

## Governments Setting a Poor Example

*"Kevin Rudd might empathise with working families over fuel prices, and express concern over climate change, but some of his colleagues have double standards when it comes to their choice of taxpayer-funded vehicles. Through a little-known perk, federal departments often provide ministers and parliamentary secretaries with a private-plated car and fuel card for their use in Canberra, separate to any electorate or private vehicles they might have at home. So this week, when not in parliament debating price-reduction policies and cabinet leaks, the ministers had the opportunity to take a spin around Canberra's roundabouts and open up on the avenues - all at taxpayers' expense, and with scant regard for the fuel used and fumes produced."*

**Ref: Sean Parnell, The Australian, 30/5/08**

*"The Federal Government's message on urban congestion lost some of its shine when Mr Swan squibbed on the issue of the generous fringe benefits tax for company cars. This tax concession encourages employees to drive to work and burn more fossil fuel rather than catch public transport, ride, or car-pool. A number of groups, including the Tourism and Transport Forum and the Australian Conservation Foundation, have been calling for the abolition of this tax incentive. Recently, the powerful Productivity Commission, not exactly known for hard-line green policy positions, also added its voice to the chorus."*

**Ref: Stewart Prins, Herald Sun. 2/6/08**



**Caption: Another Revolting Exhibition  
Illustration: Spooner Ref: The Age 5/6/08**

*"The Rudd Government's first budget was a disappointment. Changes to the solar rebate scheme crippled one of Australia's most important renewable energy industries, and the luxury car tax - the only substantial change to*

*taxation of motor vehicles - did nothing to improve the efficiency of the nation's vehicle fleet."*

**Ref: Tim Flannery, The Age 5/6/08**

*"The Federal Government's \$500 million plan to subsidise Australian car manufacturers to build green cars is unlikely to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and would hurt the economy, says the Productivity Commission. The Government's own think-tank also warned that far from encouraging innovative green technologies, the subsidies risked reducing productivity and repeating earlier policy mistakes which had contributed to the car industry's current problems. Its assessment directly undermines the Government's environmental, economic and industry policy rationales for its plan to provide \$500 million to local car makers for developing low-emissions vehicles."* **Ref: Mark Davis, SMH 6/6/08**

## Rudd on PT – (Show me the money)

*"Better public transport is part of the answer to soaring petrol prices, Prime Minister Kevin Rudd says. '... hasn't the time come for some decent, decent public transport systems, invested in by the national government across our major cities so people don't burn their petrol prices on the way to work', he told the Nine Network."*

**Ref: AAP, The Age, 6/6/08**

## Investing in Ferries

*"... there is a growing emphasis on the need to improve public transport. This is particularly apparent in capital cities where commuting by car is becoming increasingly untenable. More buses, an expanding rail network and new trains are either in the pipeline or on the drawing boards. The increased use of fast ferries, a common form of transport overseas, is also seen as a practical measure, as most capital cities in Australia have river access to the central business district."*

**Ref: The Age (Investor Section) 13/4/08**

[On extending the Sandringham Line] *"Why not just tunnel from Sandringham down past Beaumaris etc..."* **Ref: Schmoco, Rail Page, 15/2/08** [www.railpage.com.au/f-p1008436.htm](http://www.railpage.com.au/f-p1008436.htm)

*"Cheaper [in the] short term to add a CNG powered ferry service: Mordialloc - Beaumaris - Black Rock - Brighton Beach - Williamstown Pier - Station Pier."* **Ref: Fogcv, Rail Page, 15/2/08**

