

**JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE CROSS CITY TUNNEL – THIRD
REPORT AUGUST 2006**

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation 1

That Consistency Assessment and Environmental Reviews prepared for variations to major infrastructure projects be made publicly available by the proponent at the same time as they are provided to the Department of Planning.

Response: The Government supports the recommendation.

Recommendation 2

That Connector Motorways Group Pty Ltd publish monthly reports on its website of the number of vehicles using the Lane Cove Tunnel, commencing the month after the date of its opening.

Response: The Government supports the recommendation.

Publishing traffic figures is a matter for road operators; in the case of the Lane Cove Tunnel, the operator is Connector Motorways.

Recommendation 3

That community information strategies for projects of long duration be maintained through all phases of the project, with the relevant government agency taking a key role in the community information strategy.

Response: This was a key recommendation of the Review of Future Provision of Motorways in NSW (the Motorways Review) adopted by the NSW Government.

The Motorways Review recommended that "the RTA, in conjunction with the relevant parties to a PPP contract, should develop a seamless process of consultation and stakeholder management through all phases of a project. Depending on the project stage, the RTA should either directly manage these processes or coordinate their implementation. Such processes should target an appropriate balance in the involvement of general community, stakeholder, householder and road user groups." The recommendations of the Review have been accepted by Government.

Recommendation 4

That the Roads and Traffic Authority work with Connector Motorways to ensure that the monthly information sheets provided by Connector Motorways include clear and concise descriptions of the surface street changes that will follow once the Lane Cove Tunnel opens. This work should be done in conjunction with the Lane Cove Tunnel Transition Working Group.

Response: The Government supports the recommendation.

The NSW Government is developing packages of public education material to assist the travelling public negotiate surface road changes.

The NSW Government is also working with Connector Motorways on its public education and community information material, including monthly community information sheets with clear and concise descriptions of the surface street changes that will follow once the Lane Cove Tunnel opens.

The NSW Government is taking a staged approach to integrating surface road works associated with the \$1.1 billion Lane Cove Tunnel and expanded Gore Hill Freeway project.

The Integration Group, established in June 2006, recommended that surface changes should be implemented in stages, and that the existing traffic arrangements on Epping Road should remain in place for the first transitional period of five months. This is consistent with the findings of the joint Select Committee's Inquiry, the NSW Auditor General and the Motorways Review that road changes after a major road project should be staged.

It makes sense to allow motorists time to get used to the 48 traffic changes that will have taken place by the time the tunnel opens before further changes are made.

From the opening day, residents seeking information about changed traffic conditions in their suburbs will be able to contact a hotline set up by the RTA. There is also a team of staff available to visit them.

The RTA's Transport Management Centre, which monitors Sydney's road network, will also have a specialised team working around the clock to manage traffic flow during the crucial first few weeks of the project opening.

Recommendation 5

That the NSW Government give consideration to reviewing the current proposal to have one general traffic lane and one 24 hour bus lane in each direction of Epping Road.

Response: The Government supports the recommendation.

The NSW Government has agreed with findings of the joint Select Committee's Inquiry, the NSW Auditor General and the Motorways Review that road changes after a major road project should be staged.

In June 2006, the Government established the Lane Cove Tunnel Integration Group to oversee the integration of the Lane Cove Tunnel and the expanded Gore Hill Freeway into the broader road network.

The Government approved the Integration Group's recommendation that surface changes associated with the project be transitioned over an 11 month period, including

existing traffic arrangements on Epping Road being in place for 5 months after tunnel opening.

Recommendation 6

That the Roads and Traffic Authority retain the shared pedestrian path and cycleway associated with the project.

Response: The Government supports the recommendation.

The \$5 million bus interchange and accompanying pedestrian overpass to improve public transport in the north-western Sydney corridor will be built by Connector Motorways at Longueville Road, Lane Cove by mid 2007.

The NSW Government remains committed to the provision of pedestrian and cycle facilities and at the end of the transition period, the full cycleway/pedestrian path will be available for use.

Recommendation 7

That the imposition of up-front fees for major infrastructure projects delivered by Public Private Projects be limited to reasonable development costs incurred by the Public sector, and details should be made public with the contract.

Response: The NSW Government has committed to implementing the recommendations of the Motorways Review.

The Review recognised that up-front recovery of all costs as a matter of routine is undesirable. It recommended that in appropriate circumstances the Cabinet may determine that an up-front payment to partially or fully recover costs is appropriate for a specific project. However, such recovery payments may only be levied subject to Cabinet approval. There is no presumption that all costs incurred in the course of a project will be recovered by way of an up-front payment.

Contract summaries for Cross City Tunnel and Lane Cove Tunnel disclosed the up-front payment to the RTA. Government policy requires that disclosure of all government contracts must be in accordance with:

- Premier's Ministerial Memoranda 2007-01, Public Disclosure of Information arising from NSW Government Tenders and Contracts;
- Working With Government Guidelines December 2006; and
- Recent amendments to the *Freedom of Information Act 1989*.

In addition to complying with the above policies, any upfront payments received by the RTA have been recorded and noted in the financial statements of the Annual Report in the year it was received in accordance with accounting principles.

Recommendation 8

That the Department of Planning have an increased role in assessing the Consistency Assessment and environmental review process, relating to any modifications submitted subsequent to the Preferred Activity Report and the project's Conditions of Approval, to ensure that the community is fully informed of substantial modifications.

Response: The Government does not support this recommendation.

