

## Fast Rail

*"A re-elected Gillard Labor Government will undertake a detailed feasibility and corridor study to determine the economic viability of, and identify potential routes for, a high speed rail network on the east coast of Australia. ... High speed rail has the potential to cut travel times for people commuting between capital cities like Sydney and growing regional cities like Newcastle and Gosford. Nearly 10 million people live along the east coast between Brisbane and Melbourne, which requires ongoing investment in modern transport infrastructure. ... High speed rail is already well-advanced in Europe and Japan, with China now building new state of the art high speed rail networks to service their major cities."*

**Ref: Campaign Media Release, 5/8/10**



**"Meanwhile, in Melbourne the Very Slow Train Network today created a new record ..."**

*"The Coalition has always been committed to a modern, fast and efficient rail system in Australia and allocated record amounts of funding to upgrade the Melbourne to Sydney and Sydney to Brisbane coastal rail link during its previous term in office. The Coalition also commissioned a study into fast rail, the East Coast Very High Speed Train Scoping Study. In Government, the Coalition will build upon this study to consider the viability of possible passenger routes along Australia's east coast between Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney and Brisbane."*

**Ref: Campaign Media Release, 5/8/10**

## Melbourne-Brisbane Inland Rail

*"A re-elected Gillard Labor Government will begin the work needed for the Inland Rail Link. The rail link will be some 1,700 kilometres long, with rail stretching from Brisbane to Melbourne through Central West New South Wales. The new line is expected to be:*

- 7 hours faster.
- 170 km shorter than the current coastal rail route.
- More reliable with better availability.
- More competitive on transit time.
- More competitive on freight door-to-door prices [and it] will take trucks off highways. ...

*"[A] study puts the cost of building the Inland Rail Link at \$4.7 billion over eight years, including three years of pre-construction activities. ... Federal funding towards the construction works on this project will come from the next rounds of the Nation Building Program."*

**Ref: Campaign Media Release, 5/8/10**



## Greener Car Proposal

*"The Greens' policies for making Australia's car fleet more efficient, launched in Melbourne, would give Australia's car manufacturing industry a sustainable future, protecting jobs while protecting the climate. The Greens are proposing introducing stringent Mandatory Vehicle Fuel Efficiency Standards for all vehicles sold in Australia. This would be backed up by an improved Green Car Innovation Fund, efficiency requirements for government procurement of vehicles and tying manufacturing subsidies to improvements in fuel efficiency. 'These policies will drag Australia's car manufacturing into the 21st century, giving the industry a future while helping create a safe climate future for all of us', Australian Greens Deputy Leader, Senator Christine Milne, said. 'Old thinking from governments and manufacturers alike has meant that we are making gas guzzlers in this country that nobody outside the Middle East wants to buy anymore. The Greens' policies would get us out of that dead end'. The Greens propose fleet average standards of 160g CO2/km to be adopted for 2015, with equivalence with the European standard (expected to be 95g CO2/km) to be achieved by 2020. This compares to the government's recently announced weak targets of 190g CO2/km by 2015 and 155g CO2/km by 2024. Given that the cars we will be manufacturing in 2020 have not yet been designed, there is no justification for weak targets for so far into the future."*

**Ref: EcoVoice eNews, August 2010**

## Call for Active Transport

*"Major political parties have been urged to embrace active transport as part of the policy cure for the challenges of chronic disease, climate change, congestion and pollution. The call was made today by a unique partnership of organisations from the health, transport and local government sectors. The five groups – The Australian Local Government Association, Bus Industry Confederation, Cycling Promotion Fund, the National Heart Foundation of Australia and the International Association of Public Transport – today launched a policy framework."*

**Ref: Media Release, 12/8/10**

## Car-loving Leader

*"Mr Abbott has refused to recant comments he made in his 2009 book, Battlelines, in which he writes 'there just aren't enough people wanting to go from a particular place to a particular destination at a particular time to justify any vehicle larger than a car and cars need roads'."*