## And Also ...

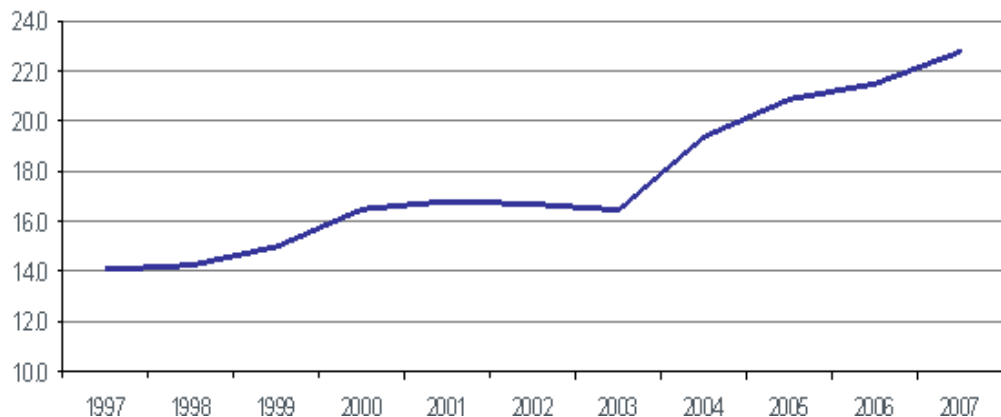
*"If petrol gets more pricey we'll be saddling up our camels"* **Headline in the Australian 21/5/08**

## Anthony Albanese in the Hot Seat

*“Interestingly, the new [Federal Transport and Regional Development] Minister’s seat of Grayndler is right in the path of the proposed M4 East motorway extension [in Sydney], for which the then Shadow Spokesperson, Martin Ferguson, promised funding in the last week of the campaign. Grayndler is also likely to suffer from increased aircraft noise if the planned maintenance on the East-West runway at Kingsford Smith proceeds – with Minister Albanese responsible for aviation, negotiations with the airport could be very interesting...we hope the new Minister is not too busy fighting fires in his own backyard to explore the reform opportunities available on issues like Fringe Benefits Tax, or funding of urban public transport infrastructure.”* **Ref: Peter Warrington**  
**The Flyer January 08 PBAI Australia**

“At a global level, transport represents 23% of total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from fossil fuel combustion. Domestically, the transport sector is estimated to be the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest emitter of greenhouse gas emissions after stationary energy and agriculture, accounting for around 14% of total greenhouse emissions. Almost 90% of transport greenhouse emissions are derived from the road transport sector and around 54% from passenger cars alone. Over many years, we have made the car central to our lifestyle – for work, recreation and for the ability to live our lives as we choose. By world standards, car ownership in Australia is high and can be expected to remain high for the foreseeable future, as the AAA’s combined membership of six and a half million demonstrates. And the importance we place on car ownership has been reinforced through infrastructure spending by past Commonwealth governments that has concentrated on roads and not other alternatives for transporting freight and passengers.

Australians are also using their cars more than ever before. The Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport, and Regional Economics based within my department has found that passenger car travel in the capital cities more than



**Total International Passengers Carried (millions) – Years ended December 1997 to 2007**

doubled between 1977 and 2004 [Source: Australian Transport Statistics Yearbook 2007]. ...

“... Australia is one of the most urbanised countries in the world - with four out of five Australians living in urban areas. ... Establishing the Major Cities Unit shows that the Government is serious about addressing urban congestion. The Unit will aim to:

- increase **productivity** by reducing urban congestion and improving our freight networks so that people and goods can move more efficiently;
- ensure **sustainability** by making sure our cities provide closer links between work and home, and of course to ensure that infrastructure is planned and built with the aim of reducing emissions and securing our water supply; and
- improve **liveability** – by making sure planning accommodates participation and lifestyle.

“... In conclusion, the Government is driving a groundbreaking climate change agenda to transition Australia to a low carbon economy.”

