

**Stamp Duty on Cars – It Gets Worse**

The item in the last newsletter on the Victorian Parliament voting to reduce stamp duty on large cars while leaving small cars unchanged and raising public transport fares generated considerable response including this pithy item: *“Wot a snorter! Did the Victorian Parliament, with the government’s instigation, vote for these measures? Really, how pathetic.”*

We also noted this item by Cosima Marriner (The Age 31/5/07) **‘Car taxes rise in green drive’**: *“Queensland has become the first state to increase taxes on gas-guzzling cars in an attempt to encourage more motorists to buy fuel-efficient hybrid vehicles. The Premier, Peter Beattie, yesterday announced an increase in the motor vehicle duty payable on the purchase of cars with four cylinders or more. The tax increases apply to new and second-hand cars, and come into effect on January 1 next year. To encourage more people to buy environmentally friendly cars, the duty will remain at 2 per cent of the purchase price for hybrid vehicles. It will increase to 3% for four-cylinder cars, 3.5 per cent for six-cylinder cars and 4% for V8s... We have come up with a new system of motor vehicle duty that will encourage smaller cylinder purchasing for new cars,” Mr Beattie said. ‘Meaningful efforts to combat global warming must involve incentives for low-emitting activities.’ A spokesman for the Queensland motoring association, the RACQ, said raising taxes at a time of record fuel prices would make things tougher for motorists.”*

Yes, or they could buy smaller and more efficient cars. The interesting thing is that the Victorian Treasurer, John Brumby appeared to use the fact that Queensland had the lowest stamp duty on cars as a reason for lowering stamp duty in Victoria. *“Victoria will go from having the second highest duty in Australia on a \$36,000 car to the second lowest duty – only behind Queensland – which Victoria currently subsidises through the unfair GST agreement,” Mr Brumby said.*<sup>1</sup>

Queenslanders have got the jump on Victorians by sending a clear message on efficiency rather than price. Victorian polities voted after May 31.

	Hybrid	V4	V6	V8
Qld	2%	3%	3.5%	4%
Vic <sup>2</sup>	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%	2.5%

<sup>1</sup> Media Release from the Office of Treasurer 27/4/07  
<sup>2</sup> Cars under \$57,000. Cars over \$57,000 5% Duty

**Ferry Feedback**

It was good to get some feedback on the ferries:

*“Good to see you continuing to take up the PT batten. In regards to your ferry comments, my grandfather was involved for many years in trying to get a commuter ferry from Frankston to Melbourne happening ... I have spent many, many days on the Bay. I think the harsh reality is that the weather kills the viability of many services. South-westerners hit this end of the Bay pretty heavily, and even if services can run, I think timing and comfort would be regularly compromised. There were also passenger holiday services to Sorrento in the 1910-1920’s. I wonder if there are records of how often they ran. Good to keep floating the possibilities.”*

**Chris Barnett, Thirdskin, 7/6/07**

*“I like the news about the Lady McKell. Many would think you’re eccentric about bay maritime transport, but I have a ‘thing’ about bay and river ferries, as well as trams, even though I am a serious, objective transport planning consultant. I suspect that land-use and travel activity along coastal Victoria and Port Phillip is nearing a point where linked public transport (road, multi-purpose ferry and rail) providing great transit routes for tourists as well as weekends between Melbourne and the peninsular ‘tips’ is viable on a triple bottom line basis.”*

**Transport Planner, 7/6/07**

**Response:** The weather is indeed a pertinent issue and the reality is that it is likely that we will have to cope with more extreme weather occurrences. The proposal is to run ferry services in concert with existing and new land-based transit services which will provide alternative services for the (2-3?) days that the ferries can’t operate. This happens with fog and high waves in other parts of the world. Weather forecasting will provide some forewarning. Presumably it would be better to have ferries running at least 360 days p.a. than no service at all?

**Sri Lanka**

The ubiquitous versatile and convenient 3-Wheelers (Took-Tooks) – an electric version would be nice.



