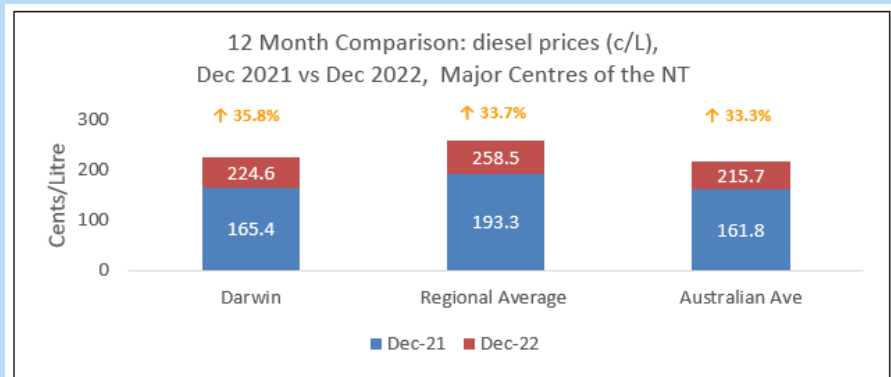
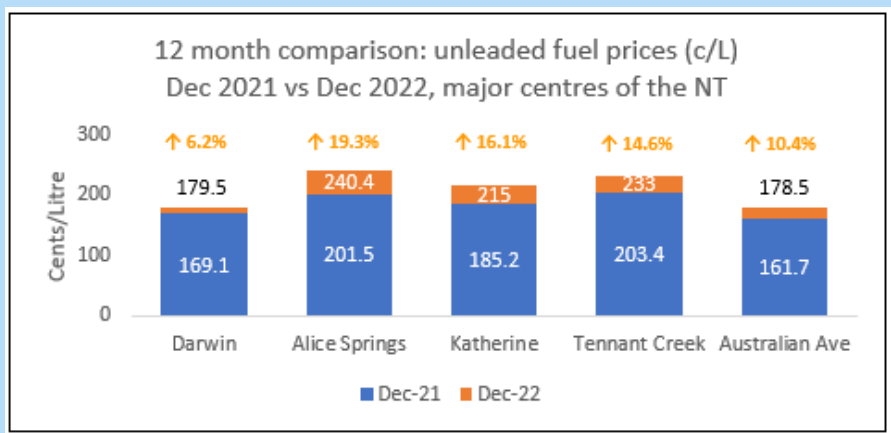


FACT SHEET

Cost of Transport in the NT April 2023



Fuel costs unaffordable. Further price hikes across the past year

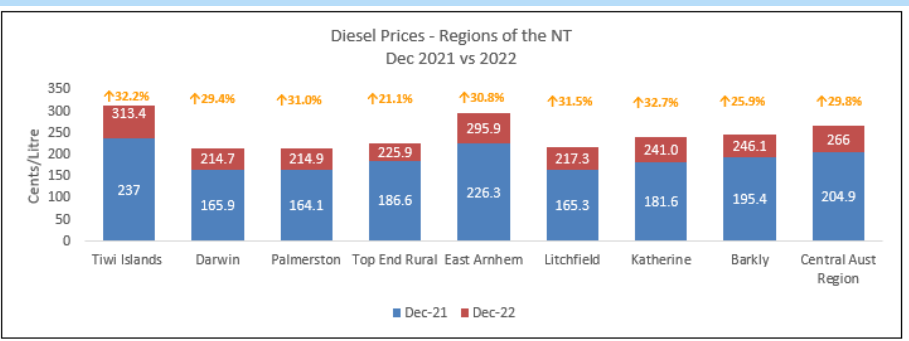
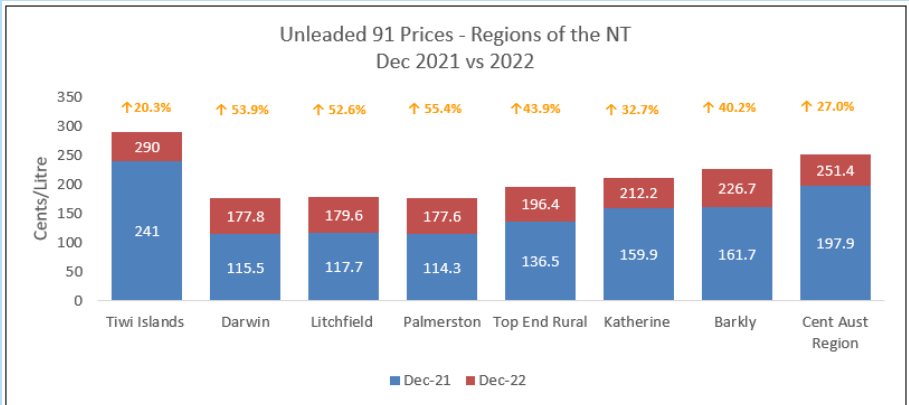


