

## Rail Freight Network Review

The Victorian Government has commissioned a Rail Freight Network Review taskforce to conduct a comprehensive review of Victoria's rail freight network and identify opportunities for future development and improvement led by the Hon. Tim Fischer AC. The review will include extensive consultations with key stakeholders and those with first hand knowledge of the industry. Submissions to the review have now closed but a series of regional consultation meetings are planned for Wodonga City Council Offices (14/9); Alfred Deakin Centre, Mildura (27/9); Glenelg Shire Council Offices, Portland (3/10); Central Goldfields Shire Council Chambers, Maryborough (16/10); Horsham Rural City Council (17/10); and Eastbank Centre, Shepparton (24/10). Bookings are essential by telephone 9655 6030 or email [rfnr@doi.vic.gov.au](mailto:rfnr@doi.vic.gov.au).

## New Licensing for Motorcycles

The State Government has announced a new Learner Approved Motorcycle Scheme (LAMS) for Learner and Probationary motorcyclists in Victoria. The new licensing scheme is designed to encourage national uniformity and modernise the current regulations that restrict new and learner motorcyclists to an engine capacity 260cc. This will allow new and learner motorcyclists to access a greater number of bikes that have safety features such as ABS and combined braking systems. Victoria Police, the Transport Accident Commission and VicRoads will work together to introduce the new system and establish a database that will help Learners and P-Platers understand which bikes they can ride. Further information is available at [www.vicroads.vic.gov.au](http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au).

## RoadSafe Conference - Young Drivers

A conference looking at young driver safety will be held from 13-14 September at the Mercure Hotel, corner Gheringhap and Myer streets, Geelong. Each year many 18 to 25 year olds are involved in crashes in which approximately 120 are killed and 2300 seriously injured. This is about one third of Victoria's road toll. More young people die from road crashes than any other cause making this one of the most important community health conferences. Keynote speakers include Christine Nixon, the Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police, and Adam Smith, the Chief Executive Officer of the Education Foundation Australia. For further information, program and registration details see the Community Road Safety Councils of Victoria website: <http://www.roadsafe.org.au/>

## Train and Tram Tender

In August 2007, the Brumby Government announced it will run a worldwide tender for the operation of Melbourne's train and tram networks as part of its plan to improve public transport services across Victoria. It has decided to retain private sector involvement in the day-to-day service delivery of the train and tram networks as it provides the best value for money for Victorian taxpayers. However, the option of renegotiating a new contract directly with the current operators has been ruled out, in favour of a full open competitive tender process. Expressions of interest will be called by mid-2008, followed by a full tender process. The tender process is expected to be completed by mid-2009 with successful train and tram operators in place by the end of that year. For more information, go to [www.doi.vic.gov.au](http://www.doi.vic.gov.au).

## ALGA Communique

The Australian Local Government Association held its annual Local Roads and Transport Congress in Newcastle in July 2007. More than 400 delegates from councils across Australia that attended the congress called on all political parties in the lead up to the Federal election to commit to election policies that incorporate a broadly-based roads and transport agenda to deliver safe, efficient, effective, and equitable transport services and infrastructure throughout Australia. The Congress resolved that this objective would be best achieved by a partnership with local government to implement the Local Government Roads and Transport Strategy over the next decade. All delegates had the opportunity to contribute to the direction of the conference communique which is at [www.alga.asn.au](http://www.alga.asn.au).

## Cycling Campaign

Leading up to the Federal election, the Cycling Promotion Fund (CPF), is calling on the Commonwealth Government to promote smarter transport choices and fund bicycle infrastructure improvements. The CPF is seeking two key initiatives: a Healthy and Active Transport Program that would provide \$50million each year for four years to allow local councils to develop a physical environment more conducive to walking and cycling; and the extension of Ride to Work and Ride2School Programs nationwide. For information on the CPF campaigns go to [www.rideabike.com.au](http://www.rideabike.com.au) and [www.vote4cycling.com.au](http://www.vote4cycling.com.au).