**Extracts from the address by the Federal Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, Anthony Albanese, to the Australian Automobile Association Climate Change Summit 3/6/08**

## International Air Travel in 2007

*“The nation’s international airports have just experienced their busiest year, handling a record number of passengers and more than 760,000 tonnes of freight. Last year, the number of international passengers arriving and departing from Australian airports rose 6 per cent to almost 22.8 million, the highest number ever carried in a single calendar year (see Chart below).”*

**Ref: Ministerial Media Statement 6/6/08**

## 2008 Banksia Award Finalists

### Tindo the Solar Electric Bus (Adelaide)

"The Adelaide City Council has set a new international standard for sustainable commuter transport with the introduction of Tindo – the world's first solar powered electric bus. Harnessing the power of the sun, Tindo is a carbon neutral vehicle that's recharged using solar energy generated by a unique solar PV system installed on the roof of the Council's new Adelaide Central Bus Station. Tindo was built by respected New Zealand bus and coach manufacturer Designline, and operates every day on the Adelaide City Council's free Connector Bus service, carrying up to 40 passengers in air conditioned comfort. At the heart of Tindo's cutting edge technology are 11 sodium-nickel chloride Zebra batteries, which are lightweight and virtually maintenance free, are designed for long life, aren't affected by external temperatures, and deliver an operational range of 200 kilometres between charges. Tindo represents a significant investment by the Adelaide City Council into a sustainable future for the City of Adelaide."

### Inner Northern Busway (Brisbane)

"The Queensland Government's \$333 million, 1.2 km, Inner Northern Busway, stretching from Queen Street to Upper Roma Street (INB), is the critical link in a network of busways that will eventually span Brisbane. The Translink-owned INB will give buses a safe, direct, traffic-free run through the most congested parts of the inner city, help reclaim Brisbane's heart for pedestrians and cyclists and underpin new 'walkable' urban developments. It will also facilitate unparalleled integration of transport services by placing a cycle centre within a busway station and a busway station within a rail station. Nationally, the INB is one of the first heavy, civil infrastructure projects to holistically address sustainability, incorporating carbon-saving measures into the busway's design, construction and operational plans and setting a new industry benchmark. The INB will offer commuters compelling new reasons to swap their car for the bus each day and join the fight against climate change."

### Tulla-Calder Interchange (Melbourne)

"Redevelopment of the Tullamarine-Calder Interchange was Victoria's first road infrastructure project delivered under a project alliance agreement. The alliance consisted of Parsons Brinckerhoff, VicRoads and Baulderstone Hornibrook. The alliance achieved

excellent results for the community, particularly through applying a focus on sustainability. The sustainability vision was 'to use innovation, engineering expertise and quality construction practices to build a safe free-flowing freeway that minimises the potential impact on the environment and local community both now and in the future'. Sustainability innovations include the use of recycled high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipe for drainage along the road shoulders. The equivalent of 663,000 recycled milk bottles were used to construct the HDPE pipe for the interchange redevelopment. In a first for the Southern Hemisphere, 210 solar panels are incorporated into freeway noise walls, offsetting up to 10% of the annual freeway lighting power demand. Furthermore, 99% of construction waste was recycled." **Ref:**

<http://www.banksiafdn.com/index.php?page=351>



**Solar Noise Wall (installed by Going Solar) on the Tulla-Calder Interchange** Picture: Warwick Johnston

### Metro Transit Awards

"The Metro Awards - created to recognize leaders in the mass transit industry around the world - are used to reward systems that have shown an 'unparalleled ability to succeed.' Calgary Transit (Canada) won the Special Merit Award for Contribution to the Environment for its Ride-the-Wind program. The program ... uses wind-generated electricity to power the city's light-rail transit system. It has increased power costs by less than one-half of one per cent per passenger - a cost transit officials argue is nominal considering the benefits to the environment. The award was one of 11 announced by a panel of judges in Copenhagen, Denmark. Others initiatives include: car heaven, which encourages Alberta drivers to turn in their older, polluting vehicles for six months' worth of transit passes; bus wash water recycling, which uses recycled wastewater; and low-sulphur diesel fuel."

