

## Cyclist Killed in CBD Bus Accident

*"A cyclist has died after she was hit by a bus in Melbourne's CBD this morning, police say. ... Police have cordoned off Swanston Street between Little Collins and Bourke streets. ... The incident has caused extensive delays for peak-hour tram services in the city. Tram services travelling both directions on Swanston Street have been diverted. A Yarra Trams spokeswoman [said] the No. 1 tram has been diverted via La Trobe and Spencer streets. Other southbound services utilising Swanston Street have been diverted down La Trobe and William streets. Northbound trams are stopping at Federation Square."* **Ref: Hamish Townsend & Marika Dobbin The Age, 18/9/08**

**Comment:** This Newsletter does not usually comment on individual tragedies but my tram pulled up between the corpse and the bus seconds after the accident. All the tram passengers fled leaving just the tram driver and myself. Within minutes at least eight police cars and two medical vehicles had arrived. Just why the police allowed pedestrians near the accident scene but blocked both sides of Swanston Walk is a mystery. (The body was shielded by the bus, the tram and several emergency vehicles).

From a transport point of view, this road trauma yet again highlights a number of issues: the problems that cyclists have in trying to squeeze past trucks and buses in the morning peak hour; why in fact such big buses are allowed in Swanston Walk (given the recognised problem and recent initiatives to have them moved); and the need for another alternative for north-south trams in cases of accidents or when the Walk is closed for parades. Should the Eddington North-South rail line be built? This correspondent has been advocating that it be constructed under Russell Street while at the same time constructing tram tracks (mostly) at street level above. This would help service the eastern end of the CBD and provide an alternative tram route. {See Eddington Submission # 1952 at [http://210.15.220.118/ewlna\\_submissions/EastWestResponse\\_150708\\_StephenIngrouille.pdf](http://210.15.220.118/ewlna_submissions/EastWestResponse_150708_StephenIngrouille.pdf)}



**Swanston Walk blocked at Bourke Street, 18/9/08**

## Vehicle Fuel Efficiency Report

*"Public and industry comment is being sought on a discussion paper on measures to increase the fuel efficiency of the nation's car fleet. ... Instead of advocating the adoption of any particular measure, the discussion paper evaluates eight potential measures to improve fuel efficiency and urges interested parties to provide their views.*

*"The measures include:*

- *CO<sub>2</sub> emission targets for new light vehicles (voluntary or mandatory);*
- *differential registration and stamp duty charges for new light vehicles based on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions;*
- *direct financial incentives for low emission vehicles;*
- *fleet purchasing frameworks which incorporate CO<sub>2</sub> reduction objectives;*
- *inclusion of fuel consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> data in new vehicle advertisements;*
- *international standards/labelling requirements for non-engine components which impact on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions;*
- *an environmental rating scheme for heavy vehicles; and*
- *a technology demonstration scheme for Australian commercial road transport fleets linked to CO<sub>2</sub> outcomes.*

*"The transport sector is the third largest and one of the fastest growing sources of carbon pollution in Australia, with more than 14 million registered vehicles on our roads. There is no silver bullet for reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the transport sector—instead we need a structured and measured approach to this issue.*

*"The Australian Government's Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme will be the primary mechanism for reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions on an economy-wide basis. Reforms to address fuel efficiency will need to be complementary to the scheme to help reduce travel costs and carbon emissions for Australian motorists. Public comment closes on 7 November 2008. The discussion paper is available at: [www.environment.gov.au/settlements/transport](http://www.environment.gov.au/settlements/transport)"*  
**Ref: Federal Ministerial Media Release, 12/9/08**

## And Also...

*"They've set up electronic flashing 40 km/h signs on the road next to the school", says a local, 'a school that shut more than nine months ago'."*  
**Ref: The Age Diary, 12/9/08**

**Comment:** The school was La Trobe Secondary College, in Macleod, Melbourne. I understand the flashing 40 km/h signs cost around \$80,000 each.

