

State Government's Outlook

Premier Brumby opened Parliament on 5 February with the 'Annual Statement of Government Intentions'. Key items on the Transport agenda for 2008 include:

- **Meeting Our Transport Challenges (MOTC):** Continuation of projects identified as part of MOTC. Initial steps included orders for new metropolitan and V/Line trains and revised timetables with new services. Also, measures to address traffic congestion including new road duplication projects and better management of inner city roads, with a view to improving traffic flows and tram and bus travel times.
- **Legislative Review:** As noted in the Transport Bulletin in December 2007, a policy review of the overarching provisions of transport legislation is currently taking place. The main elements of the new Bill include establishing a new purpose, set of objectives and decision-making principles for transport legislation in Victoria.
- **Major Projects:** The Government intends to develop new project facilitation legislation to provide a streamlined regime to facilitate the delivery of critical road and rail infrastructure projects. A Discussion Paper will be released in mid-2008 setting out the issues and options for better coordination of approvals for large projects.
- **Road Safety:** A new package of measures will be taken as part of *Arrive Alive 2*, to achieve new targets to reduce the road toll over the next 10 years.
- **Bus Safety Bill:** Road safety will be assisted by the proposed *Bus Safety Bill*, which will establish a stronger, more flexible regulatory framework to build on the current safety record (Victoria's road toll decreased from 444 in 2001 to 332 in 2007). The new bus safety regime will have performance-based safety duties allocated on a 'chain of responsibility' within industry.
- **Rail Access:** Following the Government's buy-back of the regional below-rail network, rail access legislation is being reviewed. The proposed *Rail Corporations Amendment (Rail Access) Bill* will consider the relevant recommendations arising from the Rail Freight Network Review (as detailed in December's Transport Bulletin) and take into account the access provider ceasing to be a vertically integrated private rail freight operator.
- **Rail Safety:** The Council of Australian Governments agreed that all states would implement the model rail safety package agreed by the Australian Transport Council. The *Transport Legislation (Miscellaneous Amendments) Bill* will complete implementation of this commitment.

Bike Ban on Peak-Hour Trains

On 6 February, MAV met with Minister Kosky and approximately 15 other representatives from bicycle and public transport user groups regarding the banning of bicycles on metropolitan and V/Line trains during peak hours. The meeting considered the level of consultation about the design and delivery of the policy and options to reduce congestion on public transport. The MAV understands the bike ban will soon be lifted indefinitely (the ban is not currently being enforced), along with the announcement of a suite of practical and achievable longer-term solutions in light of the policy shift.

Review of School Crossing Supervisors' Program

The MAV/VicRoads Liaison Group is undertaking a review of the school crossing supervisors' program. The review will not consider a downgrade of the service as reported by some media outlets recently, but rather will seek to examine the service including interstate and overseas models to improve the effectiveness of the program, enhance safety and get the delivery model right. Key drivers for the review are to ensure more effective policy development and coordination, a safe working environment for supervisors and that ongoing funding arrangements and workforce retention issues are addressed. A report is expected to be provided to the group in the coming months, with recommendations to be finalised and presented to the State for consideration. Contact John Hennessy, 9667 5525, jhennessy@mav.asn.au

New Public Transport Ombudsman

On 11 February, Minister for Public Transport, Lynne Kosky, announced the appointment of Simon Cohen, an experienced lawyer and complaint resolution specialist, as Public Transport Ombudsman for Victoria. The Public Transport Ombudsman scheme is aimed at resolving complaints and disputes about public transport services in Victoria through a fair, reasonable and independent resolution process. It is a free, confidential and impartial scheme that deals with complaints about Victorian public transport that members of the community have been unable to resolve directly with the public transport operators. Simon Cohen succeeds the inaugural Public Transport Ombudsman, James Hartnett.

