

Transport Coalitions

On 1 March, the MAV hosted a meeting of transport groups and coalitions to discuss key achievements from 2006 and future directions for 2007 and beyond. Presentations were made by the MAV Transport and Infrastructure Advisory Group, the Metropolitan Transport Forum, the Eastern Transport Coalition, the Western Transport Alliance, and the Coalition for People's Transport. A number of common issues emerged for 2007 included the need for Federal Government funding for public transport infrastructure, a collective interest in the East-West Link Needs Assessment (Eddington) Study, and an interest in the management of freight issues. Presentations from this event will be available on the MAV website soon. Contact Eleanor Williams, 9667 5533, ewilliams@mav.asn.au

East West Transport Study

Premier Steve Bracks and international transport expert Sir Rob Eddington released the East-West Link Needs Assessment Study Overview this month. The overview outlines the terms of reference for the study which will examine the best solution to meeting the growing transport demand between Melbourne's eastern and western suburbs. Five million dollars was allocated in the *Meeting Our Transport Challenges* statement to the needs assessment. Consultation with stakeholders has commenced and will continue until May 2007. The MAV is currently negotiating briefing opportunities for the local government sector with the Department of Infrastructure. For more information on the study or the submission process go to www.doi.vic.gov.au/eastwest. Contact Eleanor Williams, 9667 5533, ewilliams@mav.asn.au.

National Local Roads and Transport Congress

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. The congress plays a central role in bringing local government together to help shape and define the case for better funding and management of the nation's local road network. It brings together over 400 elected council members, council officers responsible for roads and transport portfolios, state and federal government senior executives and transport industry representatives from across Australia to discuss essential information on a wide range of local roads issues, including policy, road use, maintenance and funding. Further information is available at www.alga.asn.au/policy/transport/congress.

Train Fare Reductions

A range of V-line train fares have been reduced from 4 March. In addition, on this date, Zone 3 on the metropolitan transport network was abolished and Melbourne's nightrider bus fares were reduced. As part of the changes to V/Line ticketing, uniform rules for off-peak and First-Class travel have been introduced across the state. Only services arriving in Melbourne before 9am and departing Melbourne between 4pm and 6pm on weekdays will now be classed peak. All tickets will now be based on standard economy fares with a \$3 First Class surcharge for travel less than 100km and \$6 for any trip more than 100km. This will result in significant savings for some passengers, particularly those on longer journeys. The reduction in V/Line fares is part of the Bracks Government's *Fare Go Package*. Further information on V/Line fares and timetables are available at www.vline.com.au.

Road Network Workshop

A Road Network Management Workshop will be hosted by the ARRB group from 20-21 March in Melbourne as part of its Knowledge Transfer Workshop Program. The workshop is based on the extensive research and consulting work undertaken by ARRB in recent years and the various studies and guides issued by Austroads. Some of the topics are: selecting and collecting the right data for your network management needs; road network management systems, getting the balance right; asset management and risk; and maintenance contract procurement. To register, contact the Knowledge Transfer team, 9881 1555, training@arrb.com.au. For further information go to www.arrb.com.au.

Road Safety Conference

The 2007 Australasian Road Safety Research, Policing and Education Conference will be held in from 17-19 October at Crown Promenade, Melbourne. Abstracts are being sought by the conference organisers until 18 May and registrations will open on 16 March. The conference is Australasia's premier annual road safety event, providing a key forum for the exchange of information about current and future road safety initiatives. It will bring together leading local and international road safety experts over three days of presentations, workshops and keynote addresses. With the theme *'The Way Ahead'*, the 2007 Australasian Road Safety Research, Policing and Education Conference will focus on the application of road safety research. Further information is available at www.roadsafetyconference2007.com.au

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

New VicRoads CEO

Gary Little has been appointed as the new Chief Executive Officer of VicRoads. He has over 35 years' experience in leadership and engineering positions at VicRoads. As CEO, he will focus on further improvements to road safety and efficiency, while reducing travel times, fuel usage and emissions. He has been the acting CEO of VicRoads for the past six months, following the retirement of David Anderson.