## Public Transport in Sydney

*"Buses have quietly plied their way around the leafy northern suburbs of Sydney without too much trouble for the past two decades. But that is set to change drastically if petrol prices continue to rise, according to an alarming new report by the University of Sydney. In a worst-case scenario, where the price of petrol soars by \$1 per litre each year to 2017, the number of people trying to climb aboard a Forest Coach Lines bus between St Ives and the city would climb 1600 per cent.*

*"Instead of carrying about 1500 commuters in the morning peak each day, the buses would have to transport more than 24,000 - an almost impossible task. While Forest currently has 70 buses in service, it would need 480 vehicles for this route alone. Even a more modest 25-cent-a-litre annual increase would see the number of commuters leap to more than 8600.*

*"A rail or metro line is the only realistic way of transporting this many passengers. There are huge tracts of Sydney that have vastly inadequate public transport and could suffer even worse consequences. The report focuses on routes serviced by Forest, but its implications are dire for a city dependent on private vehicles. 'These kind of patronage figures are a problem because I don't believe we have a long-term strategy for meeting this demand', said Forest Coach Lines' chief executive, David Royle. 'If fuel goes up that significantly and the transport system can't take up that demand, the ultimate result will probably be the economy will suffer and it will affect people's spending'. Demand on every Forest service has soared over recent years. Mature, 20-year-old routes are growing 10 per cent a year, and Mr Royle says this will continue.*

*"But these increases could be just the start of a new wave of demand for public transport. The report's predicted figures, prepared by David Hensher and Zheng Li at the Institute of Transport and Logistics Studies, present a doomsday-like scenario of complete social upheaval across large swathes of Sydney. But they are not outlandish predictions. The CSIRO released a report in June that predicted wild increases in the price of petrol, up to \$8 per litre by 2018. 'The increase of \$0.25 per annum would stimulate demand for bus transport by 12.1 per cent within Hornsby-Ku-ring-gai, and by 11.2 per cent within the northern beaches in 2009 [estimating petrol at \$1.85]', the report says. 'Bus patronage between those zones (or inter-zone) would have a larger growth of 25.3*

*per cent. If the \$0.25 increase continued until 2017, there would be a substantial growth (ie. 573.8 per cent) in the inter-zone bus patronage'.*

*"The report found that by 2013, if petrol prices increased by 50 cents a year, then demand would swell more than 1425 per cent along routes between the northern beaches and Ku-ring-gai. 'The implication ... for bus use is quite clear. While the opportunity to grow patronage is encouraging, the ability to do so, given current capacity constraints, is very worrying', the report says. Mr Royle said the State Government needed a long-term strategy to cope with the challenges confronting the transport industry. 'We need more priority for buses and we need a strategy put in place that says if the current growth continues on this corridor at this rate we will get to a point where buses are not a solution and then heavy rail or metro rail becomes a solution'."*

**Ref: Linton Besser, SMH, 15/9/08**

## Light Rail

*"Once again NSW's public transport system has been left behind, with the Queensland Government welcoming a recommendation that light rail be the preferred mode for the Gold Coast Rapid Transit (GCRT) project. This follows similar major public transport upgrades in Perth and Adelaide. The Queensland Government report found that light rail would result in the more efficient use of road space and fuel; would create 10 times less emissions than single occupancy private cars; offer passengers a congestion free ride, by-passing traffic gridlock and accidents; operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with services every 7-8 minutes; boost public transport use on the Gold Coast from 4% to 10% by 2026; and reduce the number of private vehicle trips by up to 10%. The new light rail system would result in a high quality, frequent and reliable rapid transit system which will offer a real choice to car travel and underpin the development of a fully integrated public transport system for the Gold Coast.*

*"Since 2004, we [in NSW] have done the necessary studies (ignored by the State Labor Government) and know that light rail is a viable alternative to buses in the CBD and an important solution for major, congested transit corridors. We've identified essential and urgent need for a city light rail loop and five other high volume routes [in inner Sydney] ... An extended light rail network will provide a safe, accessible, sustainable transport option for residents, workers and visitors to inner Sydney."* **Ref: Clover Moore, Lord Mayor of Sydney and Independent MP for Sydney, Clover's eNews 5/9/08**

