

National Aviation Policy White Paper

"In the last financial year our domestic airlines carried 50 million people, almost triple the 17 million carried just two decades ago. No fewer than 23 million aircraft journeys were made to and from Australia, including 99% of all tourism visits, up from just 7.9 million just two decades before. The Melbourne – Sydney route has for many years been in the top bracket of world air routes for passenger volume. For the month of July [last] year, it was the 7th busiest in the world with around 715,000 passengers. The Sydney-Brisbane route was the 15th busiest in the world with 430,000 passengers. Today, the industry employs 50,000 people directly and supports another 500,000 indirectly. It contributes nearly \$6.3 billion to the national economy. ...

"Aviation must play its part in tackling climate change. Today it contributes two per cent of all Australian greenhouse gas emissions – a small proportion but a significant one that is set to rise, unless we become smarter, cleaner and greener about the way we fly.

"The White Paper has initiatives for a more open and transparent planning process for our existing airports, involving all levels of government and giving new consultation processes to affected local communities. ... Improved Master Plan and Major Development Plan processes will ensure better planning for airports and those who live around them. In future, airport Master Plans will have to include ground transport plans, and there will be much closer consultation with local communities about developments, especially non-aeronautical developments like shops and business parks. Communities near airports are too often ignored, or not properly taken into account when planning decisions are made. The development of airports has a substantial benefit for local communities, with jobs and investment in transport infrastructure. But, this development should not leave communities with unreasonable disruptions." Ref: Anthony Albanese, MP, Extracts from speech at the launch, 16/12/09



Fine for Tarmac Delays in the US

"American airlines that leave travellers grounded in planes in the US without food, water or the option to disembark face hefty fines under regulations unveiled by federal transport officials. Responding to horror stories of stranded passengers, US Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood announced that airlines would have to provide access to toilets as well as food and water on domestic flights within two hours of a delay. After three hours, passengers must be offered a chance to disembark. Airlines that fail to comply could be fined up to \$US27,500 a passenger - potentially \$US5.5 million for a jet with 200 people on board. 'Airline passengers have rights, & these new rules will require airlines to live up to their obligation to treat their customers fairly', Mr LaHood said.

"The action, he said, was spurred by several notorious cases of flight delays, including the plight of passengers stranded for nearly six hours on a plane in Rochester, Minnesota, in August [last] year. The department issued the first fines for airline delays in November to Continental Airlines, ExpressJet Airlines and Mesaba Airlines for their roles in the Minnesota incident. In that case, a plane ... was diverted ... and passengers were forced to stay on the plane overnight, with nothing to eat but stale pretzels. A Mesaba employee refused to allow passengers to disembark, incorrectly saying that they couldn't get off the plane because security screeners had gone home.

"... 'This is restoring civility and safety to air travel', said Kate Hanni, a vocal supporter of the three-hour rule and founder of flyersrights.com. Ms Hanni began her passenger rights crusade in 2006 after she and her family were stranded on the tarmac of Austin-Bergstrom International Airport in Texas for more than nine hours with overflowing toilets and no food or water. The airline industry has opposed the rules, saying they will lead airlines to cancel flights to avoid fines - creating further hardships for travellers. 'The requirement of having planes return to the gates within a three-hour window or face significant fines is inconsistent with our goal of completing as many flights as possible', said James May, president of the Air Transport Association of America. 'Lengthy tarmac delays benefit no one'. The airline trade group has long attributed tarmac delays to varied circumstances that cannot be addressed by a federal mandate. For example, if a plane is delayed because of bad weather and a federal law forces the pilot to return to the terminal, the trade group argues that the plane can lose its spot in the departure line-up, putting the travellers even further behind schedule."