*"When confronted with his words on the ABC's*

*Four Corners, Mr Abbott first denied the accuracy of the quote before insisting he is 'all in favour of public transport, but it's got to be appropriate public transport'. He added: 'I just make the point that if we are going to have better public transport, we need better infrastructure and better roads are certainly a big part of that'."*

*"By contrast, the former leader Malcolm Turnbull told the program that public transport was vital to Australian cities, especially as they accommodate a higher population in most densely settled suburbs. Mr Turnbull's comments reiterate almost a decade of fierce advocacy of mass transit. Only three weeks ago, in an address to the Western Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils, he said NSW had spent 'billions building new roads and freeways but until relatively recently there was little or no new investment in Sydney's mass transit'."*

*When he was elected to Parliament, Mr Turnbull famously turned down a taxpayer-funded car and instead spent the car allowance on trains, buses, ferries and taxis around his eastern suburbs electorate."*

*"While the Opposition Leader attempts to qualify his comments against public transport - saying Sydney's mass transit will only improve with a change of state government - his book expresses a clear preference for road transport, including new motorways through the inner western suburbs, the southern suburbs and the northern suburbs of Sydney. Writing of 'the sense of mastery that many people gain from their car', Mr Abbott also dismisses suggestions that Sydney could have a public transport network as comprehensive as London's. Mr Abbott's attitude to public transport reflects a long-standing position of the federal Liberal Party. In his 1988 manifesto, Future Directions, John Howard supported a shift from rail to road transport."*

**Ref: Andrew West, The Age, 17/8/10**

## Challenges to Sustainability

*"Another estimated 1.8 billion inhabitants will need housing by 2030. The majority of this growth will be in urban areas. To reckon with this projection, we need to be building a new city for a million inhabitants every week, year after year. Meanwhile the oil production peak will reduce fossil fuel energy supply. Climate change will generate additional constraints. These issues are intrinsically linked to spatial development patterns. City and regional planners need to be poised to help address them. Traditional models serving as time-tested examples for future developments, allied to new technologies may help find innovative planning tools for sustainable urbanisation and low energy cities. But governance is the prerequisite for implementation. ..."*

*"The forecast of automobile growth, main contributor to GHG emission, has been made by OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). Its figures indicate that in the last ten years the population increased by 13%, the number of cars by 50% and the number of vehicle-km by 65%. The latest projections suggest unabated further growth perspectives in emerging countries. While the 19th Century has been the age of the great railways and the urban rail, the 20th Century has clearly been the age of the automobile. Henri Ford's large scale production of his Model T and his capacity to convince the governments to pay for the roads construction and maintenance, while urban rail had to pay for both and enjoyed no right of way on the street, entailed the end of self supporting rail public*

transport in the US cities. Street views of Chicago in the 30's show streetcars locked in traffic. The automobile-based American way of life became the motor of development, linked to highways built in accordance with traffic forecasts.

*"The effects of the automobile on cities are mainly the need to provide parking space during the 90% of its life-time it is not running. Space-consumption graphs show the area x time space use by mode ranging from 1 to 90 from pedestrian to automobile parked at work place.*

*The limits to road construction were shown by the UK Government 1995 SACTRA Report (<http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/economics/sactra>). This report shows the effects of new roads in terms of traffic generation and that the space need generated by new roads is higher than the additional space provided. New roads thus increase congestion, after an initial relief period, and enhance further urban sprawl. ... The side effects of traffic in terms of personal safety, air pollution, stress and obesity have been shown again and again. The WHO (World Health Organisation) warned that people walking or cycling less than a half hour per day were in danger for their health."*

**Ref: Pierre Laconte, Extracts of address to the International Society of City and Regional Planners, 23/10/09**

## Peak Oil and the UK

*"The second report of the UK Industry Taskforce on Peak Oil and Energy Security (ITPOES) finds that oil shortages, insecurity of supply and price volatility will destabilise economic, political and social activity potentially by 2015. Peak Oil refers to the point where the highest practicable rate of global oil production has been achieved and from which future levels of production will either plateau, or begin to diminish. This means an end to the era of cheap oil. The report, 'The Oil Crunch - a wake-up call for the UK economy', urges the formation of a coalition of government, business and consumers to address the issue....*

