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# News

Newsletter of the  
Public Transport Users Association

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## PTUA responds to Scoresby EES

On 15 July the Scoresby Transport Corridor Environmental Effects Statement was released for public comment.

The purpose of an EES is to compare the environmental effects of proposed transport improvements in the Corridor with the effects of any feasible alternatives. Ideally, this ensures that the project that goes ahead is the best one with respect to environmental impact and overall benefits.

The so-called 'Scoresby Transport Corridor' stretches from Ringwood in the north to Frankston in the south. Though government documents refer to this as a 'strategic corridor', its only unifying feature is the 30-year-old Scoresby Freeway reservation that runs the entire length of it.

The Scoresby EES was prepared under the supervision of a team of road engineers from the Department of Infrastructure. It sets out four options, ranging from doing nothing to building the Scoresby Freeway, and concludes that the Freeway option is best.

The PTUA considers the EES to be fundamentally flawed in many areas.

Most importantly:

1. The Environment Effects Act requires an EES to consider feasible alternatives to the proposed project. This has not been done. Public transport improvements are considered not as an alternative to building the freeway, but as part of the options that include the freeway. Yet, the economic analysts who worked on the EES concluded that the assumed benefits of the freeway could also be achieved if just 1% of motorists shifted to public transport.

2. The public transport options considered in the EES do not match actual travel needs. Most of the proposals are for north-south routes, when most travel is east-west and local.

3. The popular proposal for a rail extension to Rowville is rejected, on the basis of misleading cost estimates.

4. The EES has failed to consider the most important environmental effect of the Scoresby Freeway: its threat to the Yarra Valley green wedge. By providing a "ring road with a hole in it", it would create pressure for a freeway connection through Eltham and Warrandyte. By completely ignoring this issue,

the EES has failed to consider probably the most important environmental effect of the project it endorses.

These concerns have been expressed in a submission coordinated by the PTUA on behalf of 41 community and environment groups including the Australian Conservation Foundation, Environment Victoria and Friends of the Earth. The summary of our submission appears on the opposite page.

Our submission calls on the State government to, as a minimum:

1. extend the EES to consider the effects of a ring-road on the green wedge, and involve residents of this area in a proper consultation process;

2. commission genuinely independent experts to put together a package of public transport improvements that would be an alternative to the Scoresby Freeway, so that the community can make an informed choice; and

3. appoint a management committee of community representatives, not road engineers, to oversee this process.

Tune in to the next issue of PTUA News for further developments.

**Summary: Page 3**

## Kennett welcomes conductors

From the Herald Sun, 10 September 1998:

"Tram conductors' proposed return to the public transport system has gained support from Premier Jeff Kennett."

From the Sunday Herald Sun, 20 September 1998:

"The Amsterdam City Transport Company's... director of trams Adreia BOLIER said fare evasion had jumped to 15% before conductors were reintroduced...

"And we found conductors absolutely pay their way."

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## Keeping in touch...

### PTUA office

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e-mail: ptua@alphalink.com.au

### Committee Meetings

Second Wednesday of each month.  
Please call the office for details.

### Membership Enquiries

Graeme Gibson: (03) 9650 7898

### World Wide Web

Our home page is on Vicnet at <http://www.vicnet.net.au/~ptua/firstpt.htm>

## Committee Members

Paul Mees — President

John McPherson — Vice President

Les Chandra — Secretary

Tim Hoffman — Treasurer

Peter Dann

Anthony Morton

Wendy Everingham

Demitri Pimenides

Alan Hardie

Christina Sindt

Mary Jamieson

Gerry Warren

## Notice of

# Annual General Meeting

## Wednesday 21 Oct 1998 at 7pm

## Ross House Flinders Lane Melbourne 3000

### Nominations for the PTUA committee

The current election procedure allows for the AGM to elect a President, Secretary and Treasurer and up to nine committee members. Nominations must be on the form attached, and signed by the nominator and the candidate, both of whom must be members of the PTUA. Nominations must be received at the PTUA office (ground floor, 247 Flinders Lane Melbourne) by hand or by mail by 4.00 pm Friday 16 October 1998. Nominations will not be called for the AGM unless fewer than 12 nominations are received by the above date.

