

Climate Change & Transport

“Climate change ... and vulnerability of oil supply are key constraints that must inform the development of all transport policy,” [Greens senate candidate Kerrie] Tucker told reporters at the [Queanbeyan Railway] station. ‘This is about accepting the reality we live in today. We have to do things differently.’ The Greens’ policy revolves around a multi-billion-dollar investment in public transport, particularly trains, to maximise energy efficiency and minimise fuel consumption. Greens senator Kerry Nettle said the commonwealth had invested \$58 billion in roads over the past 30 years and only \$2.2 billion on rail. That trend should be reversed, she said, but the coalition’s election campaign already showed that was unlikely.”

Ref: AAP The Age 5/11/07

“A fixation with road transport compromises climate change policy, writes Kenneth Davidson.... On the ALP’s election website there were 29 transport policy promises — 27 involved specific pledges for road funding totalling \$8.3 billion and two ‘vision’ statements on shipping and rail in speeches by shadow transport minister Martin Ferguson in July and August. These speeches don’t commit a dollar expenditure or give even an indication of the roles shipping and rail might play in achieving greenhouse targets. Nor do they mitigate the double whammy of peak oil (which is driving world oil prices towards \$100 a barrel) and Australia’s ‘oil squeeze’ as declining domestic production and rising demand will push oil self-sufficiency from a present 84 per cent to 20 per cent in the next two decades. The election is being played out in a dream world.”

Ref: Kenneth Davidson The Age 9/11/07

Positions Vacant

Public Transport Local Government

Facilitator (0.8 EFT for 3 years). This position will be responsible for the coordination and strengthening of the relationship between the Victorian State Government Public Transport Division, Local Governments, the VLGA and a range of stakeholder groups in Victoria. Details: <http://www.vlga.org.au/news/items/2007/11/180284-upload-00001.pdf>

Public Transport Ombudsman (Victoria)

“Three years on [this role] remains an office of last resort, dealing only with issues that have not been resolved.... [it] continues to be a relatively small but very influential body.”

More details: Robin Billen (03) 9650 2555

Ref: The Age 10/11/07

Federal Election 2007

In Victoria, the Eastern Transport Coalition (ETC) incorporating the Councils of Greater Dandenong, Knox, Manningham, Maroondah, Monash, Whitehorse and Yarra Ranges, has been “underwhelmed by the responses from the major political parties to the need for improved public transport” in the east of Melbourne. Acting Chairperson of the ETC, Cr Alex Makin said: “Voters in these key electorates also think that the Federal Government should fund public transport infrastructure in the same way they do roads. Voters want better public transport to reduce congestion, save money and help the environment. Our survey of 1000 voters found that more than four out of five respondents (83%) said that the issue of public transport infrastructure would be of importance when deciding who they would vote for in the next Federal election. And yet the political parties have provided only a mixed bag of responses, some good and some bad.

While the Liberal Party has said that they will not entertain a role for federal involvement, it has been encouraging that La Trobe MP Jason Wood has agreed there is a need. Likewise the \$80 million for Springvale Road provides a model that should be expanded to include public transport projects.

The ALP, through candidate for Aston, Gerry Raleigh, has said that they promise a ‘national approach to fixing public transport in our community’. While this is a positive statement, the eastern suburbs need a financial commitment to make this a reality.

The Greens for instance have said that 25 per cent of Auslink funds should be used on mass transport systems. This is a stance the ETC supports and we note that the State Government advocated for public transport to be included last year.

Federal Government funding for public transport would allow us to build rail to Rowville, rail to Doncaster or increase the number of train services on the Belgrave / Lilydale lines. With growing congestion on our roads, skyrocketing petrol costs and the impact of climate change – it doesn’t matter who gets elected they are going to have to include public transport in their plans.”