Ref: Hugo Martin, Los Angeles Times, 23/12/09

Problems with Shipping

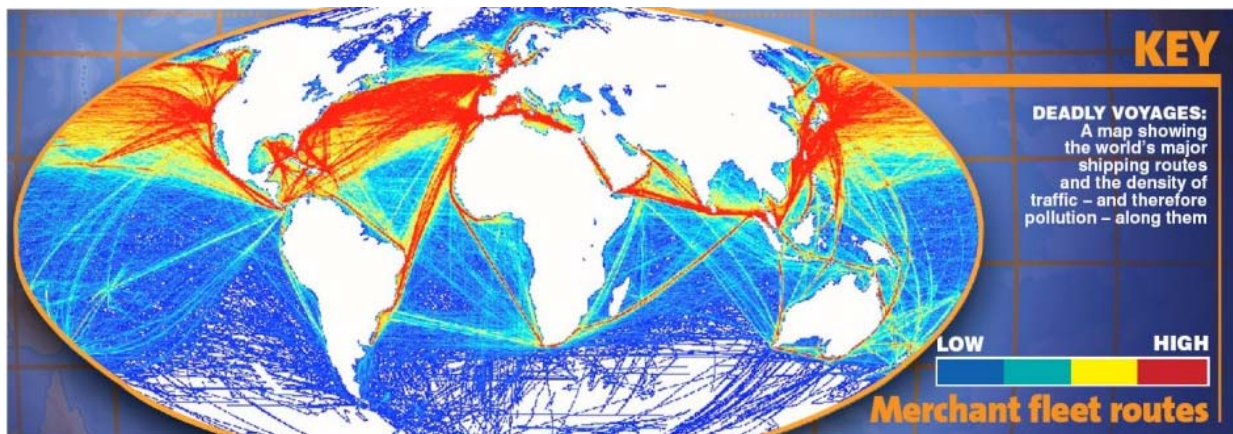
"There are now an estimated 100,000 ships on the seas, and the fleet is growing fast as goods are ferried in vast quantities from Asian industrial powerhouses to consumers in Europe and North America. ... For decades, the IMO [International Maritime Organisation - the UN body that polices the world's shipping] has rebuffed calls to clean up ship pollution. As a result, while it has long since been illegal to belch black, sulphur-laden smoke from power-station chimneys or lorry exhausts, shipping has kept its licence to pollute. For 31 years, the IMO has operated a policy agreed by the 169 governments that make up the organisation which allows most ships to burn bunker fuel.

years to make the switch. And, even then, it will depend on a final 'feasibility review' in 2018. In the meantime, according to Corbett's figures, nearly one million more people will die. Smoke and sulphur are not the only threats from ships' funnels. Every year they are also belching out almost one billion tons of carbon dioxide. Ships are as big a contributor to global warming as aircraft – but have had much less attention from environmentalists."

Ref: Fred Pearce, Daily Mail, 21/11/09

www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-1229857/How-16-ships-create-pollution-cars-world.html

"The underlying issue here is that, if any change is to be made in terms of ships using better fuel, it is



"Christian Eyde Moller, boss of the DK shipping company in Rotterdam, recently described this as 'just waste oil, basically what is left over after all the cleaner fuels have been extracted from crude oil. It's tar, the same as asphalt'. Bunker fuel is also thick with sulphur. IMO rules allow ships to burn fuel containing up to 4.5% sulphur. That is 4,500 times more than is allowed in car fuel in the European Union. The sulphur comes out of ship funnels as tiny particles, and it is these that get deep into lungs. Thanks to the IMO's rules, the largest ships can each emit as much as 5,000 tons of sulphur in a year – the same as 50million typical cars, each emitting an average of 100 grams of sulphur a year. ... A year ago, the IMO belatedly decided to clean up its act. It said shipping fuel should not contain more than 3.5% sulphur by 2012 and eventually must come down to 0.5%. This lower figure could halve the deaths, says Corbett.

the consumers who will ultimately have to bear the cost. And consumers would not want to do that, which is why companies shifted their factories to sweatshops in the 3rd world in the first place. It's all about cutting cost these days, no longer about quality, because companies believe that consumers want lower prices. Mindsets must move away from low cost, low quality. And by the way ... 1 in 3 people who live in Singapore get cancer. And lung cancer is one of the top cancer killers here, despite the island having a strict no-smoking policy in many areas. Very few people here smoke. But the whole island is surrounded by these massive tankers. You can see tons of them docked quite close to any shore here."

