

RACV Demands

"The RACV has demanded that the Brumby Government double the money it pours into road building in outer Melbourne. Calling for \$3.2 billion to be pumped into 85 new road projects over the next five years ... [presumably in a build-more-roads – attract-more-cars – create more-congestion - build-more-roads strategy, however the powerful automobile lobby group has also recognised that:] 'Many of Melbourne's newly developing suburbs are public transport black holes with little prospect of significant improvements in the near future'.

"On top of \$3 billion in road projects, the RACV called for:

- *Underpasses or overpasses to be built at five level crossings in Melbourne each year.*
- *A 'missing link' tollway from Greensborough to Ringwood ...*
- *Rod Eddington's proposed \$9 billion east-west road tunnel. ...*

"The RACV also called for a new railway line to Mernda, near Whittlesea, electrification and duplication of the line to Sunshine and new stations at Melton and Point Cook. It called on the Government to bring forward its new SmartBus orbital bus program, not due to be completed until 2012. ... But Public Transport Users Association president Daniel Bowen said ... 'Exactly what Melbourne doesn't need right now is more roads', ... 'As a city we need to make a choice: do we keep building roads like we have been doing for the last 50 years – which has just resulted in worsening traffic congestion and more reliance on petrol – or do we invest heavily in transport that provides real solutions?'"

Ref: Clay Lucas, The Age, 10/9/08

And Also...

A Velocity train from Ballarat in regional Victoria tried to emulate its city cousins with its own version of a pantograph. Railway staff had to secure the errant flap of metal to stop it becoming entangled in the overhead electrical lines.

Photo:
Liam
Shellard
18/9/08



Good News for Regional Victoria

"Tourists and residents of Victoria's mountain country will be linked with an innovative new bus service connecting Bairnsdale to Wangaratta following an \$11,500 Brumby Government grant. Public Transport Minister Lynne Kosky said the new bus service would start in late October and run through until May 2009 and will operate on Mondays and Fridays. 'The Alps Bus Link service will be an iconic, regional and strategic public transport route and link the regional towns of Wangaratta, Bright, Omeo and Bairnsdale along the Great Alpine Road [she said.] Importantly, it will also link local Alpine shire communities that are currently not connected to any public transport service, such as Dinner Plain, Harrietville, Freeburgh and the Alpine resort of Mt Hotham.' ... The service will connect the local residents ... to a wider range of work, education, training, shopping and recreational opportunities as well as medical and business services."

Ref: Victorian Ministerial Media Release 2/9/08

"Bendigo bus users will have free travel on all Bendigo Transit bus services on Mondays in September. Public Transport Minister Lynne Kosky said the free travel days were provided to allow people who never or seldom used buses to familiarise themselves with the network and discover the benefits of bus travel. ... Member for Bendigo East Jacinta Allan said the four free travel days were a way of rewarding the people that already use bus services, as well as encouraging others to leave their cars at home and try the bus. ... 'Earlier this year the Victorian Government delivered almost 700 new bus services for Bendigo, increasing the number of services by a massive 30 per cent', [Member for Bendigo West Bob] Cameron said. 'It was the biggest bus service improvement in Greater Bendigo in over 15 years and since the new timetable was introduced, patronage on Bendigo buses has increased by 26 per cent. The increased patronage is a terrific result and shows the improved services have been well received by the Bendigo community'. Ms Allan said a new ultra low-floor, environmentally friendly bus is now being used on some services. 'This bus will be the first of its kind for regional Victoria and features a Euro 5 engine which reduces vehicles emissions, in turn reducing its impact on the environment', Ms Allan said. 'The low floor design will significantly improve access, particularly for passengers with disabilities, as well as those with prams or luggage'."