*"ITPOES predicts Peak Oil will occur within the next decade, potentially by 2015 at less than 95 million barrels per day. (In 2008, production levels were 85 million barrels per day.) The study finds that the recession has delayed the oil crunch by two years. This provides invaluable time to plan for a future which will see structural increases in oil prices coupled with shortages and increased market volatility. The UK will be particularly badly hit by these factors with a tightening of supply leading to greater oil import dependency, rising and volatile prices, inflationary pressures and the risk of disruption to the transport system. Key recommendations from the report include the acceleration of the 'green transport revolution' to see the ongoing introduction of lower carbon technology and trials of sustainable bio fuels. This would cover private vehicles, but also extend to the general transport network, with the government urged not to cut investment in public transport. A focus on new clean technologies should be combined with wide scale behavioural change promoted through incentives and education to produce a modal shift to greener modes of transport. ...*

*"The Taskforce recognises that oil demand in the OECD area (developed countries) is now flat or declining but also recognises that demand in non-OECD (developing countries) continues to expand rapidly, having already recovered from the recession. Demand in the non-OECD areas already accounts for 45% of global oil demand and is expected to reach 50% by the middle of the decade. ...*

*"Quotes from Taskforce members:*

- *'The UK's freight network, cars and public transport systems are almost entirely dependent on oil. The twin threats of the oil crunch and climate change make that unsustainable. We need urgent Government action to support alternative technologies and incentivise behavioural change to protect business, consumers and our environment'. – Brian Souter, CEO of Stagecoach Group.*
- *'There is the danger of creating a social recession as the poorest households get hit the hardest by higher prices. Economic growth will be endangered as prices rise, costs of raw materials increase and consumer spending ability is suppressed'. – Ian Marchant, CEO of Scottish & Southern Energy.*
- *'As we reach the maximum rate of oil extraction, the era of cheap oil is behind us. We must plan for a world in which oil prices are likely to be both higher and more volatile and where oil price shocks have the potential to destabilise economic, political and social activity'. – Philip Dilley, Chairman of Arup."*

**Ref: ITPOES Website, 10/2/10** Full report:

<http://peakoiltaskforce.net/download-the-report/2010-peak-oil-report/>



*"Sir Richard Branson and fellow leading businessmen will warn ministers this week that the world is running out of oil and faces an oil crunch within five years. The founder of the Virgin group, whose rail, airline and travel companies are sensitive to energy prices, will say that the coming crisis could be even more serious than the credit crunch. The next five years will see us face another crunch – the oil crunch. This time, we do have the chance to prepare'."*

**Ref: Terry Macalister, The Guardian, 7/2/10**

## Peak Oil and Investors

*"With the current state of the oil and equity markets, it may seem premature to think that the petroleum industry is about to hit the wall, whatever your opinion of peak oil and climate change. But institutional investors from the US, Europe and Australia worth a combined \$US12.5 trillion (\$13.6 trillion) are sufficiently concerned about the significant challenges and potential threats to oil industry valuations that they are demanding greater disclosure on how these companies propose to manage the inevitable transformation to a low-carbon economy and the likely shift away from their end products. ... Frank Pegan, the chief executive of Catholic Super, says it's time that the business strategy, investment, reporting and lobbying activities of the oil and gas sector are aligned with investors' and society's needs to shift to a low-carbon economy."*

**Ref: Giles Parkinson, The Australian, 22/3/10**

## Oil Consumption in the US & China

*"The US is ... by far the biggest per-capita energy consumer, with the average American burning five times as much energy annually as the average Chinese citizen. ... The US also remains the biggest oil consumer by a wide margin, going through roughly 19 million barrels a day on average. China, at about 9.2m bpd, runs a distant second. But many oil analysts believe US crude demand has peaked or is unlikely to grow very much in coming years, because of improved energy efficiency and more stringent vehicle fuel-efficiency regulations."*