Melbourne 2030 Paper

The MAV has prepared an issues paper on the Melbourne 2030 review to ensure local government provides early input to the process. The paper has been circulated to some MAV advisory groups. Interested council officers are welcome to provide input. Once feedback and comments have been incorporated, the paper will go to the Department of Sustainability and Environment, the *Melbourne 2030* Implementation Reference Group and the Expert Advisory Committee (when established) to oversee the second stage of the review. Contact Lisel Thomas, 9667 5589, lthomas@mav.asn.au

Local Access Projects

On 12 January, the Minister for Public Transport announced the first group of projects to be funded through the Round One of the Local Area Access Program (LAAP). The LAAP provides grants for councils to deliver small scale projects in its municipalities in collaboration with the Department of Infrastructure and other relevant organisations. Funding has been provided for the program over four years, as part of *Meeting Our Transport Challenges*. It is anticipated that another group of projects funded in Round One will be announced over the next few months. The next funding round for LAAP and the related TravelSmart program is expected to commence mid-2007. Further information is available at www.doi.vic.gov.au.

Sustainable Cities Proposal

Going Solar has developed a proposal for the establishment of a Sustainable Cities Authority (SCA) which would be a joint State/Federal taskforce. The proposed SCA would ultimately have offices based in every state and territory and would work with a number of key existing departments in each region including transport, tourism, infrastructure, planning, environment, sustainability, health and regional development. A talk on the proposal will be held at the Manningham Civic Offices on Thursday 29 March at 6.15pm. To RSVP, call Kay Toussaint on 9840 9348. The full proposal is available at <http://goingsolar.com.au> or by emailing Stephen Ingrouille, steve@goingsolar.com.au.

Position Paper Launch

The Victorian Commissioner for Environmental Sustainability, Dr Ian McPhail, will launch his new position paper *Creating a City that Works* on Wednesday 21 March, 2.30pm at Spring St Conference Centre Theatre, 1 Spring St, Melbourne. Dr McPhail will be joined for a panel discussion by Professor Peter Newman, Jim Betts and Marcus Spiller. They will share ideas on the future of effective transport and sustainable communities for Melbourne, and will welcome audience participation and feedback. For further information and to confirm your attendance please contact Bea Williams, 9637 8173, bea.williams@ces.vic.gov.au.

Transport Connections

Applications are now closed for this round of the Victorian Transport Connections grant program, which provides funding for practical solutions to improve existing transport services. Transport Connections will allocate \$14.15 million to approximately 30 projects in rural and regional Victoria and metropolitan interface areas. Grants will average \$120,000 per annum, depending on the size of catchment area and community needs. Funding is available until June 2010. Councils will be advised of the outcomes of their applications in mid-April. Contact transport.connections@dvc.vic.gov.au.

Transport and Planning

The Director of Public Transport (DPT) is now a referral authority under the Planning and Environment Act for major residential, retail, commercial, office and industrial developments. Now, Responsible Authorities (generally councils) must refer nominated applications to the DPT to help integrate land use and transport planning. Information on the DPT's new role and which planning matters require referral are available at www.doi.vic.gov.au. For further information go to the Department of Infrastructure's website or call the Public Transport Division on 9095 4106.

Railway Station Safety

Passengers on Melbourne's metropolitan train network will soon feel safer with a \$4 million injection from the Bracks Government to improve security lighting at stations across the system. The money, funded partly through fines paid by Connex, will be used to upgrade weak yellow-lighting with bright white lighting at 57 train stations. The Victorian Government, in partnership with Connex, undertook a six-month trial of white lighting at several railway stations in 2004. The positive response that resulted from this trial led to the development of a more widespread program. For a full list of the train stations affected contact Eleanor Williams, 9667 5533, ewilliams@mav.asn.au.