Ref: Victorian Ministerial Media Release 2/9/08

Airline Efficiency Improvements

"Qantas takes delivery of its first Airbus A380 superjumbo this week as it looks forward to building a fleet of fuel efficient aircraft to combat an environment of high fuel costs. ... 'The A380 will deliver up to 10 percent improvement in fuel efficiency and carbon emissions per revenue tonne kilometre than today's largest jets', Qantas said. The superjumbo uses around 2.9 litres of fuel per 100 passenger kilometres compared with the aviation industry average of about five litres per 100 passenger kilometres. The figure is based on having about 470 passengers aboard the aircraft and it falls even further when the giant is packed to the rafters."

Ref: SMH, 17/9/08

"Air New Zealand is to fit winglets to its Boeing 767-300ER planes to cut fuel consumption and reduce carbon dioxide emissions, the airline said on Tuesday. The airline said it expected the modifications would save more than NZ\$7.5 million (A\$6.2 million) in fuel costs and cut CO2 emissions by around 16,000 tonnes a year. The winglets, developed by Aviation Partners Boeing, are 3.4 metre (11 feet) high wing-tip devices, and reduce the drag near the wing tip, which means the aircraft uses less fuel, and can climb faster. 'As a result of this initiative we expect to reduce the fuel consumption across our 767 fleet by around 1.6 million barrels annually', said General Manager Airline Operations David Morgan."

Ref: Brisbane Times, 17/9/08

Airport Rage

"The [Australian Services] union has been campaigning for several years on the risks posed by airport rage. After a 2004 survey found 96 per cent of airline staff had experienced airport rage and 33 per cent experienced it daily, the union successfully campaigned for the introduction of a specific offence - interfering with security - which targets abusive travellers."

Ref: Ute Junker, The Age 6/9/08



'You want Economy or First Class rage?'

And Also ... (Aviation 101)

"Try to keep the number of your landings equal to the number of your takeoffs."

Ref: www.jokefile.co.uk/numerical_order/1087.html

Park(ing) Day



"It's a car park and when you put the money in the meter it's essentially taking out a short-term lease on a space and you can do what you want with it," said 29-year-old Alicia Hooper [Melbourne]. ... Since International Parking Day began in San Francisco in 2005, people have filled their car parks with beds, aquariums, putting greens and anything people can play with. Ref: Hamish Townsend, The Age, 19/9/08, Photo: Craig Abraham

"Brisbane's first Park(ing) Day will feature 47 parking spaces, joining hundreds of others across the globe, from New York to Rio De Janeiro. PedBikeTrans president Robyn Davies said Little Stanley Street will be dotted with Park(ing) spaces, and will feature street furniture and some more unusual aspects."

Ref: Andrew Wight, Brisbane Times, 19/9/08

More on the CBD Bus Accident

"Unfortunately, this was an accident waiting to happen. It is ridiculous that Swanston St should be closed to car traffic but that these enormous coaches should be allowed to clog up the street during its busiest period. When the coaches are parked, cyclists are forced ride within a hairs breath of the coaches or cross into the path of the trams. In the wet (when tram tracks are very slippery for cyclists) this problem is even worse. The coaches should be removed."

Ref: Reader's Comment, The Age, 18/9/08

"Stung by criticism he failed to protect cyclists from the thousands of tour buses that choke one of the city's main thoroughfares, an emotional [Melbourne] Lord Mayor John So last night banned buses from Swanston Street after a young woman riding to work was killed. ... Melbourne City Council last year considered forcing tour buses from Swanston Street to a purpose-built terminal at Federation Square. But the council buckled under pressure from tour operators - which pick up 320,000 customers a year on Swanston Street from nearby hotels."

Ref: Clay Lucas, The Age, 19/9/08

Car Free Day

“Every September 22, people from around the world get together in the streets, intersections, and neighbourhood blocks to remind the world that we don't have to accept our car-dominated society.” **Ref & Image: World Car free Day 2008** <http://www.worldcarfree.net/wcfd/>

“In the Belgian capital of Brussels, the city's central region will be closed to motorised transport all day. In Washington, 10,000 people have pledged to leave their cars at home. But in Brisbane the 24 hours will go virtually unnoticed. Over the same period, more than 80 per cent of all the trips made in the city will be in a private motor vehicle - a statistic that places Brisbane as one of the most car-dependent cities in the world outside the US. But how has the city managed to navigate itself down this congested cul-de-sac of car reliance?”