Fuel costs in the major centres of the NT over the past year have risen at a rate well above the rise in the general inflation rate for Darwin (CPI All Groups), which rose by 7.1% since December

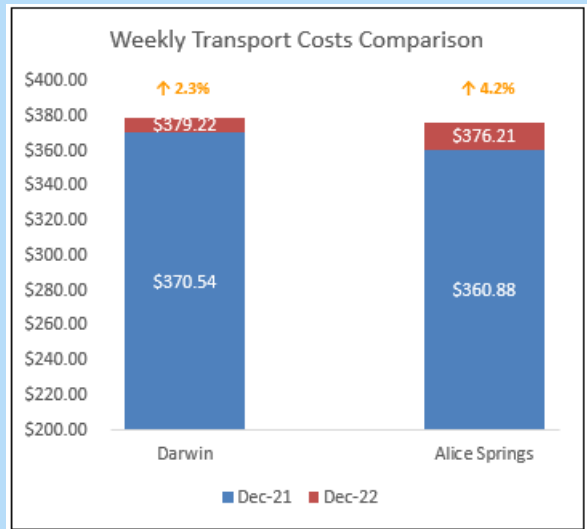
High fuel and overall transport costs means households have less money for other essential items like food, electricity, and clothes

Low income households are the hardest hit by rising transport costs

Fuel prices across the remote areas of the NT are excessively high. Households in remote areas disproportionately feel the impact of national price rises, with average prices for diesel at 313.4 c/L in the Tiwi Islands and 295.9 c/L in East Arnhem. Unleaded 91 fuel was excessively high at 290 c/L in the Central Australian region



Transport costs have been on the rise over the past year in both Darwin and Alice Springs



Transport costs rose in Darwin (2.3%) and Alice Springs (4.2%) between December 2021 and December 2022. Even small price increases can be hard for some households to absorb. The biggest expenditure increases were in fuel and comprehensive car insurance. These expenditure areas are non-negotiables, with access to a private vehicle essential for many in terms of accessing work, education, medical services and food.

Price changes December 2021 - December 2022



Fuel:
Darwin up 15.5%
Alice Springs up 17.9%



Comprehensive car insurance:
Darwin up 22.2%
Alice Springs up 31.8%

Over the past year, the proportion of weekly household income spent on transport costs rose to 16.1% in Darwin, from 15% in December 2021, and to 16.8%, up from 16.1% in Alice Springs. Alice Springs is the second least affordable regional centre surveyed, in terms of proportion of income required to cover transport costs. Alice Springs retains the highest weekly expenditure out of all regional centres surveyed in the Transport Affordability Index.