### Motions on notice

It is moved that the PTUA register as an approved environmental organisation, in order that donations to the PTUA be tax deductible. And to this end, that the PTUA Constitution be amended as follows:

1. The following clause to be appended to the Statement of Purposes:

The Association will set up a gift fund under the constitution and rules of the Association for the specific purpose of furthering the above objectives. The public fund shall comply with Subdivision 30E of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

2. The following to be inserted as Article 10(b), the existing Article 10(b) to become Article 10(c):

Any allocation of funds or property from the public fund of the Association to other organisations or persons will be made in accordance with the objectives of the Association and will not be influenced by the expressed preference or interest of a particular donor to the Association. In the administration of the public fund no action shall be taken that could in any way be construed as acting as a mere conduit for the donation of money or property to other organisations or persons.

Proposed: Les Chandra, secretary 1997-98

Seconded: Tim Hoffman, treasurer 1997-98

### PTUA Committee Nomination Form

I \_\_\_\_\_

of \_\_\_\_\_

nominate \_\_\_\_\_

of \_\_\_\_\_

for election to the position of:

☐ Committee member

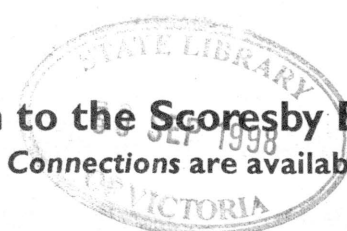
☐ President

☐ Secretary

☐ Treasurer

## This is the summary of the PTUA's submission to the Scoresby EES.

Copies of the full submission and our policy document *Making Connections* are available from the PTUA Office.



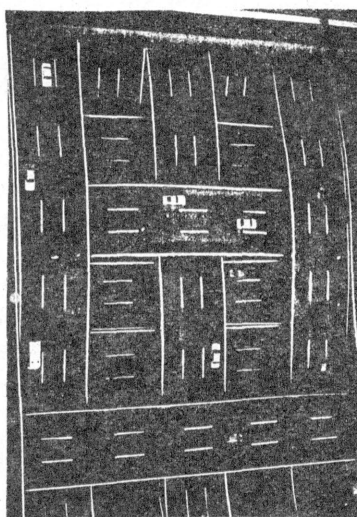
The Scoresby Transport Corridor EES is probably the important urban planning exercise ever carried out in Melbourne. The Scoresby Freeway is part of a planned "metropolitan orbital transport and land use corridor" that, if it proceeds, would constitute the most dramatic change to Melbourne's urban form and transport patterns in the city's history. Before embarking on such a dramatic change of course, the community should have an opportunity to consider and debate the consequences.

The Scoresby Corridor EES was supposed to "develop and evaluate integrated sets of transport and urban development options within the corridor." A range of options was to be developed, including "combinations of demand management measures; use of non-motorised modes (including bicycles)...; broad public transport improvements within the corridor..." (Study Scope). Importantly, the EES Guidelines emphasise that any feasible alternatives to the proposed Freeway were to be investigated.

This did not happen. Instead, the Management Committee overseeing the preparation of the EES intervened to prevent consideration or evaluation of a genuine package of demand management and other measures that could have provided an alternative to construction of the Scoresby Freeway. The consultants preparing the EES were instructed not to consider such an option, even though the concept of a real alternative to the freeway has wide community support. Construction of the Scoresby Freeway (Option 4) was compared instead with a series of plainly inadequate "straw man" options (1, 2 and 3), which no municipal, community or conservation group had asked to have evaluated. Unsurprisingly, given that the only real competition had been excluded from evaluation, the Freeway "won".

The basis of the alternative option was established in 1996, when consultants to the EES made a preliminary estimate that an increase of approximately 1% in the share of travel carried by public transport across metropolitan Melbourne would, by itself, produce equivalent economic benefits to the

Scoresby Freeway. This means increasing public transport's share of travel from 6.8% now to around 8% by 2011—about the same figure as was achieved in Melbourne a decade ago—instead of the predicted 6.4%. As an indication of how modest this objective is, the 1997 Integrated Regional Transport Plan for South East Queensland, adopted by the State and local governments, aims to raise public transport's mode share in



metropolitan Brisbane from 8.4% currently to 13% by 2011. Another comparison is provided by the Transport 2021 Strategy for the Greater Vancouver Region, adopted in 1996, which proposes increasing public transport's mode share from 9% currently to 14%.