Under Part 3A of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, modifications to a major project require the approval of the Minister for Planning unless the project as modified would be consistent with the existing planning approval. This is the case whether the proponent of the project is Government or a private developer.

Recommendation 9

That in order to ensure a broad range of community representation on Communication Construction Liaison Groups, the Department of Planning increase the minimum number of community representatives on these groups from two.

Response: The Government strongly agrees that community representation on Communication Construction Liaison Groups is essential.

The need for, and composition of, these Groups should be determined on a project-by-project basis to reflect the scale, location and impacts of that particular project.

Recommendation 10

That the RTA consider constructing a scale model of future projects for public display, in order to assist residents visualise the project as a whole.

Response: The Government supports this recommendation.

For each of the Cross City Tunnel, Lane Cove Tunnel and Western Sydney Orbital (M7), the RTA constructed a scale model of the project and made it publicly available.

The RTA will continue to construct scale models of significant infrastructure projects where this would assist the community to visualise the project as a whole.

Recommendation 11

That NSW Health ensure that information about, and the results of, the Lane Cove Tunnel Air Quality study are made available on the Department's website, and that progress updates on the study are made to the Lane Cove Tunnel Air Quality Consultative Committee and promptly made available on the Department's website.

Response: The Government supports this recommendation.

The air quality standards set for the Lane Cove Tunnel are among the toughest in the world.

It is expected that the background air quality in the Lane Cove area will improve following the opening of the Lane Cove Tunnel due to improved traffic flows and tunnel emissions being more effectively dispersed through the Tunnel's ventilation system.

When the tunnel opens, air quality will continue to be monitored and made publicly available.

The Woolcock Institute of Medical Research, an independent research institute, is undertaking the Lane Cove Tunnel Air Quality and Respiratory Health Study on behalf of the NSW Department of Health. The Department of Health has established a web page (see: www.health.nsw.gov.au/airquality/lc_tunnel.html) regarding the study providing a link to additional information available through the Woolcock Institute website.

As indicated on the NSW Department of Health website, this report, once completed, will be publicly released and its findings will be presented to interested community members in a public forum. In addition, the Department of Health is willing to provide progress updates to the Lane Cove Tunnel Air Quality Consultative Committee at appropriate milestones in the investigation.

Recommendation 12

That the NSW Government continue to implement the requirements of the Action for Air plan and strive to constantly improve and update the air quality standards.

Response: The Government supports this recommendation.

As detailed in the Action for Air: 2006 Update, the Government has largely implemented the initiatives under its air quality management plan, Action for Air, and will examine potential new initiatives to improve air quality in the context of its current review of Action for Air.

Attention is also drawn to the Government's State Plan (2006) and the priority under this for "cleaner air and progress on greenhouse gas reductions" (Priority E3). This incorporates the National Environment Protection Measure (NEPM) for ambient air quality in the Government's plan for NSW and will also drive initiatives, backed by strong reporting and accountability mechanisms, to further reduce emissions and achieve air quality goals.

NSW is also engaged in the national process to review and update the Ambient Air Quality NEPM, based on the most recent research into health impacts of air pollution.

Recommendation 13

That future road tunnel projects include within the call for tenders a requirement for tenderers to design and cost in-tunnel filtration as a component of the ventilation systems.

Response: See recommendation 14.

Recommendation 14

That the decision on whether or not to install in-tunnel filtration in future road tunnel projects be made by the Budget Committee of Cabinet, on the basis of advice received from relevant Government departments.

Response: The Government supports this recommendation.

The Cabinet will decide whether or not to install in-tunnel filtration in future road tunnel projects, on the basis of advice received from relevant Government agencies.

Recommendation 15

That the NSW Government continue to work with the Federal Government to ensure that Australian standards for vehicle emissions meet international best-practice standards.

Response: The Government supports this recommendation.

All of the available international best-practice (i.e. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe "Euro") emission standards have been accepted by the Federal Government and are scheduled for implementation in Australia as Australian Design Rules. The NSW government will continue to review future Euro standards and where appropriate will recommend their adoption by the Federal Government as Australian Design Rules, so that new vehicles in NSW will continue to meet best practice international emission standards.

Recommendation 16

That the proposed in-tunnel filtration trial for the M5 East be monitored carefully by the RTA, and that the assessments be promptly made available on the RTA's website.

Response: The Government supports this recommendation.

Recommendation 17

That the Government ensure that a timetable for the installation of filtration technology in the M5 East Tunnel is publicly announced before the end of 2006. The timetable should identify objectives of the trial, with such objectives to be established with the oversight of a community consultative group that includes key community stakeholders. This community consultative group should oversee the operation of the

trial and contribute to regular public reporting on the efficiency of tunnel filtration against the trial's objectives.

Response: In 2006, the Minister for Roads announced the Air Quality Improvement Plan for the M5 East. The Air Quality Improvement Plan included the installation of a filtration plant to filter 200 metres per second of air in the M5 East tunnel.

The RTA has submitted an application for planning approval for the filtration project.

When preparing the application for planning approval, the RTA identified objectives of the proposal. These objectives were established during discussions with community members and local government representatives.

As part of the RTA's application for planning approval of the filtration, the RTA has proposed a community involvement strategy. This strategy proposed mechanisms to enable RTA to engage with and to provide information to the community, including residents, councils, interest groups and local schools.

The RTA is committed to regular public reporting on the efficiency of tunnel filtration against the project objectives.