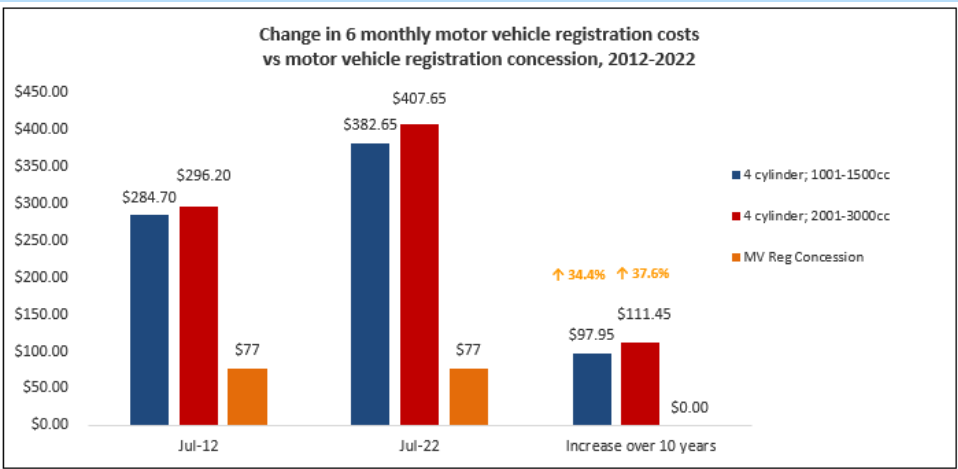
FACT SHEET

Cost of Transport in the NT April 2023

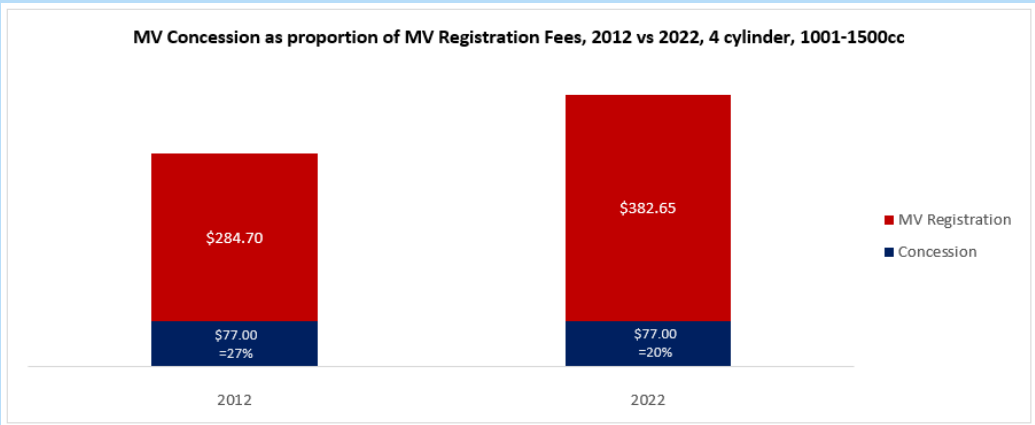


Motor vehicle registration fees have risen by well over 30% since 2012, with no corresponding increase in the NT Motor Vehicle Concession, which has not increased since 2009.

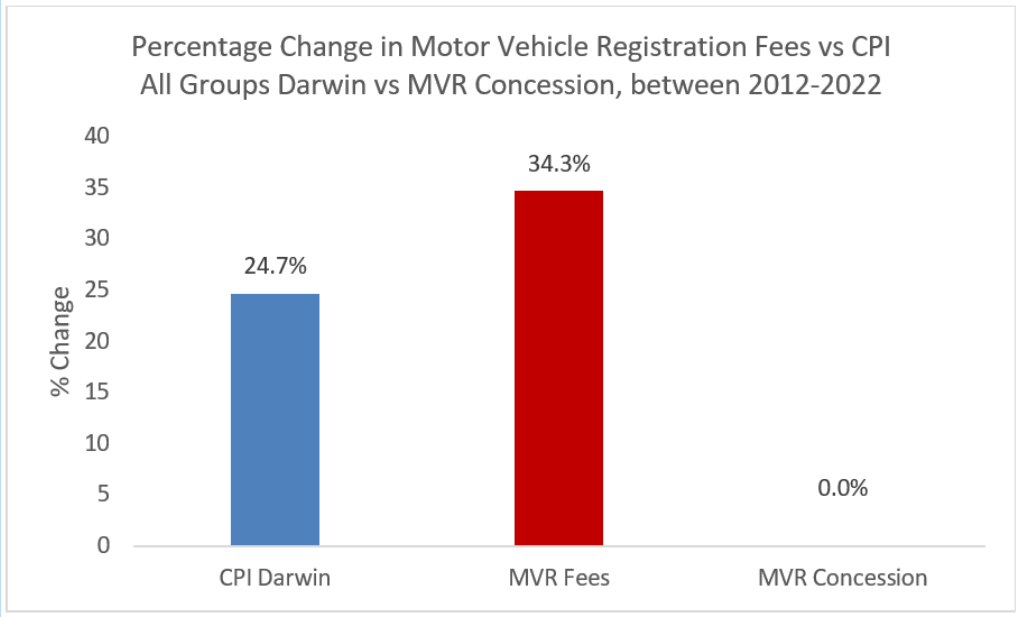
NTCOSS endorses the call by the Council on the Aging (COTA) NT, for indexation for concession paid under the Seniors Recognition Scheme. Likewise, NTCOSS calls for indexation to be applied to ALL concessions paid under the NT Concession Scheme, which we have been calling for since 2015, and to extend the Concession Scheme to all Centrelink Commonwealth Health Care Card holders