An integrated package of land-use planning, demand management, road and public transport measures designed to provide an alternative to the Scoresby Freeway could, and should, have been prepared and evaluated. Had such a package of measures been evaluated using the "key performance indicators" in Table S.1 of the EES summary document, it would have outperformed Option 4 on all the criteria used for evaluation. It would improve accessibility to employment and services, especially for people without cars; reduce air pollution and exposure to noise; reduce rather than increase greenhouse gas emissions; and preserve native flora and fauna. And this would be achieved at a substantially lower cost than Option 4.

In fact, the environmental effects of Option 4 have been seriously underesti-

mated in the EES, for three principal reasons. Firstly, the Scoresby Freeway is, as the EES summary document concedes, "part of a proposed Eastern Ring Road". Once built, the Scoresby Freeway would make the construction of the remainder of the Eastern Ring Road, namely the link across the Yarra Valley "green wedge" to the Northern Ring Road at Greensborough, inevitable. Therefore, an evaluation of the environmental effects of the Scoresby Freeway must consider the effects of the whole Eastern Ring Road, not just the Scoresby section. Again, the management committee refused to permit this to occur. This refusal is extraordinary, given the environmental sensitivity of the green wedge, and the consequent very significant effects of any major road through this area.

Secondly, the Scoresby Freeway is intended to form part of the "metropolitan orbital transport and land use corridor" proposed "for consideration" in the 1996 draft Transporting Melbourne strategy. The orbital corridor is, basically, a ring-freeway with US-style "edge city" development along it. The environmental effects of such a corridor should also be taken into account, but again have not been. The evidence from the United States is that land-use patterns like the proposed orbital corridor create substantial increases in automobile travel, with consequent increases in congestion, fuel usage and pollution.

Thirdly, there are technical deficiencies in the transport modelling undertaken for the EES. The use of a "gravity model" involves an assumption that travel in Melbourne does not have a strong radial bias, when in fact it does. This leads to an overestimate of the amount of circumferential travel, both now and in the base case, and therefore an overestimate of existing demand for a road like the Scoresby Freeway. This is exacerbated by a failure to take the traffic-generating effects of building the freeway into account in the trip-assignment stage of the model (the approach recommended by the Australian Road Research Board), which leads to an underestimate of the likely additional circumferential travel that would be

continued Page 7

# Albury rallies against freeway vandalism

A successful rally with well over a thousand people present marched through the centre of Albury on 12 September, protesting over the flagrant vandalism of the so-called 'internal freeway bypass' plan.

The plan, supported by the NSW and Victorian governments, aims to funnel the full destructive blast of interstate truck and car traffic straight through the middle of Albury.

The PTUA was represented at the rally by long time anti-freeway campaigner Kevin Healy and Ruth Clemens from RACOF (Richmond Action Coalition on Freeways), an authority on the extensive health effects of air pollution. The PTUA is especially grateful to Ruth, who has recently undertaken a number of speaking engagements to university students for the PTUA.

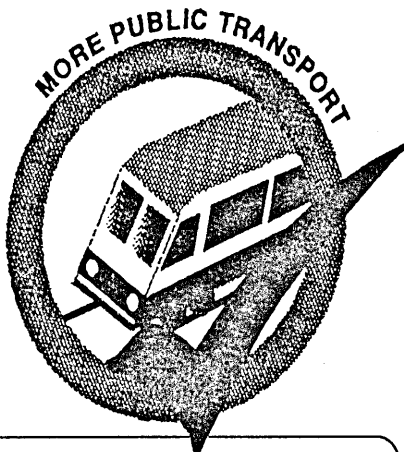
PTUA News reported on this astonishingly short sighted project in July. Not only is it ridiculous to channel traffic into town when other provincial cities have benefited from bypasses; the real long term aim should be to make the heavy truck traffic redundant by a fast, frequent freight train service along an upgraded Sydney- Melbourne corridor.