“Dr Jago Dodson, a transport expert at Griffith University's Urban Research Program, says it is down to ‘accumulative and consistent decisions’ that put the automobile at the top of the transport pile. ‘That's why Brisbane is the way it is’, he says. ‘The State Government thought they could enable cheap and affordable housing to occur without providing the infrastructure that there is in some European cities. It became possible to just build suburbs without public transport, on the assumption households would provide their own transport - that idea has prevailed since the '50s. But now, the cost of private transport is rising and a lot of people feel those costs are just too much to bear’.

“In contrast, says Dodson, many European cities such as Zurich, Amsterdam, Copenhagen and Munich, decided to put the brakes on car use in the '70s. ‘Most of those cities with relatively low levels of car dependency made some deliberate decisions to develop an urban pattern that didn't mean people had to depend on the motor car as a means of transport. They planned so that people could get around and do the things they wanted to do without needing a car. At the same time they made it harder to use a car than it was to use public transport or bicycle’.

“Dodson believes, whether we like it or not, Brisbane will have to make moves away from the motor vehicle sooner, rather than later. ‘I think we are heading towards a situation where car use will be restricted in the centre of Brisbane’, he says.”

Ref: Graham Readfern, Courier Mail, 22/9/08

Car Reduction Strategies

“Owning a car could soon be much harder for those planning to live in the CBD with Melbourne City Council set to approve a range of measures to discourage driving. Recommendations include ... limiting on-street metered spaces to a maximum of two hours [and] new residential developments to one car park space for every two units. The proposals are part of a Planning Committee Report into city parking and will be presented to the council [today]. The report notes the council's strategy is to ‘progressively reduce unnecessary car traffic (and the associated demand for car parking)’ and calls on it to ‘continue to promote and advertise public transport, walking and cycling as the primary and preferred means of travel to and from the City of Melbourne’. Residential developments are currently allowed one space per unit. But the report says, ‘with many new



residential buildings applying for less than one space per dwelling, the trend with residential developments in the CBD has been for the amount of car parking as part of the development to be reduced’. ... It says reducing car spaces could make city units more affordable. ‘It could result in lower costs for apartments in that owners and tenants would only pay for the parking spaces they need

and the cost of constructing the spaces would be borne by those choosing to build them’.”

Ref: Jason Dowling, The Age 24/9/08

Good Planning

“Today's Herald Sun reports that Bernard Salt using 2006 census data and a panel of celebrities has judged Bentleigh East as Melbourne's most liveable suburb. The paper's editorial explains that the rating was based on factors including safety, affordability, public transport access and social diversity, and it goes on to encourage the legacy of Melbourne's Liveability to be continued.”

Ref: PIA Bulletin #262, 19/9/08

Comment: Now why can't our new suburbs have all that?

Feedback on ‘Crisp Shirts’

“Some years ago the Australian Department of Environment solved the problem of cyclists' shirts being creased in transit, by installing an iron and ironing board in the change rooms. You take your shirt straight from the clothes line, stuff it roughly into your saddlebag, and iron it freshly after you arrive at work.” **Thanks to Leon Arundell, Ride to Work Manager, Pedal Power ACT Inc, for this suggestion, 26/9/08**

Transit Mode Race

A fun transit mode race (between walking, cycling, tram, train, fleet car and taxi) was held on Wednesday September 24 from Sustainability Victoria (SV) in Lonsdale Street in the CBD to Going Solar (GS) in Leicester Street, South Carlton – on the edge of the CBD – and back again. Just over 2 km in total 'as the crow flies'.