*"China's rise is also helping shift the focus for oil producers in the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries. Key OPEC states like Saudi Arabia long looked to US oil consumption for guidance in adding new pumping capacity. But in recent years, OPEC states including Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have built or started building refineries and storage facilities in Asia. Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest crude exporter, now ships more to China than to the US. ... In the early 1990s, China became a net oil importer for the first time as its demand finally outpaced domestic supplies. China's energy demand surged again after China joined the World Trade Organisation in 2001. ... The question is whether China will adopt a low-energy pathway pioneered by places like Japan and Europe or follow a high-energy lifestyle of big houses and big cars pioneered by the US."*

**Ref: Spencer Swartz and Shai Oster (Wall Street Journal), The Australian, 20/7/10**

## More on the Swanston Street Turf

*"Early in 1985 [not C2003 as reported last week] the Ministry for Planning and Environment organised a multi-faceted environmental event which transformed this centrally located, busy stretch of street, allowing people to experience it in a new way."*

*"Swanston Street was closed for three days across three city blocks – from Flinders to Lonsdale Streets – and overnight a grassed parkland setting was created. 1,900 square metres of turf was laid and 300 semi-mature trees planted in massive planter boxes, banner were hung, and specially designed and equipped stages and marquees erected."*

*"Each space was designed to challenge people's existing perceptions of the city. An estimated 500,000 people joined in – chatting, singing, dancing, promenading, eating and drinking – to redefine Swanston Street as they knew it."*

**Ref: Victorian State Urban Arts Unit, 1986:44**

## And Also ...

*"A delay [was caused] on a Qantas flight out of Singapore because a gold frequent flyer was detained for shoplifting in the terminal."*

**Ref: The Age, 7/8/10**

## In Search of a Mop and Bucket

*"Dear Secretary [V/Line Customer Relations],  
On Friday my wife and I travelled to Bendigo in a V Locity train. The exterior of the train was absolutely filthy and with the sun shining on the dirt it was impossible to see out the windows as my attached photograph shows. I appreciate that if these trains are to be given maximum use the opportunity for the trains to go through the mechanical wash in Melbourne will be limited. With the trains being stabled overnight in regional centres it is clear that they need to be washed in these locations, presumably by hand. Clearly this is not being done, but equally clearly it is needed.*



View from the V Locity train to Bendigo. 18/6/10

*"What is more worrying however is that nobody at Southern Cross appears to have the interest or authority to make the decision; this train needs cleaning and arrange for it to be done. A mop, a bucket of detergent water and squeegee could be used to clean the windows during the few minutes it is in the station. The insides get a superficial clean; so why not the outsides too? I understand that this is not part of your present way of operating, but it should be! On interstate buses I have had the experience of the bus being washed at stops during the journey. No bus company would expect its passengers to put up with such filthy windows. I strongly suspect that no V Line bus contractor would get away with operating filthy buses."*

**Ref: Andrew Blair, 19/6/10**

*"Dear Mr Pakula [Victorian Minister for Transport], I have sent the [above] letter to V Line. It clearly sets out my concerns. The train in which I travelled to Bendigo was not just dirty on the outside; it was filthy. Clearly it had not been cleaned for weeks. I am not looking for excuses or reasons. Surely provision must be made to regularly ensure that these smart new trains, the pride of your country fleet, are properly cleaned inside and out. Such cleaning should be part of the Plan."*