Ref: Ammy (Singapore), Daily Mail, 23/11/09

And Also...

"A Cessna 172 registered to an El Cajon flight school, clipped a power line on approach to [a San Diego County] runway and crashed. The plane did not catch fire and there were no structures damaged nor any injuries on the ground. But the plane struck a valve to a sewage pipe, releasing 25,000 gallons of raw sewage onto the nearby street and the plane wreckage."

Ref: Tony Perry, L A Times, 24/1/09

"It should not be hard to do. There is no reason ship engines cannot run on clean fuel, like cars. But, away from a handful of low-sulphur zones, including the English Channel and North Sea, the IMO gave shipping lines a staggering 12

Downtown Planning (Part 4)

“How are we going to get city transportation into better balance? The difficulties are not technical; a wealth of ingenious and practical technical innovation in mass transportation remains in limbo because of lack of development and construction funds. And the funds are not forthcoming, not because we are a poor country, and not because we have nothing to lose in losing the hearts of our cities, but because we have gone bankrupt in another realm - in the realm of planning policy for transportation.

“Perhaps I have been too hard on our Epaminondas traffic commissioners. After all, they are only doing what they know how to do, in a policy vacuum. New York's Traffic Commissioner Wiley is reported in the press as having said last week that his job is ‘to operate the street systems and highways as efficiently as we can. My job’, he went on to say, ‘has nothing to do with over-all city planning’. Of course he is wrong, because what he does is drastically shaping the future of the city. But in a sense, he is right too, because there is no policy, no goal for the city behind his work, which is not his fault.

“How are we to get transportation planning policies which control the flow and number of vehicles to the extent that they are not able to disintegrate and destroy the downtowns? How do we get policies which emphasize and support superior, comfortable and speedy rail transit or express bus service into the heart of the city, and promote the utmost convenience for bus use within the city's heart? We will get them only by recognizing, and recognizing in time, that our present course of destructive expediences for traffic is total folly, and, ultimately, total futility.

“Citizens can make their determined stands here and there, as we have at Washington Square. Forward looking merchants can re-assert the pedestrian attractiveness of downtown, as they are planning to do in Rochester. But people who are concerned with mass transportation, as you gentlemen are, have a responsibility too to speak up and to work for saner policies. You have a legitimate vested interest in the city streets and city activities, just as automobile manufacturers have a vested interest in highways. I wonder that you are so quiet about it, and about what is happening to the base of your business.

“Last week I was discussing this question with a Philadelphia newspaper reporter who specializes in traffic and transportation news. ‘Oh, the public transportation people’, he said, ‘they've given up. They seem to figure they're in a dying industry,

and they'll get what they can while it still lasts. After them, the deluge’.

“I hope his estimate was inaccurate. For if you are defeatist about the future of your industry, if you do not have the drive to make it the huge and ever-growing service it should be in a country increasingly urban, then all of us may well be defeatist about the future of our cities' hearts, and about the civilized values the true city represents.”

Ref: Jane Jacobs, Address to the New York State Motorbus Association, Nov 10, 1958

Jane Jacobs (Part 4)

“Jane Jacobs, a well known US city planner gave this address in 1958. It is now still as relevant as it was then. Private car travel today when compared with public transport travel's much greater efficiency in its use of space, is still as inefficient in its use of urban street space as it was at that time.

“Some things have changed since 1958. First, we are learning that to build urban expressways (whether as free-ways or toll-ways) is an extremely costly way of trying to solve the problems of traffic congestion, which is caused primarily by excessive amounts of urban private car travel (which uses street space most inefficiently). We are discovering that while the opening of a new expressway does reduce car traffic congestion temporarily, it does little more than encourage more private car travel and hence move the traffic congestion elsewhere. Urban expressways are costly, with the basic cost per kilometre being around four times that of building an equivalent urban Rapid Transit or other public transport line. In addition, the annual depreciation of the required transit vehicles is less than 20 percent of the total annual depreciation of the matching number of private cars. A further advantage of the equivalent urban transit service is that it has considerably more reserve passenger capacity than the urban expressway (which may have none at all quite soon after it has been opened).

