

More on the Cost of Parking

"... the State Government has been using expensive private car parking beneath the Park Hyatt hotel, costing tens of thousands of dollars a month, for staff parking. ... What we do know is that the parking spots are not cheap. At \$407 a month, or almost \$5000 a year, for each parking space, it runs into the sort of money that long-suffering commuters might think better spent on improved public transport services. Couldn't ministerial staff instead be offered subsidised or free public transport into town instead of expensive parking bays? Not only would this save the Government money, but it would give some Premier's advisers first-hand experience of the trials and tribulations of using the public transport system. This, in turn, would show them first-hand the need for basic improvements, such as running more train services....And, as they will be quick to point out, ministerial staff who use the parking can work irregular hours, which makes 24-hour access to parking invaluable."

Ref: Editorial, *The Sunday Age* 16/9/07

Memo to Advisors: (1) Yearly Zone1 Tickets at \$1094, save almost \$4,000 on parking plus the cost of running a car. (2) Many of us work irregular hours, which makes 24-hour access to public transport invaluable. Oh yes, and we vote.

More on Your Leaders and PT

Questioned as to why the major parties failed to support a motion in the Senate for the 'government to reverse its policy of denying public transport any funding in its transport budget determinations' [Newsletter #30] we received the following response: *'A Rudd Labor Government will provide financial assistance to State governments to improve and extend public transport systems in urban and regional Australia through the Financial Assistance Grants Scheme and the Auslink, Roads to Recovery and Strategic Regional programs'*. As I read this it appears a Federal Labor Government would fund public transport. So why vote against the motion in the Senate?

Oil and War

"Alan Greenspan has shaken the White House by declaring that the prime motive for the war in Iraq was oil.... 'I am saddened that it is politically inconvenient to acknowledge what everyone knows: the Iraq war is largely about oil' he said. ... The Bush administration, along with its allies in government in Britain and Australia has always insisted the war had nothing to do with oil."

Ref: The Australian 17/9/07

More on the VicRoads Survey

It is interesting that VicRoads did a survey on Copenhagen-style bike paths and I would love to see it. I can't speak about Copenhagen but I did spend some time in Randers, a city further north in Denmark, and found that the three level road system - pedestrian, bike, car - was great! Can't imagine any negative impacts for pedestrians, as cyclists have their own path so none of the problems that arise with shared bike/pedestrian paths. The fact that the paths are at different levels I think also probably helps avoid the problem of cyclists and pedestrians straying onto each other's paths, which I've encountered in other places. It does of course mean pedestrians have to look out for bikes first, then cars, when crossing roads, but they do anyway on normal roads, and with the separated paths you know what you're looking for on each path - no problem with bikes appearing out of a mass of cars. I reckon the thing about the separated path system is that it clarifies things and makes everyone feel, and be, safer. I suspect this makes it easier for a wider variety of age groups to cycle, with obvious health benefits. Also it means that people who would otherwise be car drivers are now cyclists, or have family members etc who are, so that they are more careful and sympathetic to the needs of cyclists.

Thanks to Kerry Dawborn for this item.

Oil and Food

While we are chewing through the world's oil reserves, we need to be mindful of the amount of oil required for agricultural production and the transport of that food in a big country like Australia. As the former Deputy Prime Minister, John Anderson, notes: 'We put as much petrol into our refrigerator as we do our car'.

Ref: ABC Radio National Breakfast 26/9/07



And Also ...

Sign on a bicycle in Melbourne: 'No Iraqis were killed to fuel this bike'.

Online: www.goingsolar.com.au/transport

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Facts and Statistics for Victoria

- 1 million additional vehicles registered in last 10 years in Victoria
- Around 55,000 more heavy vehicles on road in last 10 years
- Victoria's freight to double between 2004 and 2024
- VCEC report estimates total cost of congestion to our economy to be between \$1.3 billion and \$2.6 billion per year
- Since 1999, more than \$4.8 billion has been invested in building better roads across Victoria, including over \$2.1 billion on regional roads, e.g. 1999, \$230 million was spent per year on roads. Today, it is \$880 million
- The last Budget included \$30 million congestion package to improve traffic flows at key road and freeway network locations
- Other specific projects to help ease congestion include the \$1 billion Monash West Gate corridor upgrade; and \$1.3 billion for upgrading our outer metropolitan arterial roads
- Committed more than \$100 million to trams and buses having on-road priority between 2004 and 2010
- Currently, there are approximately 1.25 million car trips on the metropolitan arterial road network during the morning 2-hour peak per day, likely to grow by a further 400,000 over the next 25 years
- Over 12 million trips made each day in Melbourne (including walking and cycling)
- 40 per cent of trips in Melbourne are less than two kilometres long, and 60 per cent are less than five kilometres long
- 83% of all trips to work in and around Melbourne are by car, but only about 7% of these actually occur with a passenger on board
- Aiming by 2020 to have 20 per cent of motorised trips taken on public transport
- 2,500 boardings at the Doncaster Park & Ride each day

Ref: Facts and figures that were presented in the Minister for Roads and Ports speech at the Victorian Road Based Public Transport Advisory Council Summit held on 29 August 2007
Thanks to VicRoads for this information.



**Pictures (above and right):
The Ghan in Alice Springs**

Feedback on Train Timetables

"The new timetable is disappointing. It seems that the Dandenong, Frankston and Sydenham lines are the fullest but only the Dandenong line gets an extra AM peak service! A couple of services will go onto the new Craigieburn service, which means that no new trains were purchased for this line extension! ... It's about time they got serious and spent large money in an effort to switch traffic to rail, thus reducing congestion on the Monash, West Gate and Eastern freeways. More people would use it now if it was less crowded. Free travel before 7 am is fine, but you have to arrive at the destination by 7 am, so it won't make much difference to the peak which is really 8-9 am. I don't think many people are going to arrive 1 to 2 hours early to save a few dollars."

Confidential Feedback 23/9/07

More on Federal Funding of PT

"The MTF has long advocated for the Federal Government to fund urban public transport, and also review the fringe benefits tax bias towards car travel... In addition, Cr. Jackie Fristacky wrote to The Hon. John Howard, Prime Minister to alert the Federal Government to recent changes to the Canadian tax structure that eliminate incentives for greater car use in its fringe benefits tax system.... Transport is increasingly becoming an issue for all levels of government as walking, cycling and public transport grows in patronage, and in the advent of global realities of climate change and peak oil." **Ref: Metropolitan Transport Forum Annual Report 2006/07**

"...our Federal Government is the only federal government in the world that doesn't spend a dollar on public transport. I think that if you really have got \$20 billion and you accept climate change is an issue, the feds should start writing out some cheques to assist the states on public transport because every other government in the world at a federal level does exactly that."

Ref: Stephen Mayne on ABC TV Difference of Opinion: The massive budget surplus 20/09/07