Ref: ETC Media Release 14/11/07

Road Funding vs PT

“It seems to me the only plan for our public transport is to let it rust and crumble while billions of dollars are spent on privatised and polluting roads. Our commitment to public transport is a shameful joke.” **Ref: Pip Star The Age 9/11/07**

Melbourne-Devonport Ferry

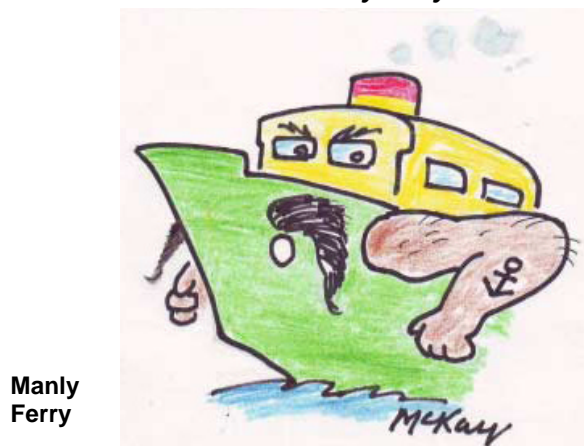
"The TT-Line has reversed its fortunes. The ferry company has recorded a profit of more than \$10m. TT-Line's annual report shows it generated \$155m in revenue last financial year. The Melbourne to Devonport ferry service turned a \$6m loss into an almost \$6m profit, but the now defunct Sydney ferry wrote off a \$2m loss."
Ref: ABC News 24/10/07

Melbourne Ferries

"One infrastructure initiative that needs to be further explored is the increased use of ferries on Port Phillip and Westernport Bays....Melbourne's Bays are undervalued, poorly resourced, and characterised by missed opportunities to meet government policy, and community and industry needs,... The private sector is keen to invest in key commercial developments with significant community benefit outcomes."
Ref: VECCI Task Group Report: Community Participation in Land and Waterways Sustainability (2007)

Sydney Ferry Review

"Bret Walker, SC, oversaw the special commission of inquiry into Sydney Ferries, set up in March... [and] ... Sydney Ferries will get a new fleet and a new owner, as widely predicted.... Under Mr Walker's preferred option, the Government would continue to set the fares, routes and timetables with a service contract in place for the operator to fulfil, including supplying a new fleet. He endorsed Sydney Ferries' move to develop two classes of vessels, including an 800-seat vessel for the Manly run capable of doing the trip to Circular Quay in 20 minutes.... The Walker inquiry argues reform will actually create a much more user-friendly service, with patronage growth and extra routes to be added. "This is a roadmap for change and the delivery of better, sustainable ferry services for the future," [NSW Premier] Mr Lemma said."
Ref: Andrew Tillett The Manly Daily 2&3/11/07



Manly Ferry

Feedback on Regional Rail

Noting the discussion in #35 on the benefits of a rail line between Casino and Murwillumbah, there is an existing, but disused rail line linking these cities through Port Douglas and Ballina. I had the pleasure of inspecting the line recently and the rail track is still in good condition, apart from weeds and run down bridges. It is extraordinary that this rail line was allowed to close only a few years ago, when tourism to this area has been rapidly expanding, causing enormous traffic congestion on narrow coastal roads. Imagine the benefits to Port Douglas, Ballina, etc of a rail line, especially for young visitors who do not have licences. Queensland plans to extend the rail train link from the Gold Coast to Coolangatta. This opens up the opportunity for a link to Tweed Heads and to Murwillumbah, thus linking the entire east coast. Readers can help the local TOOT organisation (Trains On Our Tracks) lobby for re-opening of the line by writing to The Hon. John Watkins MP, Deputy Premier and Minister for Transport and Finance, NSW Ministry of Transport, Level 21, 227 Elizabeth Street, Sydney NSW 2000.
Thanks to Jackie M Fristacky, Deputy Chair, Metropolitan Transport Forum, for this item.

Federal Funding of Public Transport

"Our rail line is a federal issue because:

- ◆ It's a piece of national infrastructure, particularly the missing NSW-Qld link.
- ◆ Tourism is a national responsibility.
- ◆ Climate change needs to be tackled at all levels and rail is climate friendly.
- ◆ Rail should form the backbone of a regional integrated transport system."

Ref: Trains On Our Tracks www.toot.org.au

"Its time for the [Federal] government to invest some of the budget surplus in rail.... There is a very strong feeling in the community that more money needs to be spent on infrastructure and services. There is also a very firm view across the region that commuter rail services and a rail link to Queensland are appropriate to the needs of the community and provide a broad spread of economic, social and environmental benefits."
Ref: Karin Kolbe, Trains On Our Tracks media release www.toot.org.au 21/10/07

And Also...

"There will always be the Manly ferries' [ex skipper Roger Smith] said. It is an icon. You can't imagine life without a Manly ferry." **REF: Manly Daily 3/11/07**

Online: www.goingsolar.com.au/transport

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