logistics and Supply Chain Management</li> </ul>	28 staff
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintains highest ranking for Excellence in Research for Australia assessment</li> <li>• Move back to main campus</li> <li>• Professor Rico Merkert appointed Deputy Director</li> <li>• Release of ITLS Strategic Business Plan, 2015-2019</li> </ul>	25 staff

2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of TRANSW and Future Transport Research Group via Michel Bliemer</li> <li>• Member of iMOVE CRC</li> <li>• Maintains highest ranking for Excellence in Research for Australia assessment</li> <li>• Ranked 1st in Australia and 6th in the world for Transportation Science and Technology in ARWU rankings.</li> </ul>	25 staff
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professor John Nelson takes up appointment as Chair in Public Transport</li> <li>• Professor Hensher's research assessed as high impact by ARC Engagement and Impact Assessment</li> <li>• Professor Hensher awarded John Shaw Medal</li> <li>• Release of ITLS Business Strategic Plan, 2020-2024</li> </ul>	28 staff
2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move to permanent home in the Merewether Building on main campus</li> <li>• Record number of academic media appearances across television, print, radio and online</li> <li>• Move graduate programs to online with great success and student numbers up over 100% compared to 2019 despite COVID-19</li> <li>• Extensive webinar activity under the 'new normal'</li> </ul>	28 staff
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch of report on inaugural Sydney MaaS Trial project</li> <li>• The continuation of important COVID-related projects</li> </ul>	20 staff



**ITLS**  
Celebrating 30 years