**Ref: Andrew Blair, 19/6/10**

## The Emperor's New Car (Part 1)

*"Despite their 'green' image, electric cars are often less efficient and more polluting than the petrol cars they replace, according to a major report released today. The 168-page report, titled The Emperor's New Car, is described as a 'long-overdue reality check' by its author, car expert Clive Matthew-Wilson. The report was prepared in consultation with several internationally-recognised energy experts. Matthew-Wilson, who edits the car buyers' Dog & Lemon Guide, says: 'The car industry is selling a false image of efficient, environmentally-friendly electric cars powered by 'green' energy. In reality, electric cars often aren't very efficient and aren't very green'.*

*"The report was highly critical of the iconic Tesla electric sports car, which has become the international symbol of chic, environmentally-responsible motoring. 'The Tesla is actually not very efficient at all. Most of Tesla's publicity focuses on the efficiency of its electric motor. What they don't tell you is that its batteries are heavy, inefficient and that Teslas are frequently powered by electricity from highly polluting power stations'. 'Despite what most people believe, a high percentage of the world's electricity is produced using dirty fuels like coal. This isn't going to change anytime soon; in fact, the widespread introduction of electric cars will probably increase the world's reliance on coal in order to keep up with the increased demand for electricity'. 'Claims that electric cars are "emissions-free" are simply a lie; they merely transfer the pollution from the road to the power station. Not only will electric cars not reduce emissions, they may actually increase emissions, because burning coal to make electricity to power an electric car creates more pollution than if you simply powered the same vehicle using petrol'. 'Renewable energy sources may be growing fast, but they're still a tiny percentage of the world's electricity supply and they'll stay that way for the foreseeable future, because renewable energy sources tend to be far more expensive than fossil fuels'.*

*"The report compared the Tesla electric sports car to a petrol-powered Lotus Elise sports car. Because the Tesla is essentially an electric version of the Lotus Elise, it was possible to directly compare the electric and petrol versions of the same vehicle. 'In four of the five countries we surveyed, the Tesla electric car was less efficient and more polluting than its petrol sibling. Only in New Zealand – where the majority of electricity is produced by hydroelectric generation – was the Tesla "greener" than the Elise. However, a New Zealand scientist recently predicted that if the New Zealand car fleet was replaced with electric cars, the country would probably need to build coal power stations to meet the increased demand'.*



*"The report suggests that China is likely to be the main beneficiary of the electric car movement. Due to massive government investment, China is likely to be the first country to mass-produce electric cars at prices that are competitive with conventional petrol and diesel engines. However, these cars are likely to be produced using environmentally destructive materials, in factories that are powered by non-renewable and heavily polluting forms of energy. So what's Matthew-Wilson's solution to the global energy crisis? 'There's no quick fix to either the energy shortage or climate change. In the longer term, we're all going to have to use less energy, and that means smaller houses, less plastic junk that we don't really need and less wasted trips in our cars'. 'Most of the world's alternative energy industry is based on quick fixes to the current system. In reality, most of this technology isn't economic, doesn't work, or simply doesn't exist and isn't going to exist anytime soon'. 'It disturbs me to see politicians and business leaders on television promoting fantasy technology using fantasy economics'. 'If we make decisions based on the wrong assumptions, we're just going to make things worse'. ..."*

**Ref: Media Release, The Dog & Lemon Guide, 2010**

<http://dogandlemon.com/site/2010/03/28/electric-cars-a-major-environmental-threat/#more-177>

## Questions about Better Place

*"The electric car company associated with the husband of the [NSW] Premier, Kristina Keneally, was exclusively invited to participate in a bid for a recharging network trial by the [NSW] state-owned EnergyAustralia, which did not approach its competitors. Better Place Australia, of which Ben Keneally is a senior executive and has 3.2 million management-class shares, was asked by EnergyAustralia to join a consortium which successfully bid to participate in the federal government's showcase \$100 million energy efficiency project, Smart Grid, Smart Cities."*

**Ref: Sean Nicholls, SMH, 2/8/10**

## Streetcars and Baseball (Part 2)

*"Earlier in the century, railroads had established a pivotal relationship with baseball. Trains made it possible for teams to travel hundreds of miles to compete and to bring the games to an expanding pool of spectators. Streetcars, however, could offer a transportation benefit that steam locomotives could not, by carrying spectators directly to the ballparks, further expanding the fan base for games. The up-and-coming relationship between streetcars and baseball was not coincidental. An estimated 15% of the nation's business leaders in the 19th century were transportation executives.*