To make the race more interesting a weighting was given to each mode:

- Walking 2 (Healthy and no cost)
- Cycling 1 (Healthy but equipment cost)
- Tram/Train/Bus -1 (Transit cost and GHG)
- Taxi/Carshare -2 (Higher transit cost & GHG)
- Car -3 (Capital/Transit cost & GHG)

Cars and bikes had to be locked in their normal places at the start time, locked or parked (parking meters paid) outside the GS building, and returned to their normal places at the end of the trip. The taxi had to wait for 5 minutes at GS or another cab called. The race started and ended inside the SV office. Contestants had to arrive at GS in a presentable state, with a business card for a meeting. Points were to be deducted for receiving a speeding, parking, or other fine & added for finishing in the top three.

At Going Solar the contestants had to wait five minutes and discuss the ramifications of their trip:

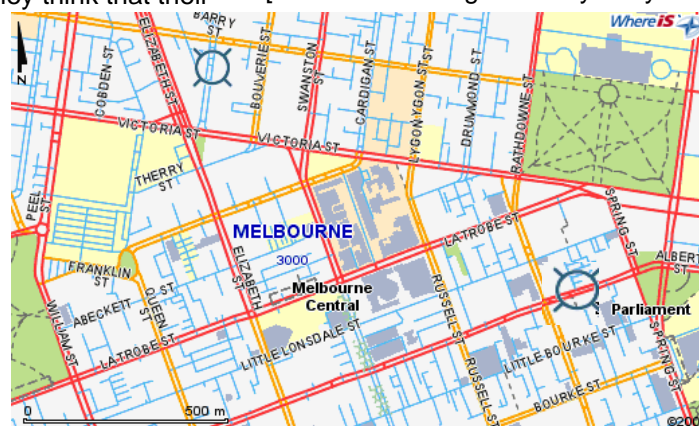
1. What greenhouse gases did they think their trip produced?
2. What loss of amenity did they think that their mode of transport has caused to others?
3. What did they think were the ramifications and costs of any requirements for parking (vehicles/bikes) or keeping taxis waiting?

These questions were not meant to be a test but rather just to get people thinking about the ramifications of their chosen travel mode.

What do we learn from this exercise?

- ⊙ The cyclist easily won, both in time and on points. He found a bike rack outside GS.
- ⊙ The walker was only ten minutes behind.
- ⊙ The fleet car driver used a hybrid vehicle and noted that just after he pulled up at GS the parking inspectors arrived. He put money in the meter. Had the nearby Victoria Market been in operation, parking and traffic would have been more congested.
- ⊙ The taxi was on LP gas. It was kept waiting for five minutes outside GS. Was the engine on?
- ⊙ Neither the car driver nor the taxi passenger seemed to be aware of the ramifications of the motor vehicle on the amenity of others (ie road space, pollution, noise, hard surfaces, etc)
- ⊙ The train passenger did well given that she had to walk about ten minutes to and from Melbourne Central Station. She had checked the timetable beforehand to make sure of which platform she needed to make the return journey.
- ⊙ The tram passenger's journey demonstrates the difficulty in moving around parts of the CBD by tram in spite of tram lines quite close to SV (Latrobe and Bourke Streets) and GS (Swanston and Elizabeth Streets). Clearly the priority given to cars over trams at intersections needs to be addressed to speed up the trams.
- ⊙ Interestingly no one chose to travel by bus even though buses run along Lonsdale Street. For most Melbournians CBD buses are invisible.

[The race was organised by Kelly Wickham at SV].



Going Solar top centre and SV, centre right.

Map Ref: Where Is?

Name	Mode	Weight	Arrive GS	Arrive SV	Points	Penalties	Total
Jan	Bicycle	1	11:32	11:48	3 (1 st)		4
Jamie	Foot	2	11:42	11:58		-1	1
Monty	Taxi	-2	11:35	11:51	2 (2 nd)		0
Susan	Train	-1	11:39	12:05			-1
Anna	Tram	-1	11:43	12:05		-1	-2
Rodney	Car	-3	11:35	11:53	1 (3 rd)		-2

The penalties were deducted for failing to provide a business card