The Australian Railway Association has calculated that just 10 extra container trains in each direction each day could substitute for the thousands of trucks that now clog the Hume Highway

and terrify travellers. The environmental disturbance of the trains would, needless to say, be minimal compared with thousands of trucks through town at a bellowing 100 kilometres per hour.

A large group of Albury doctors has supported the external freeway option in a local newspaper advertisement.

PTUA members should contact federal and state politicians. With the October federal election looming, local member Tim Fischer is already feeling the heat from this ridiculous plan. Federal money would finance this road disaster while the environmentally responsible rail line alternative disintegrates quietly from lack of government interest. A rail upgrade could easily raise passenger rail speeds to 160 or even 200 kph bringing Albury/ Wodonga within two hours of Melbourne and leaving the cars (and trucks) far behind.



**Here are examples of fare rises based on the four most popular tickets, all daily tickets. Concession tickets are half the full fare and make up 50% of sales.**

Zone 1	Full fare \$4.30 to \$4.70	Conc. \$2.20 to \$2.40
Zone 2	Full fare \$2.90 to \$3.20	Conc. \$1.50 to \$1.70
Zone 1+2	Full fare \$7.00 to \$7.70	Conc. \$3.50 to \$3.90
Zone 1+2+3	Full Fare \$9.40 to \$10.30	Conc. \$4.00 to \$4.40

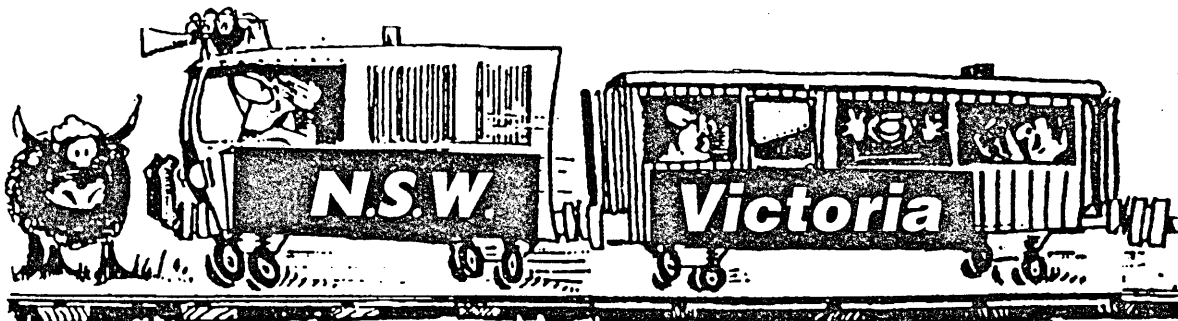
## GST will put us back on the roads

The PTUA has slammed the federal government's GST election tax policy, claiming it to be just another step in converting our cities into poor imitations of Los Angeles.

John Howard's GST will slug 10 per cent extra onto all public transport fares, but will not affect the price of petrol. Road freighters, who already enjoy enormous subsidies from governments while creating congestion and trauma on our roads, will benefit from cheaper diesel fuel. Meanwhile cars are set to become much cheaper. The whole package is geared toward satisfying the car lobby at the expense of the public, who will suffer from increased pollution, congestion and car dependence.

What the government plans to do is the exact opposite of what should be done in a society that values efficient transport systems and is keen to give people real transport choices. Melbourne already has the highest public transport fares in the Southern Hemisphere, far higher than in other cities with decent public transport systems. Cheaper cars and higher fares will benefit more affluent people at the expense of those who have no choice but to take trams and trains. It will encourage more people to give up on public transport and join the traffic jam.

The PTUA is opposed to any tax policy which generates perverse incentives for car travel at the expense of public transport. Public transport fares should be reduced to competitive levels, while fuel excise should remain at levels that reflect the true cost of road transport.