“Secondly, the term Rapid Transit, meaning fast electric rail transit (or public transport) had not then in 1958 come into general use. The introduction of Rapid Transit services into urban areas was just around the corner; for it was in 1962 in the San Francisco Bay Area that plans for its Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) system were begun. By 1972, operation of the first part of this system (on the east side of San Francisco Bay), from Oakland southwards to Fremont had begun. By the end of that year, service northwards to Richmond had also begun. During 1973, East Bay service from Macarthur (just north of Oakland)

eastwards to Walnut Creek, and West Bay service from San Francisco southwards to Daly City were opened. Though the Trans-bay Tube had been built and completed, service through it between San Francisco and Oakland was not begun until some signalling and track-circuiting problems had been fully solved.

“Soon after the planning announcement in the San Francisco Bay Area, other US urban areas also began to plan new Rapid Transit services. The Philadelphia-Lindenwold fast rail service was in operation by 1973, and the Washington, DC Rapid Transit system (to be completed by the bi-centenary year, 1976) was well on the way towards completion, with, in the central city, timber-decked streets under which in the excavated caverns the subway lines and stations were being built. Other US urban Rapid Transit systems, such as in metropolitan Atlanta, soon followed.

“The experience of these US urban areas, together with that of British and European cities, shows that these Rapid Transit systems are a noticeably safer, more efficient, and significantly less costly way of solving traffic problems than building more expressways to further the growth of private car travel and its resulting and constantly recurring traffic congestion.

“Thirdly, there is a close link between Land Use and Transport planning, for the amounts of person and goods movements in an urban area are largely determined by its particular layout. Yet, urban land use planners do not appear to know that by using the Urban Transportation Study computer simulation techniques (available since the mid-1960s) they can check the transport efficiency of their land use plans by comparing several trial plans (with different densities and dispersions of land uses) and choosing that plan in which the total person-km and tonne-km of urban person and goods movement is minimized. Checking this transport efficiency would contribute much towards the greater general efficiency of our urban areas.”
Ref: Louis Fouvry, June 4, 2001

“Jane Jacobs, a nationally known writer on urban problems, was arraigned in Criminal Court yesterday and charged with second-degree riot, inciting to riot and criminal mischief. The police had originally charged that Mrs Jacobs tried to disrupt a public meeting on the controversial Lower Manhattan Expressway. ‘The inference seems to be’, Mrs Jacobs said, ‘that anybody who criticizes a state program is going to get it in the neck.’” **Ref: New York Times, April 18, 1968**

Robert Moses (Part 3)

“Moses' power increased after World War II, when, after the retirement of [Mayor] LaGuardia, a series of politically weak mayors consented to almost all of Moses' proposals. ... One of Moses' first steps after [Mayor] Impellitteri took office was killing the development of a city-wide Comprehensive Zoning Plan, underway since 1938, that would have restrained his nearly uninhibited power to build within the city. ... He could now remake New York for the automobile. By 1959, Moses had built 28,000 apartment units on hundreds of acres. Ironically, in clearing the land for high-rises in accordance with the innovative tower in the park scheme, he sometimes destroyed almost as many housing units as he built.

“Federal interest had shifted from parkway to freeway systems, and the new roads mostly conformed to the new vision, lacking the landscaping or the commercial traffic restrictions of the pre-war ones. ... Moses had direct influence outside the New York area as well. City planners in many smaller American cities hired Moses to design freeway networks for them in the 1940s and early 1950s. Few of these were built; initially postponed for lack of funding, projects still unbuilt by the 1960s were often defeated by the awakening citizen-led opposition movement. The first successful examples of these freeway revolts were in New Orleans. ... Later, successful freeway revolts that saw highway projects either scaled back or cancelled outright also occurred in Portland, Oregon, San Francisco, San Diego, Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Phoenix, Memphis, Toronto, and eventually even Los Angeles.