## Car Commuting & Health

*"Besides being a daily grind that takes time away from family, a long commute can be harmful to your health. Researchers have found that hours spent behind the wheel raise blood pressure and cause workers to get sick and stay home more often. Commuters have lower thresholds for frustration at work, suffer more headaches and chest pains, and more often display negative moods at home in the evenings. It's not just the drivers who suffer. Carpool passengers have to deal with what they call "Mustang neck" or "Beetle neck" -- the contortions they must make to wedge themselves into the back seats of certain cars.*

*'If you're driving an hour-and-a-half each way twice a day for 30 years, the consequences don't catch up with you at 32, they catch up in your 50s', said Jerry L. Deffenbacher, a professor of psychology at Colorado State University, who uses a computerized driving simulator to test the connection between traffic congestion and anger. 'Like smoking, it wouldn't be immediately obvious.' Drivers with multiple route changes are at greater risk, Novaco found after plotting out the commutes of his study subjects. 'It's a physical strain as well as psychological one', he said. 'It's frustrative and activates negative emotional states, and that generally has an effect on physical well-being'.*

*Robert Cervero, chairman of the department of city and urban planning at the University of California at Berkeley, has studied the relationship between the design of communities and physical activity. He said rising rates of obesity and some types of diabetes contribute to the problems facing commuters. But so, too, do the lifestyle choices -- and land-use decisions -- that result in long commutes."*

**Ref: Eric Weiss, Washington Post Staff Writer 9/4/07** [www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/04/08/AR2007040801177\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/04/08/AR2007040801177_pf.html)

## And the Opposing Argument:

*'More anti-suburb nonsense that fails to get at the root cause of long commutes - not enough roads to accommodate the growth in the suburbs. The solution is simple - STOP listening to the enviro-nuts, NIMBYs and BANANAS who don't want any new roads built ANYWHERE, and stop letting the transit freaks who think Metro makes highways unnecessary do all the transportation planning and BUILD THE DAMN ROADS, ALREADY!'*

**Ref: cflem Washington Post Blog 9/4/07**

## (Hybrid) Taxi!

*"New York, which is probably the most energy-efficient city in North America, is taking things to a new level. Mayor Bloomberg is planning to convert the city's entire fleet of 13,000 cabs to hybrids -- or at least drastically improve their fuel efficiency".*

**Ref: Eric de Place 23/5/07 Washington Post Blog** in reference to an article in the New York Times.

## Electric Post

*"The French postal service, La Poste, plans to order 10,000 electric delivery vehicles, which it says are far more economical than normal cars or vans.... 'There has never been such a big order [for the vehicles] in the world,' said French Industry Minister Francois Loos, quoted by the AFP news*



*agency. La Poste wants to reduce its 70m-euro (£48m; \$95m) annual fuel bill. La Poste has been testing eight French electric vehicles since 2005... 'According to our tests, it is six times cheaper to run an electric vehicle than a diesel vehicle,' said La Poste chairman Jean-Paul Bailly. La Poste believes the change will also cut emissions of the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide (CO2) by four tonnes per vehicle annually."*

**Ref: BBC News 17/4/07**

## Solely Selling Renewable Fuel

*"...a tiny service station in High Street, Prahran, [Melbourne] under the brand name Conservo, ... will start selling E10 (unleaded petrol blended with 10 per cent ethanol), B20 (diesel blended with 20 per cent biodiesel) and B100 (100 per cent biodiesel) to the public. E10 is suitable for use in all petrol vehicles and both the B20 and the B100 can be used in standard diesel engines. The fuels all have claimed lower carbon emissions than standard petrol and diesel.*

**Ref: Karl Quin, The Age 26/6/07**

## Tired of Cycling up Hills?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JtB8DX70ihM>

**Online:** [www.goingsolar.com.au/transport](http://www.goingsolar.com.au/transport)

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