# Swanston Street tram terminus revisited

After some two years, the powers that be at Melbourne University have admitted to problems with the Swanston St terminus (see *PTUA News*, Aug 1997) and have launched an inquiry into possible solutions. A submission was presented by PTUA Committee member Tony Morton.

Since the PTUA article appeared, there have been a few minor changes for the better. In particular, footpaths in Monash Road have been widened and the landscaping improved to provide a more welcoming access for pedestrians. Unfortunately, the improvements do not compensate for the key adverse decision affecting pedestrians at the University, which is the decision to abandon Masson Way as the principal pedestrian access.

The University insists that Monash Road "must be maintained as the main ceremonial entry with vehicle access to the University". It is simply not feasible to combine pedestrian and vehicle access in Monash Road, given the num-

bers of pedestrians who must access the University daily. If Monash Road is to continue as a vehicle access, Masson Way, to the north, must be revived as the principal pedestrian route. At present, Masson Way is separated from the tram terminus by physical barriers (confining pedestrians and cyclists to a narrow footpath access) and by distance.

The problem will not be solved unless access to Masson Way from the tram stop is vastly improved. To this end, the northbound tram stop should be repositioned closer to its original location opposite Masson Way, and the pedestrian barrier removed. This will necessitate some redesign of the tram 'interchange', which never satisfactorily fulfilled its original purpose anyway. One solution would be to relocate this interchange north of Elgin Street; this is the solution recommended by the PTUA when the reconstruction of the terminus was originally proposed. That a significant amount of money has already been spent on the present, unsatisfactory solution is unfortunate, but should not de-

ter anyone from rectifying the situation.

The design of the Swanston/Faraday Street intersection and tram terminus must aim at facilitating the efficient flow of pedestrians, cyclists and motorists between the University, the tram stops and Faraday Street. As a guiding principle, the movement of tens of thousands of pedestrians should take priority over the movement of a smaller number of cars and trucks.

The speed limit in Swanston Street should be reduced to at most 50kph, preferably 40kph, as part of an area-wide traffic calming scheme to create an environment friendlier to pedestrians. Right hand turns to or from Monash Road should be eliminated. It should be recognised that the sheer size of the intersection at present is unworkable and unsafe.

The University, together with the City of Melbourne, Swanston Trams and Vicroads, should finalise its proposals in full consultation with knowledgeable people within the University community.

## Eastern Freeway Frustration

When the Eastern Freeway extension opened last December, commentators from all sides of politics took turns to gloat about how much time would be saved driving from Nunawading to the city. Barely six months later, much the same people were complaining about longer delays (*The Age*, 14 June).

Where has this extra traffic come from? This is not traffic that once used Doncaster Road and now uses the new freeway; this traffic would wind up in the Hoddle Street queue regardless. Nor can it all be accounted for by shifts from Whitehorse Road or other arterial roads, as traffic flow through Richmond and Abbotsford has not eased to the same extent as flow on the Eastern Freeway has increased. What we are seeing is the dreaded 'induced traffic': traffic which has appeared out of nowhere through the simple act of extending the freeway.

Even that doyen of freeway advocates, the RACV, could not help but confirm the obvious in its latest Travel Time Survey. According to RACV figures, inbound travel times for Doncaster commuters have increased by five min-

utes as a result of the extension. Even from Nunawading, travel time to the city has improved by only two minutes from what it was before—and it appears to be getting worse. One cannot help but ask whether this negligible time saving for some car commuters was worth 400 million dollars to the taxpayer!

Already, some MPs are lobbying for an Inner Ring Road: the bride of City Link which would slice through the trendiest parts of our inner suburbs in an attempt to quench the insatiable thirst for car travel. But for every new freeway, a new bottleneck appears. Doubtless the road lobby will not be satisfied until the CBD is fed on all four sides by ten-lane freeways with induced traffic that makes Los Angeles look healthy.

Where is the political vision to see a way out of the traffic jam? Why can't people be given real freedom of choice—to use public transport or ride a bike without suffering the inconvenience arising from years of neglect and prejudice? It can be done and it won't cost the earth.

Residents of Doncaster and

Templestowe have waited 20 years for an East Doncaster rail link to help alleviate the traffic problem. This would constitute a far better use of public money than adding to everyone's frustration with yet another freeway extension.