“Moses knew how to drive, but because he didn't have a license, many sources say that he didn't know how to drive. His view of the automobile was shaped by the 1920s, when the car was thought of as entertainment and not a utilitarian lifestyle. Moses' highways in the first half of the 20th century were parkways, curving, landscaped ‘ribbon parks’, intended to be pleasures to drive in and ‘lungs for the city’.

“While appearing utopian on its face, some critics contend Moses' vision of towers, cities and parks linked by cars and highways in practice led to the expansion of wholesale ghettos, decay, middle-class urban flight, and blight. Beginning in the 1960s and reaching a peak in the 1990s, public opinion and the ideals of many in the city planning profession shifted away from this strand of car-oriented thought.”

Ref: Wikipedia {Continued in #143}
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Moses

More on the High Speed Rail Issue

“John Whitelegg makes some valid points {see #136} about the relationship between British cities and London, but surely the benefits of HSR are real even in a small country? The intention of HSR would be to replace a proportion of car and air travel, mostly domestic but some European, by rail travel with significant emissions and congestion benefits. It would not be a net travel growth situation. No doubt there is an element of keeping up with the European neighbours, but HSR is an attractive way of increasing rail mode share while reducing overall emissions and improving the urban environment. The low speed, high frequency Basle-Zurich model he mentions probably would cause growth in very short inter-city trips, but this would be mostly replacing cars. Low speed rail does not replace cars as effectively as higher speed services.

“Here in Australia the cost of developing HSR over longer distances would be greater, but the market in the larger cities should ensure success, when it finally happens!”

Ref: Robin Spragg, 12/1/10

High Speed Rail in Taiwan

“It’s exciting to hear about the state-of-engineering rail lines. Taiwan’s new end-to-end system transects the island on a north/south axis. It can travel at 300 KM per hour. With thirty minutes for stops the train goes end to end in Taiwan in 90 minutes. And their on time record: over 99%.



Taiwan high speed train. Picture: IBM.

What’s on-time in Taiwanese? Here in the willy-nilly world of U.S. rail a train within two or even three minutes of its scheduled time is considered ‘on time’. However, in Taiwan the leeway is exactly six seconds.

“The IBM management system used on the Taiwan high-speed rail system monitors the cars, the rails, the signal system and measures the crucial vibration effects along the route. Taiwan, like California, is prone to earthquakes which can threaten rail system safety. Speaking of California, it is estimated a north-south high speed rail system there will cost over \$50 billion. The current stimulus plan has eight billion to spread around the U.S. Meanwhile, the Chinese

government is going to spend a quarter of a trillion dollars on their high speed rail system. ... Most large nations are investing heavily in rail services. Russia. India. In Brazil they’re preparing for the summer Olympics in 2016. They hope to have a high speed rail service connecting Sao Paulo and Rio de Janeiro when the Olympics come to town. ... In Taiwan you can go 300 KM in 90 minutes, faster than you can get checked onto an airplane in most airports. At that level of service, you take the train and avoid the plane. Trains are far more fuel-efficient than trucks, cars, planes.”

Ref: Harry Fully, GreenTech Pastures, 10/11/09

Interview with Oz Kayak (Part 12)

Oz Kayak started as an engineering cadet with the Victorian Roads Authority, later worked with Victorian Railways and today is passionate about active forms of transport, community health and urban design. Here continues our discussion:

SI: By active transport we mean ‘walking and cycling’ ...

OK: ... and public transport – there’s a health benefit in waiting. You can do ‘leg lifts’ while you are waiting for a tram!

SI: There is a link between active transport and public transport, walking to and from stops, and perhaps walking between stops while waiting for your tram [or bus].

OK: Russell and team term that ‘hybrid transport’ so we model the health benefits and the cost benefits of driving a car to a terminal and then walking the rest [of the way]. Get out one stop early, or two, and walk.

SI: And my observation is that better public transport is actually better for the taxi industry.

OK: I totally support that.

SI: The interesting proposal in Melbourne at the moment is the bike-share scheme. What are your thoughts?