Go to: [www.mav.asn.au/transport](http://www.mav.asn.au/transport)

## Transport Research Forum

The 30<sup>th</sup> annual Australasian Transport Research Forum will be held from 25 – 27 September at Langham Hotel, Melbourne. Titled *Managing Transport in a Climate of Change and Uncertainty*, the forum will feature Australian and international speakers on current global issues that will influence transport policy and practice in coming years. Keynote speakers include Elizabeth Deakin, Director of the University of California Transportation Research Centre and Associate Professor of City and Regional Planning at University of California Berkeley and Robert Gottlieb, the Walkley Award winning Australian journalist. For full program registration, go to [www.atrf06.com.au/](http://www.atrf06.com.au/).

## Level Crossing Infringements

As part of a package of railway crossing safety initiatives announced by the State Government in June, penalties for level crossing infringements will be toughened, rising from \$177 and three demerit points to \$430 and four demerit points. A new offence will also be introduced (in the current session of parliament) for speeding to beat a train, crossing tracks when lights and bells are operating, or weaving in between boom gates that are down. It will carry a fine of 30 penalty units (\$3304), four demerit points and an automatic three month licence suspension. The package contains extra safety measures in addition to the annual program that will further enhance safety at level crossings and it doubles the government's financial commitment to level crossing safety over the next two years. The package includes 53 Automated advance warning signs - \$11.1 million; installation of rumble strips at 200 crossings - \$11.7 million; Don't risk it! awareness campaign - \$2 million; line of sight improvements - \$3 million and trial of compliance cameras - \$1.8 million. For further information go to [www.doi.vic.gov.au](http://www.doi.vic.gov.au).

## Transport Disadvantage Forum

Presentations from the Transport, Social Disadvantage and Wellbeing Forum held in July is now available at [www.monash.edu.au/cmo/Transport2007/index.html](http://www.monash.edu.au/cmo/Transport2007/index.html). The day's proceedings were also recorded. For a copy of the transcript, contact Emily Simatos, 9655 1099, [emily.simatos@doi.vic.gov.au](mailto:emily.simatos@doi.vic.gov.au). The Department of Infrastructure in conjunction with the Department of Victorian Communities (now the Department of Planning and Community Development), Monash University, the Brotherhood of St Laurence, the Bus Association of Victoria, the RACV, the Victorian Council of Social Service, and the Victorian Community Transport Association hosted the forum.

## Social Research in Transport

The Social Research in Transport (SORT) Clearinghouse was recently launched at the Transport, Social Disadvantage and Wellbeing Forum. The aim of the Clearinghouse is to increase awareness of social issues in transport by making it easier to access research in this area. The Clearinghouse is a repository of research reports, research abstracts and links to research findings. Councils are invited to contribute research material to this site. Also you can subscribe to SORT to receive free newsletters including lists of new research, news and events. To access SORT Clearinghouse, go to [www.sortclearinghouse.info/access/](http://www.sortclearinghouse.info/access/).

## Metropolitan Transport Forum

On Thursday 30 August, the Metropolitan Transport Forum, in partnership with Citizens for a Liveable Melbourne, held a forum titled 'Solving Melbourne's Transport Crisis.' Speakers included Dr Paul Mees, Cr Janet Rice and Peter Fitzgerald. Presentations and documents from this forum will soon be available at [www.mtf.org.au](http://www.mtf.org.au).

## Earlybird Conference Rate Extended

Earlybird registration rate for the Australasian Road Safety Research, Policing and Education Conference has been extended until 14 September. The conference will be held from 17-19 October. For further information, or to register, see the conference website [www.roadsafetyconference2007.com.au](http://www.roadsafetyconference2007.com.au).

## Parking Bulletin

The ARRB Group publishes 'Parking News', a regular bulletin on integrated parking solutions that may be of interest to those working on parking management issues in local government. To view previous editions of this publication, go to the 'Information Services and Publications' section of [www.arrb.com.au](http://www.arrb.com.au). To subscribe, email Simon Compton, Principal Adviser – Parking, [simon.compton@arrb.com.au](mailto:simon.compton@arrb.com.au).

## Ride to Work Day

Councils are reminded to start planning for the National Ride to Work Day on 17 October. To find out how to get involved, go to [www.bv.com.au](http://www.bv.com.au).