*"Moreover, transit companies serving a total of 78 cities had some financial stake in professional baseball. Albert L. Johnson, a streetcar executive who was also a baseball magnate, gave an unsentimental but candid explanation of the synergy. He characterized his own considerable efforts to link streetcars with baseball in Cleveland as a 'good investment' and freely admitted to 'visions of millions of dollars of profits'. Johnson's comments exemplify the unvarnished financial approach taking hold of the business of baseball. More specifically, he voiced the view that capitalizing on baseball was a logical extension of other business interests. Streetcar companies found that their engagements with baseball strengthened their ties with government. The companies could watch over more closely – and safeguard – their stakes in local property values, rights-of-way, and long-term leases.*

*"Many streetcar executives were willing to support a baseball team even at a financial loss, expecting to offset the loss in the long term with an increase in ridership on their vehicles. ... Goodwin's Eastern*



*Park transit lines may not constitute the most positive example of streetcar service during that era, but they are the source of a lasting baseball legacy. The team's nickname was changed from the Bridegrooms to the Trolley Dodgers, because of the hazards of crossing the tracks and avoiding streetcars to get to the ballpark. The moniker eventually was shortened to Dodgers and remains the team's official name, even after the move from Brooklyn to Los Angeles. ...*

*"Over the course of the decade [from 1897], streetcars took on other roles and cultural references with links to baseball. A trolley league of baseball teams that relied exclusively on streetcars to get to and from games sprang up in New England, circa 1899. Many streetcars on ballpark routes carried signs advertising games. In the late 1890s, fans of the Cleveland Spiders could buy 60-cent tickets that included round-trip streetcar fare and admission to the ballpark. The service was popular because fans were spared long waits at the ballpark box office.*



*"A defining experience of the bond between streetcars and baseball occurred in Baltimore on the night of Thursday, October 10, 1895. ... [A] night-time parade consisted of a procession of approximately 40 streetcars winding along tracks through the city's streets. The next morning's edition of the Baltimore Sun proclaimed, 'A man passing over Baltimore in a balloon last night might have imagined that a fiery serpent was creeping through the streets'. The streetcars that made up the serpent were festooned with lights and adorned with baseball themed decorations. The cars leading the parade carried the Orioles, their families, and veteran players from earlier Maryland baseball clubs. Enthusiastic crowds lined up for what the Sun called a 'trolley party' and 'electric parade'.*

*"Although the Orioles lost the Temple Cup series to the Spiders, the parade in their honour showcased the substance and symbolism of the streetcar-baseball relationship. The streetcar industry, and the role of streetcars in taking fans to baseball games, would continue to grow in the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Eventually many of the vehicles would be supplanted by other mass-transit options, like subways and motorized buses. Still in its infancy in the late 19th century, the automobile likewise would become a formidable competitor.*

*"Nonetheless, the streetcar deserves recognition as the forerunner of those more modern modes and for its crucial contribution to bringing previously far-flung locales closer together. For baseball, streetcars played an important role in diversifying the attendance at games. In addition, hefty investments of money and infrastructure by streetcar executives contributed in the long term to establishing ballparks as permanent fixtures on the American landscape. These contributions underscore the lasting impact of streetcars on baseball's growth as a socio-cultural force, even though the clang and clatter of a trolley is no longer instantly and widely associated with the crack of a bat and the cheers of a crowd rooting for the home team. The study of streetcars in the 19th century illustrates transportation's time honoured influence not just on destinations, such as ballparks, but on everyday life."*

**Ref: Robert Cullen, TR News, Jan/Feb 2010**

<http://onlinepubs.trb.org/onlinepubs/trnews/trnews266transitbaseball.pdf>