

**CITY OF SYDNEY AMENDMENT (CENTRAL SYDNEY TRAFFIC AND
TRANSPORT COMMITTEE) BILL 2012**

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Second Reading

The Hon. DUNCAN GAY (Minister for Roads and Ports) [2.58 p.m.], on behalf of the Hon. Michael Gallacher: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading speech incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

This bill amends the City of Sydney Act 1988 because the City of Sydney is unique and is not just another local government area.

Sydney is Australia's only global city and is the gateway to the nation. The City of Sydney local government area accounts for about one quarter of New South Wales's economic output or approximately 8 per cent of Australia's gross domestic product.

The Sydney local government area is home to approximately 187,000 people and 400,000 jobs. Sydney is also Australia's leading tourism and events destination. Last year, Sydney attracted 28.8 million domestic and international tourists who spent \$12.7 billion.

This bill seeks to establish the Central Sydney Traffic and Transport Committee to oversee and coordinate the management of traffic and transport in the Sydney central business district—because of the impact that the Sydney central business district has on the State's economic activity and international competitiveness.

While the City Council and Transport for NSW work cooperatively on many individual transport issues, there is no effective coordination mechanism that can ensure decisions are made that support the broader interests of the State.

This has meant that while the Government has pursued a program of transport reform to support Sydney's pivotal economic role, the council has pursued its own parallel vision of a "City of Villages".

We need to ensure that both levels of government are working together to deliver the best results for the State's economy and for all of the people who use the city, whether they be residents, commuters, visitors or business owners.

The Central Sydney Traffic and Transport Committee will, for the first time, bring all significant traffic and transport decision making under the one umbrella.

I will now deal with the bill in more detail.

The operation of the committee is limited to the Sydney central business district, defined with reference to the map which the Premier presented in the Legislative Assembly.

The committee will be chaired by the Director General of Transport for NSW, Mr Les

Wielinga, with a further three members nominated jointly by the Minister for Transport and Minister for Roads and Ports, and three members nominated by the City of Sydney council. The committee is required to meet a minimum of four times each year, but has the capacity to, and I expect will, meet more often.

The functions of the Central Sydney Traffic and Transport Committee are described in clause 51H and include:

- providing high-level coordination of the development of transport and traffic policies, plans and projects affecting the central business district;
- assessing the impact of traffic and transport management decisions and actions within the central business district, on the efficiency and effectiveness of the transport network that provides access to and movement within the Sydney central business district for persons and goods;
- coordinating the management by road authorities and parking authorities of traffic and transport within the central business district;
- reviewing and approving certain projects within the central business district having a significant impact on central business district traffic and transport;
- promoting the efficiency and safety of the public transport network in the Sydney central business district.

The committee will also oversee the many council or State-run committees and working groups that are currently working on specific transport issues or precincts within the Sydney central business district.

In assessing each proposal the committee is required to consider:

- the future economic welfare and development of Sydney and the State;
- the efficient functioning of businesses in the Sydney central business district;
- maintaining access for freight into the central business district;
- the efficiency and safety of the public transport network; and
- the needs of commuters, residents, pedestrians and visitors to the central business district.

Under the bill, a roads or parking authority will be required to notify the committee prior to commencing works on traffic control or establishing or amending the operation of a parking scheme. The committee will have the power to direct the authority to stop, vary or defer carrying out the proposed changes.

The Government is concerned to avoid duplication and the committee becoming backlogged with minor proposals. To that end:

- The committee may issue notices to roads authorities setting out types of works that do not

need to be referred to it on the basis that those works are unlikely to have a significant impact on roads, traffic or transport in the Sydney central business district.

- The committee may issue guidelines as to the details of proposed works which are required to be provided to it.
- The committee will not consider any work or scheme proposed by a public sector agency other than a central business district roads or parking authority.
- The committee will also not consider works that are of a temporary or emergency nature or are related to a sporting, cultural or other special event.

I note that the bill now also incorporates an amendment which the Government agreed to in the other place which explicitly excludes routine minor maintenance works from the need for referral to the new committee.

There will be strong interaction with the Central Sydney Planning Committee, with the Planning Committee required by clause 51N to consult the Traffic and Transport Committee before it makes a decision that will require road works or traffic control works that have a significant impact on traffic and transport in the Sydney central business district. The Planning Committee must take into consideration any representations made by the Traffic and Transport Committee. This will ensure that significant impacts on traffic and transport are identified and addressed early in the planning process.

It should be noted that consideration by the Planning Committee under clause 51N does not absolve roads authorities from their obligations under clause 51L. This clause requires a roads authority to refer to the Traffic and Transport Committee proposals to undertake road works and traffic control works. If disputes arise between a roads or parking authority and the committee, the bill provides for the dispute to be resolved through consultation between the Transport and Roads Ministers and the Minister responsible for the relevant roads authority, and if agreement cannot be reached, the Premier will resolve the matter.

To be clear this bill does not change the responsibilities of a Roads Authority—the council will remain responsible for funding and developing road and road infrastructure proposals and maintaining those public roads for which it is the roads authority. It is intended that the Council's Local Pedestrian Cycling and Traffic Calming Committee would still review the purely technical matters of traffic and control works.

I also note that the bill incorporates an amendment moved by the Government in the other place to clarify that the default position is that meetings of the committee will be open to the public.

Under the new provision, the committee may only close a meeting where it is of the view that it is not in the public interest for the meeting to be open to the public.

Transport within the Sydney central business district cannot be designed with only the residents in mind. There are many other people who are stakeholders Sydney City's transport, not least of which are the thousands of Sydneysiders that travel to the central business district every day and the businesses operating both within and outside the city.

The maintenance of the State's economic engine room requires a body that has the power to ensure that an effective and efficient transport network is delivered for the benefit of greater Sydney and for the State.

I commend the bill to the House.