**Ref: Colette Derworiz, Calgary Herald 9/4/08**

## Flying High on Weed

"Air New Zealand says it could be using a poisonous weed to power commercial flights before the end of the year, thus revolutionising air travel and leading to fare cuts. The breakthrough fuel source will be a noxious weed called *jatropha*, an ugly fast-growing drought-proof bush that can grow in virtually any soil. Air NZ will officially test the weed fuel in one of its Boeing 747-400s before blending it with its current jet fuel for use in its fleet if the tests are successful. It has set a target of a million barrels of biofuel a year by 2013 – 10 per cent of its total fuel use. The airline says the biofuel, at least 30 per cent cheaper to produce than current jet fuel prices of \$US160 a barrel, will lower fares, and eventually make airlines carbon neutral. 'This is a social, commercial and technically capable fuel. It is an exciting time for the aviation industry', Air NZ's operations manager David Morgan said. The interest in biofuels from airlines has largely stemmed from the need to address the impact of aircraft on the environment. But after jet fuel prices rocketed as high as \$US173 a barrel last month, the need to find alternative fuel has become paramount to the viability of airlines. Giant aircraft manufacturer Boeing believes Air NZ is leading the world down a track that all airlines will need to negotiate in the short-term. 'Aviation fuel has become extremely expensive, and there is a real challenge there', Boeing director Darrin Morgan said. 'Sustainable biofuel like *jatropha* is the only alternative that can significantly reduce greenhouse gases and fuel costs'.

"*Jatropha* plants grow up to 3m high and produce a seed that contains an inedible lipid oil that can easily be refined into jet fuel. Each seed produces up to 40 per cent of its mass in oil. The plant, which can be grown in non-arable land, is the only biofuel that fulfils Air NZ's strict criteria that its chief executive Rob Fyfe says are un-negotiable. 'Firstly, it must be environmentally sustainable and not compete with existing food stocks. Secondly, it must be at least as good as the current product. Finally, it should be significantly cheaper and be readily available'."

Ref: Andrew Carswell, News.com.au, 5/6/08



'Makes me all nostalgic, Mabel. Remember the opening of the Glen Waverley line?'

## Sustainable Transport in Melbourne

"I am sure that there will be general agreement ... that we need to get serious about public transport. The tragedy is that the Government seems to lack the vision and political will to make the major enhancements to the train network that are overdue." Ref: Geoffrey Warren, Business Day, The Age 3/3/08

"Melbourne's train network has not kept pace with its population growth. The last new train line built here was the Glen Waverley Line in the 1930s. Melbourne's population then was one million people. It's now grown to almost four million people, and the rail network is still the same."

Ref: Stateline Victoria, ABCTV, 22/2/08

[www.abc.net.au/stateline/vic/content/2006/s2170350.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/stateline/vic/content/2006/s2170350.htm)

"Yet another quaint policy stance by the State Government is that people should be encouraged to use the slower buses, rather than faster trains. ... The reluctance to invest in new and fast rail lines is based on a ... myth that the provision of rail services is costly compared with building more road space. The reverse is the case. Economist John Hewson has recently highlighted the cost of building a freeway at \$100 million a kilometre, which is 10 to 50 times more expensive than the rail equivalent. Transport consultant and engineer Louis Fouvry says the cost of a road tunnel per kilometre is 2.5 to three times the cost of a rail tunnel of equivalent passenger-carrying capacity. [Another] myth is that, compared with car use, the operating costs of public transport place a heavy burden on the budget. Yet the cost of hospital beds, deaths, accident repairs, emissions, pollution, and tax concessions for road transport are many times the annual operating costs of passenger transport. The cost of road collisions alone — \$1.7 billion each year in Victoria — is more than the combined cost of running the train, tram and bus systems. A fourth myth is that car transport is more efficient for cities. While one freeway lane can carry 2000 people an hour by car, a single rail line can transport up to 60,000 passengers an hour. ... The community is entitled to an explanation from Premier John Brumby about why it is being forced to fund billion-dollar road projects that exacerbate city congestion, impede tram priority and clash with federal targets to reduce emissions. The community is also entitled to know why vital rail projects such as lines to Doncaster, South Morang, Mernda-Whittlesea, Wyndham Vale and Rowville are on the back burner when they offer far more cost-effective and sustainable travel. Ultimately they could all easily be paid for in lieu of the one projected road tunnel."

Ref: Jackie Fristacky, The Age 17/3/08