## Railway Station Improvements

### ↵ Flinders Street Station, (Melbourne)

"A new Customer Information Centre is now open on the concourse at Flinders Street Station. Over 100,000 people use Flinders Street Station each day, and with trains running from before 6am until after 1am, it is always a hub of activity for commuters. Staff at the information centre will assist customers with train travel and service information including platform information, updates on service changes, and zone and ticket information." **Ref: DoT Email, 9/9/08**

### ↵ St Pancras International Station (UK)

"Thanks to the recent refurbishment of St Pancras, hanging out at railway stations is no longer considered an activity of last resort.

Opened in 1868, the station has successfully turned itself into a destination in its own right."

**Ref:**  
**Rob Dunlop,**  
**The Age 6/9/08**

### ↵ China

"In China, you can watch sports in the subway."

**Ref:**  
**Steve Hyman,**  
**Bottleneck**  
**Blog, Los**  
**Angeles Times,**  
**19/8/08**



## Park and Ride and Pay

"The [NSW] State Government is moving to charge fees for cars parked at railway stations, overturning its long-standing 'park and ride' policy to get more people on public transport and off crowded roads. Commuters already face a steep rise in train and bus fares but could soon be paying for parking that until now has been free. The Rees Government will receive a report from consultants within weeks on how to tap private investor funds to build and operate car parks at railway stations across the city. The Government is planning to spend \$45 million to provide an extra 4000 parking places, according to data obtained from the Ministry of Transport. But amid the broader budgetary crisis, it will be under pressure to make commuters pay to use them." {See #55 & #59 on the nonsense of Park and Ride} **Ref: Brian Robins & Alex Tibbits, SMH, 10/9/08**

## Business Supports PT in NSW

"Business is urging the NSW Government not to abandon Sydney's North West Metro rail project, after Premier Nathan Rees said he was backing away from it. 'It's too early for me to commit one way or the other to that project', Mr Rees told Fairfax Radio Network today. "I am pulling back from it'. But the Sydney Chamber of Commerce has urged the Government to push ahead with the project. 'No one has ever claimed that a sustainable transport network is cheap, but we must invest to reap the rewards', chamber executive director Patricia Forsythe said in a statement. 'I would urge the NSW Government not to get spooked and push ahead with this important strategic project'.

"North-western Sydney would be accommodating much of Sydney's growth, but there were large areas with no rail network and few other public transport options, she said. Following Mr Rees's admission that private sector participation in the North West Metro had not been fully explored, Ms Forsythe urged him to investigate all possibilities. 'There are all sorts of opportunities for commercial engagement in the project, which could potentially limit the impact on the taxpayer', she said."

**Ref: SMH, 9/9/08**

## Sustainable Cities Recognised

"A world study evaluated cities on their efforts to improve sustainability including public transport, local economy, environment, health, education, recreation and living standards. Melbourne rated sixth on the top 10 list of sustainable cities and Sydney was nowhere to be seen. The list by the influential New York-based Ethisphere Institute is likely to influence where international corporations choose to base themselves and future investment. Ethisphere encourages ethics in business and its magazine is sent to 65,000 business leaders around the world.

"It praised Melbourne for its plans to cut the number of cars in the city, impose a speed limit of 30 kmh, have only 10 per cent of workers commute to the city, build bike paths, introduce a city bicycle rental system, introduce massive energy saving measures, build more affordable housing and increase public transport. The city also plans to operate public transport 24 hours a day and encourage late-night entertainment. The study rated Melbourne as a world city of the future along with New York, Toronto, Frankfurt, Singapore, Cape Town, Abu Dhabi, Hyderabad, London and Curitiba in Brazil."