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

Community Road Safety Grants

The Transport Accident Commission (TAC) is offering community groups in Victoria the opportunity to apply for funding for road safety projects under the Community Road Safety Grants Program. The program aims to encourage community involvement in local road safety programs that are consistent with Victoria's Road Safety Strategy, *Arrive Alive* and provides opportunities for local community groups to develop and implement effective road safety projects targeting specific local road safety issues. A total of \$4 million will be committed during two funding rounds per financial year over a four-year period. The first round of funding closes on 14 March and the second round closes on 2 May. The TAC will consider applications for funding of up to \$20,000. To be eligible, community groups must be not-for-profit and will need to identify the road safety issue in their community and identify a potential solution. The TAC is more likely to fund applications that share the *Arrive Alive* strategic focus. Further information is available at www.tac.vic.gov.au or Liz Knight, Community Road Safety Grants Officer, 9664 6954, elizabeth.knight@tac.vic.gov.au. Skye Holcombe is representing the MAV on the Community Grants Reference Group. Skye can be contacted on 9667 5533, sholcombe@mav.asn.au.

Innovation Sharing Among Councils

As a relatively new MAV employee, I am particularly keen to hear of, and promote, innovative and interesting local government happenings in the transport field and encourage readers of this Bulletin to forward all intelligence my way. The sharing of ideas and expertise could also be of use to your colleagues in a far or neighbouring municipality. Give me a call or send an email. Skye Holcombe, 9667 5533, sholcombe@mav.asn.au

Sustainable Transport Forum

As part of the 2008 Sustainable Living Festival, a range of sustainable transport organisations will present their visions on where Victoria could be in 2010. This free event will be held on Sunday 17 February from 10.00am at BMW Edge, Federation Square. Representatives from the Department of Infrastructure, Environment Victoria, Architects for Peace, Metropolitan Transport Forum, Tourism and Transport Forum, Planning Institute of Australia, Blind Citizens Australia and Public Transport Users Association will address guests. For more information, go to www.slf.org.au/festival/program/talks/1361.

Comments Sought

• Review of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport

The Allen Consulting Group is undertaking the 2007 review of disability standards for public transport in Victoria and has released a draft review report for stakeholder comment. The standards provide transport operators and providers certainty about their obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. Part 34 of the Transport Standards requires the Commonwealth Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, and the Attorney-General, to review the efficiency and effectiveness of the Transport Standards every five years. The MAV, in consultation with local government, will provide a submission and invite interested parties to forward all comments to Nicola Wood, nwood@mav.asn.au or Skye Holcombe, sholcombe@mav.asn.au by 3 March. For a copy of the report, go to <http://www.ddatransportreview.com.au/?x=report>.

• 40 KM/H Speed Zones

One of the conclusions from the *Review of Victorian Speed Limits* conducted by the Speed Limits Advisory Group (SLAG) in 2005 was speed limits appeared too low at some locations in urban areas (mostly associated with permanent 40km/h school speed limits). Accordingly, SLAG recommended guidelines be developed for appropriate linemarking and/or changes to infrastructure to be used in conjunction with permanent 40 km/h speed zones. A draft guide has been prepared and comments are now sought. Advice on the location and types of treatments shown in the Guide which have been successfully implemented in your municipality would be appreciated so the lists of examples in the Guide can be expanded. Photographs of typical treatments are also acceptable. For a copy of the Guide, contact Skye Holcombe, 9667 5533, sholcombe@mav.asn.au. Comments must be submitted by 29 February.

MAV Committee Involvement

MAV participates in the following committees and welcomes issues to be raised at these meetings.

- Transport and Infrastructure Advisory Group
- MAV/Department of Infrastructure Liaison
- MAV/VicRoads Liaison
- Ride2School Committee
- Speed Limits Advisory Group (run by VicRoads)
- Victorian Railway Crossing Safety Steering Committee (run by Department of Infrastructure)
- Intelligent Freight Transport Systems Partner Reference Group (government and industry group).