Based on the trends observed by the RACV, anyone who currently commutes to work on the Eastern Freeway should be taking to the streets in protest against the proposed extension to Ringwood. But those who take public transport will no doubt suffer even more. Extension to Ringwood will further reduce patronage on the parallel railway, currently the most popular in Melbourne, which carries commuters to the city far more efficiently than any road. Already the National Bus Company has reorganised its feeder bus network to feed to its own new freeway services instead of to railway stations. Buses are slower and less comfortable than trains for long commuter trips.

Melbourne already has a high-quality road network; it is time we had first-class public transport to match it.

Tony Morton



# Letters to the PTUA

## More on the A-G

Dear Editor,

Your article regarding the Auditor General in the July edition of *PTUA News* fails to mention his recent report into public transport reform since 1992.

In May 1998, the Auditor General found that "steady progress has been made towards transforming the public transport system from a system to a service with an emphasis on cleanliness, safety, reliability and efficiency in meeting customers needs."

Key messages from the Auditor General's report include:

"The performance of public transport in service delivery and punctuality progressively improved during the reform program."

"Through initiatives by the PTC to increase the level of suburban train services and provide greater flexibility for passengers, the total number of train kilometres covered each year has increased by 23%" since 1992.

That the "reported crime associated with public transport is very low in comparison to the number of boardings every year" and when compared "with the incidence of crime in private residential situations."

Confirmation of an "ongoing savings per annum of at least \$245 million" and further noted that reduction "was a direct reflection of the over resourcing and inefficient practices which had existed in transport operations for many years and had not been addressed."

"That patronage levels on trams and trains in Victoria have increased progressively during the reform program, with the total number of passengers carried in 1996-97 about 10% higher than the position in 1992-93."

These are important facts which I believe would interest your readers.

Yours sincerely,

**Robin Cooper**

**Minister for Transport**

The PTUA thanks Mr Cooper for calling this report to our attention. Certainly many small improvements have been made in public transport service since 1992, and were duly acknowledged by the PTUA at the time. The facts noted by Mr Cooper are largely old news—the modest frequency increases

for suburban train services, for example, were reported in the March 1996 issue of *PTUA News*.

The same *Public Transport Reforms* report from the Auditor General made several other observations which are also worth noting.

• In regard to the \$245 million savings per annum, "the major sources of savings were a rationalisation of workshops, specific productivity improvements, improved maintenance practices and the outsourcing of many functions." In other words, the savings resulted from correcting inefficiencies in work practices and resource duplication (with which the PTUA has no argument), rather than through reductions in the standard of service such as the scrapping of tram conductors.

• "For the financial benefits...to be sustained, it will be important that effective action is taken in 2 key areas, namely, successful implementation of the automatic ticketing system and development of a strategy to control...fare evasion within the automated ticketing environment." In other words, the report's positive conclusions are contingent on the success of automatic ticketing. In the body of the report it is noted that "expected cost savings from the planned removal of 700 tram conductors have not been realised" and that "the savings identified by the PTC [due to reductions in station staff] do not take into account the loss of revenue through fare evasion." These losses have not been quantified, although "the PTC recognised that revenue yields in Met Trains had deteriorated" since 1992.

• Cost savings in the city have not been matched in the country. The report notes that although the country rail closures "led to cost savings, they also resulted in reduced patronage levels and estimated annual revenue losses of \$2.4 million." The consequent budget savings are negligible by comparison with the measures noted above.

• A key argument for privatisation on the Government's part is that private operation will lead to further cost reductions, a claim that is not supported by the Auditor General's report. "After 6 years of cost-cutting and rationalisation of operations, particularly with workshops, audit considered there was limited scope for further large savings to be

achieved...The ability of private operators to increase patronage and profitability...will need to be recognised in contractual arrangements."

• The report identifies 7 factors which "will be critical for bringing about new patronage growth." These include suburban rail extensions, more express services, regional track upgrades, more Sprinters, better tram priority, and integration between transport modes. The PTUA could not agree more!

