

JUNE 2007 EDITION

Global Warming, Peak Oil and Local Government

The MAV is hosting 'The Challenge of Global Warming and Peak Oil for Local Government' conference to identify a pathway for the sector into the future. It will be held from Tuesday 26 (afternoon) – Thursday 28 June at Telstra Dome. The conference is directed at the role of councils and will include speakers from Australia and overseas, best practice case studies from councils that are 'leading the way' and identification of national strategic directions for local government to address these challenges. For further information go to www.mav.asn.au/majorevents. Contact John Hennessy, 9667 5525, jhennessy@mav.asn.au

CES Position Paper Released

The Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability, Ian McPhail, has recently released his report on passenger transport and urbanisation. The report identifies key challenges of climate change, peak oil and car dependence. The Commissioner identified three key areas for attention - better use of rational pricing mechanisms such as parking charges and levies, vehicle stamp duty and registration, developer fees and charges, and local government rates; improved integration and coordination of land use planning and transport planning; and leadership from government building on *Meeting our Transport Challenges, Melbourne 2030* and *Linking Melbourne* strategies. The report states, "Creating a city that works is certainly possible. The drivers for change are understood, and more sustainable options for urbanisation and transport are known and available." The report is available at www.ces.vic.gov.au.

Graduated Licensing System

Important changes are being made to the way young people in Victoria obtain driver licences. These changes are part of Victoria's new Graduated Licensing System (GLS), first announced in June 2006. The new system is being introduced to help younger drivers be safer drivers. Each year 18 - 25 year olds are involved in crashes in which about 120 are killed and 2,300 seriously injured. This is about one-third of the Victorian road toll. Victoria's new graduated licensing system is being introduced in three stages over 18 months, January 2007, July 2007 and July 2008. It is expected the new system will reduce the number injured in crashes by up to 800 each year, including 12 fewer deaths. For further information, go to www.arrivealive.vic.gov.au.

Sustainable Transport Commitment

The Victorian Government has re-affirmed its commitment to developing a sustainable public transport network, signing on to the International Association of Public Transport's (UITP) Charter on Sustainable Development. The Minister for Public Transport, the Hon. Lynne Kosky, announced the Department of Infrastructure had become a pledge signatory today as part of World Environment Day celebrations. Private sector local organisations that have signed the Charter include Yarra Trams and Veolia Transport (Connex Melbourne's parent company). Association signatories include the Bus Association of Victoria. For further information on the UITP, go to www.uitp.org.

Rail Buyback and Freight Subsidy

On 7 May, the State Government announced that Pacific National had completed the handover of the network to V/Line, returning Victoria's regional rail network to public ownership. In addition, on 8 June, the Minister for Public Transport, Lynne Kosky announced the Bracks Government would subsidise about 60 per cent of the cost to maintain Victoria's regional rail freight network as part of the buy-back agreement to return the network to public hands. The Minister said the 60 per cent subsidy would operate under the new access charges that V/Line will register with the Essential Services Commission (ESC) today, which were agreed to by Pacific National as part of the buy-back agreement. Pacific National completed the handover of Victoria's regional rail network to V/Line last month, returning the network to public ownership. As part of the \$133.8 million buy-back, approximately 350 Pacific National staff members have now transferred to V/Line. For further information go to www.doi.vic.gov.au/freight.

National Transport Congress

Reminder - the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) National Local Roads and Transport Congress will be held from 8-10 July in Newcastle. Since its inception in March 2000, the congress has rapidly grown into the main annual local government transport forum, and is now a 'must attend' event for local government transport policy makers and professionals. Further information is available from www.alga.asn.au/policy/transport/congress.

Go to: www.mav.asn.au/transport

East West Transport Study

The submission period for the East-West Link Needs Assessment (Eddington Study) has closed although the study team have indicated they are happy to receive additional information throughout the study. All submissions are available at www.doi.vic.gov.au/eastwest. The MAV is currently negotiating further opportunities for local government to meet with the study team and Sir Rod Eddington. Contact Eleanor Williams, 9667 5533, ewilliams@mav.asn.au.

Transport Infrastructure Summit

Given Victoria's prosperity and population increase, the State's ongoing need to invest in all aspects of transport infrastructure, from public transport to freight infrastructure, has never been greater. The Victorian Transport Infrastructure Summit 2007 will assess the planning, funding and strategy necessary to "Meet the Transport Challenge". By attending this two-day event, you will have the opportunity to express your views and requirements on the Victorian transport infrastructure by meeting government decision makers and key industry leaders who will discuss the challenges and opportunities of the State's infrastructure demand. With a focus on the State's intermodal capacities, it will feature case studies of the latest rail, road, port and airport projects. It will also provide delegates with an overview of the impact of current legislation, investment trends and financial partnerships. The 33 speakers include the Hon Tim Pallas MP, Minister for Roads and ports, Victoria, the Hon. Lynne Kosky MP, Minister for Public Transport, Victoria, and Howard Ronaldson, Secretary, Department of Infrastructure, Victoria. For further information or to register, go to www.informa.com.au/victransport07, email registration@informa.com.au or phone 02 9080 4307.

Metropolitan Bus Reviews

Five metropolitan bus service reviews are being undertaken in 2007 as part of the commitments of *Meeting our Transport Challenges*. Local government plays a central role in providing input to these reviews along with public transport providers and the community. The 2007 reviews involve Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Moonee Valley, Banyule, Nillumbik, Frankston, Mornington Peninsula, Hume, Moreland and Whittlesea. All involved councils were contacted by the Department of Infrastructure to participate in the review process. A further 11 reviews will be undertaken by 2010. For further information, go to www.doi.vic.gov.au contact Eleanor Williams, 9667 5533, ewilliams@mav.asn.au.

Community-Based Transport Forums

Community-based transport is an important means of increasing access and mobility in rural and regional areas. Local government often plays a central role in facilitating and supporting community-based transport arrangements to ensure appropriate transport options for the community. The MAV, in partnership with the Department for Victorian Communities, Department of Infrastructure, VCOSS, and the Victorian Community Transport Association will be hosting a series of forums outlining key opportunities for local government to support community-based transport and highlighting successful community-based transport initiatives in the region. The forums will provide opportunities for councils to learn from existing experience and to understand funding and grant-based opportunities. Forums will be held in Camperdown (3/7), Warracknabeal (5/7), Traralgon (10/7) and Benalla (date to be confirmed). All regional and rural councils will receive invitations to these forums in the coming week. Contact Eleanor Williams, 9667 5533, ewilliams@mav.asn.au.

DDA Compliant Bus Stops Update

The Department of Infrastructure (DOI) and councils have been working hard to ensure bus stops are compliant with the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA). As of May 2007, tactile ground surface indicators (TGSi) had been installed at 700 bus stops. Councils have committed to installing TGSi at a further 1000 bus stops and a further 800 will be installed on arterial roads. There are currently 205 SmartBus stops that are DDA compliant. For further information contact your regional DOI representative or go to www.doi.vic.gov.au.

Disabled Parking

The MAV, in partnership with VicRoads and the Office for Disability, has engaged a consultant to undertake a project to further develop the principles and model for a revised disabled persons parking scheme in Victoria. This will build upon previous research which identified problems with the current scheme, including perceived abuse of the permit system, and inconsistency of application between municipalities. Further information will be provided to councils soon. Contact Eleanor Williams, 9667 5533, ewilliams@mav.asn.au.

Ride to Work Day

All CEOs and mayors are invited to be National Ride to Work Day (17/10) Ambassadors. For more information, or to register as an ambassador, visit www.ride2work.com.au.