**Ref: Frank Walker, SMH, 14/9/08**

## More Feedback on Lighter Cars

*"I don't wish to denigrate the idea of lighter cars, but high-tech materials are almost a cosmetic way of addressing the problems of car overuse, abuse and misuse that generate most of the environmental impacts of car usage. That said I am horrified at the considerable rises in vehicle mass in recent years. The modern 'equivalents' of all three small cars I used to drive (Fiat 500, Suzuki Swift and Mini-Minor) are each fully twice as heavy as the older ones. This is despite their using modern, lighter construction methods. A lot of the mass is in needlessly-bigger engines, power windows, power steering, power brakes, powerful sound systems and other luxury equipment.*

*"The 4WDs are even worse with the Toyota Land Cruiser, Land Rover and Nissan Patrol each having grown from 2.2 to 2.5 and now 2.7 tonnes over the past two major model changes. Engines have become a great deal more efficient, so the rise in energy usage has not been proportional.*

*"However, a major factor in energy usage is how drivers drive. Not only in getting more kilometres from each litre, but also in reducing wear on tyres and other components, and reducing the risk or energy-intensive crash repairs. A key factor in how a car is driven is not so much the roguery of the driver but the rather intangible 'feel' of the car. Too many cars are tuned to feel best at speeds higher than is socially proper, both in a straight line and around corners. Only some cars are easy to drive gently while many others excite you to want to drive them harder. ...*

*"That doesn't mean that cars should be built like Australian 'family' cars of the 1950s and 1960s. With them another problem inhibited good driving. Their controls were so vague that driving accurately and well was unreasonably difficult and did not feel any better than driving sloppily.*

*Because this 'feel' is so intangible, it is very difficult to regulate. There are some quantitative measures that could be indicative, such as torque rise of the engine, but they would not be easy to stipulate. ...*

*"Cars for road use should not feel 'sporty'. Cars do need to feel somewhat 'responsive' so that they encourage accurate driving, but that response should be tempered to reduce the urge to push the car too hard. We need to change attitudes of drivers to an appreciation that they are moving in a social space, not a competitive*

*one, nor an exclusive car zone. ... Lightweight materials start to look like a trivial detail, particularly if they are not as repairable or recyclable, or need lots more energy to make them. Steel looks pretty good compared to composites, aluminium and magnesium in these regards. We do need to count crash-repair costs into energy usage of cars.*

*"Also, if cars are made more expensive with high-tech materials, I suspect that they will be used for more travel, 'to make the purchase worthwhile'. Likewise, 'efficient' cars may perhaps be used for more and longer journeys because each kilometre costs less. How people drive, how they aggregate trips, how they make their short trips and other areas of usage seem to me to challenge the importance accorded to 'better' automotive technologies." Ref: John Harland, 15/9/08*

## Any Suggestions?

*"I thought you might be interested in a challenge for your readers (a bit of a micro issue, but you'd have the right audience). A common issue I have riding to work as an office worker is how to transport shirts that have been ironed. It would be cool if someone came up with a module that went into a bike pannier bag that kept the shirt in a pressed condition. I find the shirt always gets*

*slightly crushed after folding and carefully placing in my pannier. I have heard of others that drive to work one day a week to transport the pressed clothes, then ride the remainder, but it would be great to have a product that kept things crisp and eliminated that extra car trip."*

**Ref: Nathan 8/9/08**



## And Also ...

*"When I look every day, the big oil company's building is right out there next to me, and it's quite a reminder that we should have mutually beneficial relationships with the oil industry."*

*"I beg to disagree with any candidate who would say we can't drill our way out of our problem or that more supply won't ultimately affect prices. Of course it will affect prices."*

*"Alternative-energy solutions are far from imminent and would require more than 10 years to develop."*

**Ref: Quotes from US Vice-Presidential Candidate Sarah Palin, Gristmill, 29/8/08**

<http://gristmill.grist.org/story/2008/8/29/83614/5859?source=rss>

**Comment:** 10 years to develop? What have I been selling for the last 30?