Thus, while we acknowledge the cost savings which have been achieved, we feel that acceptance of many of the positive conclusions of this report will have to await the outcome of the performance audit on automatic ticketing.

## Metcard woes

The litany of bizarre incidents with automated ticketing continues. PTUA member **David Gunn** provided the following report.

"I recently received the assistance of a very helpful PTC employee at Blackburn railway station, who actually operated the ticket machine for me to purchase my monthly ticket. The only problem was that the machine gave him, as change, an English 10p coin in lieu of an Australian \$1 coin. Yet he was not empowered to exchange the incorrect coin for a correct one. All he could do was give me a refund form and the Metcard telephone number. I called the number on the spot, only to have his action confirmed.

"I then offered to visit Metcard's offices to swap the coin, only to be told that this was not possible. Again I wrote to the Minister, who made some 'concerned' noises, and I duly received in the mail a cheque from Metcard, for \$1.

"I believe that the disempowerment of PTC employees in this regard is ludicrous. In all other industries, including mine, we strive to improve service and meet our customers' needs in better ways. I am flabbergasted at the flagrant reduction in services we have had to endure for no recompense in costs, and worse, with an impending fee rise from next January. If I told one of my clients that I would send him a cheque for \$1 rather than give him the coin over the counter, I'd be reprimanded by both my supervisor and the client."

# In Brief.....

## **Warragul Passengers Shuttled**

The split-up of the PTC into corporatised units will lead to V/Line Passenger taking on the Pakenham-Warragul commuter services. Apparently it is now impossible, organisationally, for suburban trains to proceed through to Warragul, though of course the overhead electric supply remains in place. Regular commuters have already complained to the PTUA regarding the forced change of trains, probably at Pakenham station. Poor utilisation of the diesel train on the short 42 kilometre section from Pakenham to Warragul can be expected.

## **West Coast Expansion?**

According to the *Herald-Sun* on 21 September, West Coast Railway is making a "hard to beat" bid to take over the entire V/Line Passenger operation. WCR is reported to be committed to a reopening from Sale to Bairnsdale and is also considering reinstating passenger services to Mildura and Ararat. "The government should by now be well

aware of country hostility to passenger rail closures," the *Herald-Sun* said.

## **TGV gets go-ahead in NSW**

The federal government recently announced that the Speedrail consortium, which runs French TGVs, has been chosen as the preferred bidder for the Sydney-Canberra high-speed rail link. Speedrail will now have to demonstrate the feasibility of the project before it goes ahead. Meanwhile, the Committee for Melbourne has expressed hopes that the TGV will be extended to Melbourne, and provide an airport link into the bargain. Needless to say, upgrading the existing track and rolling stock would be a more cost-effective solution, that could provide a better deal for regional cities and work for the benefit of freight as well as passengers.

## **Blair Sidelines Transport Reforms**

Hopes for a progressive transport policy from the not-so-new Blair government in the UK are fading, reports the *Guardian Weekly*. Delays continue to build for Deputy PM Prescott's

Transport White Paper. Major contentious issues remain, specifically congestion charges and road pricing. The Transport Minister now insists that "high-earning car-owners need have no fear of the White Paper."

Public Transport Minister Glenda Jackson, on a visit to Melbourne recently, denied any retreat on policy, only delays with a legislative log-jam. She confirmed that the subsidies per year to the private rail operators were double those in British Rail days, while service standards were actually in decline. According to Minister Jackson, proceeds from the proposed congestion charges would be recycled to the local government authorities collecting them.

## **VCOSS slams fare increases**

The Victorian Council of Social Service, in their report "Tickets Please: Public transport costs for low income and disadvantaged Victorians," has charted an increase in urban public transport fares of 20% above the inflation rate from September 1992 to December 1997. In the same period, private motoring costs rose only in line with inflation.

## **Scoresby EES submission**

### **(from Page 3)**

generated by building the freeway. Finally, over-optimistic employment forecasts have been fed into the model, inflating estimates of future traffic. The result is an overestimate of the likely travel time savings, and thus the economic benefits, of building the road, and an underestimate of the likely environmental costs.

