



28 February 2006

Joint Select Committee on the Cross City Tunnel

INQUIRY INTO THE CROSS CITY TUNNEL FIRST REPORT

Reverend the Hon Fred Nile MLC, Chairman of the NSW Parliament's Joint Select Committee on the Cross City Tunnel, has announced that the Committee's First Report has been tabled today.

"There is no doubt that the Cross City Tunnel project has caused great controversy in Sydney. The Committee has heard evidence from a wide range of people at six hearings during December 2005 and February this year. There has been considerable community anger about the disruption caused by changes to local streets in the Central Sydney area, from the narrowing of William Street to the removal of free direct access to the Harbour crossings" Reverend Nile said.

"Road users have voted with their wheels in not using the tunnel, with traffic figures in February 2006 at around 30,000 per day, still far less than both the CrossCity Motorway and the RTA predicted. There has been anger over the level of the toll to use the tunnel, which at the current level of \$3.56 each way is not seen by road users as offering value for money."

"The Committee has taken the decisive step of recommending that the RTA immediately reverse all road changes that will not lead to a contractually imposed liability to pay compensation to the tunnel operators, and investigate the feasibility of reversing even those changes that may impose liability to pay compensation" Reverend Nile continued.

"If this recommendation is adopted, there will be an immediate relaxation of the restrictions to the freedom of movement of people in cars moving through the surface streets of Central Sydney. The Committee has also recommended that the RTA encourage the CrossCity Motorway company to reduce the toll immediately to the more reasonable level of \$2.90, which will encourage greater use of the tunnel."

The Committee received 69 submissions and heard evidence from 59 witnesses over 6 days of hearings in December 2005 and February 2006.

**For comment please contact Revd the Hon Fred Nile MLC,
Committee Chairman, on (02) 9230 2478.**

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The Committee's inquiry is ongoing. The second stage will focus on the role of government agencies in entering into major public private partnerships, and will examine in more detail some of the important issues that have been raised in today's First Report.

The Joint Select Committee membership is Revd the Hon Fred Nile MLC (CDP), the Hon Amanda Fazio MLC (ALP), the Hon Greg Pearce MLC (Lib), Ms Lee Rhiannon MLC (Greens), Mr Michael Daley MP (ALP), Mr Andrew Constance MP (Lib), Mr Paul McLeay MP (ALP), and Mr John Turner MP (Nat). Mr Daley MP (ALP) replaced Mr Matt Brown MP (ALP) on the Committee on 22 February 2006.

Information about the Committee's Inquiry, including how to make a submission and copies of the terms of reference are available from the Committee's website at www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/crosscitytunnel or from the Committee secretariat on (02) 9230 3554 or via email to crosscitytunnel@parliament.nsw.gov.au.

**For comment please contact Revd the Hon Fred Nile MLC,
Committee Chairman, on (02) 9230 2478.**