OK: To start with, the bike-share scheme needs what we call ‘community service obligation’. The scheme itself will not cover its costs. So it needs to be effectively modelled. In Paris, London – and like schemes – they, in a conventional business model, do not make money, or even cover costs. {Continued in #143}

Observations on Public Transport

"In recent days there have been some thoughtful letters relating to rail-based transport and its role in the future of public transport in our city [of Christchurch]. With this in mind I'd like to make some observations about how I see rail-based transport in relation to the future of our city. I hasten to add that views expressed are my own and not necessarily those of the Christchurch City Council – though I genuinely hope that in time the council will support investigating rail-based transport for our city. ... It is also a chance for me to reflect on some of the lessons learnt from the cities I visited on a recent study trip to the northwest United States, and also to Vancouver in Canada. Travelling with me were the council's chief executive Tony Marryatt and our general manager of strategy and planning, Mike Theelen.

"Our trip was to specifically look at integrated urban transit systems, inner-city redevelopment projects (urban renewal), affordable housing and the finance and governance models used in managing these urban infrastructures. The first point to make is that all four of these issues are completely interconnected. We travelled to San Francisco, Vancouver, Seattle and Portland. Apart from driving between Vancouver and Seattle, we used public transport systems to move around. Buses were our primary mode of transport in San Francisco, although it is impossible to enjoy that great city without using the famous cable cars. This historic part of the inner-city transport system is not dissimilar to our own steadily expanding tourist tram system. The difference is that in San Francisco the cable cars service not just the shopping precinct but also some densely packed inner-city areas. The distances travelled are similar to our own tram's current and planned expanded routes.

"In Vancouver we also focussed on 'light rail' systems. Canada's western city largely escaped the United States' passion for motorways, much like our own city. Lacking the desire to carve up its suburban and urban landscapes with motorways but facing growing traffic volumes another solution was required. So Vancouver turned to rail. It is not an accident that Vancouver consistently rates as one of the most liveable cities in the world. Portland was the final stop and the highlight of my journey. It was here that it all came together for us. We saw how a city had intelligently used rail and bus-based public transport systems to transform dying inner-city precincts into vibrant (yes! that word again) and creative urban and suburban landscapes. The key is a combination of light rail units and

streetcars, both of which are modern electric-powered railcars equally at home on mainline rail or city streets. Using streetcars, supported by bus feeders services, Portlanders have been able to connect urban to suburban and workplace to residential suburb.

"Rail has captured commuter and recreational travel in a way that buses have not. The reason for this is complex to quantify but as the transport planners in Portland told us when we questioned this, that it was the magic of 'steel and sparks'. In a land where many planners we met referred to buses as 'social transport' the renaissance and popularity of rail has transcended many of the sceptics' views. Short term it is much more expensive for rail than it is for buses alone. But where buses alone struggled for patronage, rail has changed community commuting habits. Buses tightly integrated with streetcars running on both city streets and existing rail corridors are shifting a growing number of citizens. Even more interesting is that rider numbers climb dramatically on weekends with citizens climbing on board the streetcars to enjoy the cultural, entertainment and social opportunities offered by the city centre. It proved to us that there is life after the malls.

"Where the inner-city streetcars run, and the suburban stations are located, values have risen, business is attracted and residents follow. The planners have discovered that rail is the 21st century's most effective urban development tool. The capacity of rail to handle large, concentrated numbers of people was demonstrated to us one night in Vancouver. In minutes of a national ice hockey game finishing, the crowd of nearly 20,000 was effortlessly dispatched throughout the city on large (300-plus person capacity) light rail cars running at less than three-minute intervals. ...

"Just like Portland has already done, it is time to re-imagine our future. We need a city with a human pace, more pedestrian-friendly, rich in public spaces and art, renewed with an urban vigour based around a substantial inner-city residential population, and supported by a sustainable and attractive public transport system. Our city is perfect for a return to 'steel & sparks'."
Ref: Mayor Bob Parker, The Press, 26/12/09.

East-West Rail in Australia

"A key milestone in the modernisation of the East West rail corridor has been reached with two new passing loops between Kalgoorlie and the Western Australia/South Australia border now completed. ... Every 1,500 metre train can carry as much freight as 100 semi-trailers." **Ref: Federal Ministerial Media Release, 8/2/10**