The EES report states that "extensive community consultation" occurred throughout the study. While it is true that many brochures were distributed and meetings held, this cannot accurately be described as real consultation, for two reasons. Firstly, at no stage were residents of the Scoresby corridor informed of facts that are absolutely critical to people's ability to make an informed judgment on the issues. The most important of these facts is that ex-

isting travel in the corridor is dominated by local and radial travel, with very little circumferential travel. This means that, contrary to popular impression, most of the traffic congestion on routes like Springvale and Stud roads is created by local and radial, not circumferential, travellers. Secondly, at no stage were communities within the corridor given the opportunity to comment on genuine alternatives to the Scoresby Freeway; instead, they were asked to compare the Freeway with the plainly inadequate Options 1, 2 and 3.

The Scoresby Freeway is part of a plan for a ring-freeway around Melbourne. If built, this would be the most expensive single public infrastructure project ever seen in Australia. It would also trigger the most dramatic change in land-use patterns in Melbourne's history, pushing us irretrievably down the

path to an American-style "edge city". The Scoresby Corridor EES has offered no plausible justification for such a move. Instead, it has ignored the most serious strategic planning issues raised by the proposed Scoresby Freeway, and failed to consider any genuine alternatives to building the Freeway. However, information gained during the course of the EES reveals that a viable alternative, based around a small but significant shift to public transport, does exist. Such an alternative is consistent with best practice in overseas cities and even Australian urban areas like Brisbane.

The Scoresby Corridor EES should be rejected and a genuine evaluation of the alternative undertaken. This evaluation should be carried out by experts on sustainable transport and overseen by community representatives, not road engineers.

**Copy Deadline for the next PTUA News is 6 November 1998**

Newsletter Production Team:

Tony Morton and John McPherson

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# PTUA News

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## A Warm Welcome to All Our New Members

### Patrick O'Connor celebration dinner a success!

At the Celtic Club on 29 July an extremely successful dinner for over 70 guests heard speeches of appreciation from representatives of organisations whose causes the late Patrick O'Connor held dear.

Former president Dr Charles 'Chips' Sowerwine spoke for the PTUA, while amusing and affectionate appreciations came from colleagues of Patrick at Save Albert Park and the Loyola Musical Society. Colleagues of Patrick from the County Court also attended.

Always conscious of the political aspect of the public transport debate Patrick would have been gratified that his local member of State Parliament John Thwaites, his partner Melanie Eagle and their young son were present.

At approximately the beginning of September PTUA president Paul Mees received the surprise notification that Patrick had left the PTUA a substantial sum of money in his will. Needless to say the PTUA committee is humbled but also delighted that our current efforts are receiving such an endorsement from one who was so involved for so long.

### The Dangers of Talkfests

On 1 September the PTUA was invited to a Melbourne Urban Futures Roundtable conference, Accessible Cities, sponsored by Melbourne City Council and Environs Australia.

The list of attendees looked high-powered and perhaps worth some time from our busy schedule. We could not have been more wrong.

The environment lobby was well represented, the road lobby very well represented, the telecommunications industry in attendance, along with Trades Hall Council, various state sponsored booster organisations, some prominent academics, media personality Jon Faine and also, to calm the furious debate, the prominent churchman Tim Costello.

The result of all this talent applied to this laudable issue over two and a half hours was, frankly, nothing. Set-piece speeches were made all round and while the PTUA representative exhibited signs of irritation and even exasperation, everyone else kept their cool to an extreme extent.

Everyone agreed we needed to be concerned about the effects of pollution and congestion on our city, but were told by the road lobby that a large increase in road traffic was inevitable and that accessibility could only be assured by more (and more) roads. Citylink was of course vital to the very survival of civilisation as we know it!

The telecommunications people exchanged views, the rest listened respectfully. The PTUA representative put our view, that Melbourne would benefit hugely from a quantum leap in actual physical accessibility for commuters and visitors without cars. A few heads nodded from the 'green lobby', but no actual debate ensued.

The Reverend Costello poured a little oil on slightly rippled waters and departed. The PTUA participant was left wondering what the whole exercise cost, let alone what it was worth.

**John McPherson**

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