Between July 2012 and July 2022, 6-month motor vehicle registration fees increased by 34.4% for smaller vehicles and 37.6% for larger vehicles, both rises well above the 24.7% in the Darwin CPI over the same period. Over the same period, the motor vehicle registration concession did not increase at all. Inadequate or no indexation has the effect of diminishing the concession over time, raising questions of affordability for low-income households and consequently access to very basic goods and services that are essential to health, wellbeing and participation in society.



Over the past decade, the value of the motor vehicle registration concession as a proportion of the overall costs of vehicle registration has steadily declined. In 2012, the concession represented 27% of the cost of registering a small vehicle, yet by 2022, it had to declined to only 20%



The Cost of Motor Vehicle Registration (MVR) fees rose at a rate greater than the All Groups CPI for Darwin every year from December 2012 until December 2020. It is only in the last two years that the CPI has risen at a greater rate than the MVR fees.

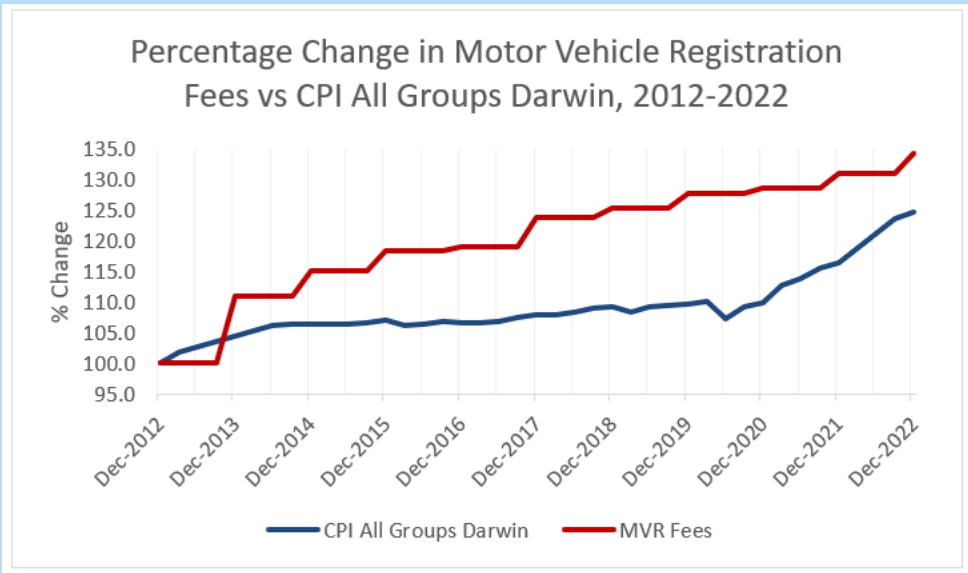
However...

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Cost of Transport in the NT April 2023



Over the past two year MVR fees have still risen at a higher rate than they had since 2017, while there has still been no increase in the concession for Motor Vehicle Registration (which has not changed since 2009)



NTCOSS recommends that the NT Government:

Extend Motor Vehicle Registrations to all Centrelink Health Care Card holders

Establish yearly indexation of the NT Motor Vehicle Registration concession

Establish Aged Pension/Centrelink Health Care Card concession rates for users of remote bus services and ensure consistency of bus fare structures across different services

Conduct a review into regional and remote transport networks

NTCOSS recommends that the Federal Government increases JobSeeker to at least \$76 a day to cover basic living costs

References: [Australian Automobile Association \(AAA\)](#) and [SGS Economics and Planning \(SGS\)](#) 2022; [AAA and SGS](#) 2023; [Australian Bureau of Statistics](#) 2023; [COTA NT](#) 2023; [NT Government](#) 2012; [NT Government](#) 2022a; [NT Government](#) 2022b; [NT Government](#) 2022c; [NT Government](#) 2023a; [NT Government](#) 2023b; [NT Government](#) 2023c