

Submission
No 158

THE TRANSPORT NEEDS OF SYDNEY'S NORTH-WEST SECTOR

Name: Mr John Longton

Date received: 17/10/2008

Hon. Jenny Gardiner MLC
Chairperson
General Purchase Standing Committee No. 4
Parliament House
Macquarie Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Chair and Committee

As a resident at the above address for over forty years, I can report that there has been no improvement in bus service levels for the last twenty years on the nearby Windsor Road to Parramatta bus route. Bus services along both Old Northern Road and Windsor Road to Parramatta still remain at 30 minute frequency and buses travel in tandem from Baulkham Hills Shopping Centre to Parramatta.

In 1985 Bob Carr, as Minister for Environment and Planning released a plan to build a light rail line linking both Rouse Hill and Hoxton Park growth areas to Parramatta. The planned route was along a Windsor Road reservation with the light rail passing through Parramatta CBD which would have avoided the major bus congestion now occurring with multiple bus routes terminating in the Parramatta CBD. A repeat of the Sydney CBD bus congestion with the addition of more private buses being added to the existing Sydney STA bus congestion.

Parramatta and Baulkham Hills Councils accordingly concentrated high density development along this Old Northern Road, Windsor Road and Church Street main bus route to Parramatta.

As Premier, Bob Carr then ignored his previous light rail plan and route, changed the plan to two separate busways to Parramatta and changed the Rouse Hill route to the low density development Old Windsor Road route. Obviously lower construction costs along the Old Windsor Road green field corridor dictated the change of route and not population densities.

Constant claims now of the success of this renamed Rouse Hill busway to transitway are not based on any modal split study. This study would show bus patronage still declining as a percentage of the ever growing car use population. See attached SMH report dated 15.10.08 which details an ever declining public transport modal split.

Woolworths new national Head Office is located at Bella Vista, adjacent to the Old Windsor Road transitway. Why then does Woolworths contract their own bus service to transport their staff to both Parramatta and Seven Hills rail stations? Perhaps Woolworths could answer this?

Government preference for busways is based on Treasury preference for up front cheaper cost, not long term passenger capacity or operating costs. The Baulkham Hills M2 bus service to Sydney CBD requires one driver to transport about 60 passengers for about a three hour peak hour return trip. Passengers are continually left stranded at bus stops on both inward and outward journeys and forced to wait up to an hour to squeeze onto a full bus. The inefficiency of one passenger load for a three hour turnaround time, has forced the DOT to not only buy the buses for the private operator but also pay the company per kilometre to operate the M2 service.

This current system of buying buses and topping up the fare box for private bus operators, with no control of service standards, ensures that services are minimized to maximize profits. That is why countries like the USA carry out independent cost operation studies when planning public transport. These studies lead to the States and Federal government funding the construction and

then tender the operation with fares and service levels set in the operation contract. That is why the USA has over the last 10 years, built over 100 light rail systems.

Forest Coach Lines which operates a bus service between St Ives and Sydney CBD has broken ranks and pointed out the impossible infrastructure logistics of more and more buses and soaring oil costs. What is not said is that while the government buys natural gas buses for the STA, it continues, at their request, to only buy diesel powered buses for the private operators and continue to subsidize their far more costly fuel bill. See attached SMH report dated 15.09.08 where Forest Coach Lines sets out their concerns and suggests rail or metro is the realistic way of transporting large numbers of passengers. The attached Telegraph report dated 29.08.08 details how Sydney has under invested in public transport compared to our global peers.

We have Professor Peter Newman and Dr Gary Glazebrook, both planning experts calling for the 2001 Christie Report on City Rail expansion to be implemented. See attached SMH reports dated 18.09.08 and 15.10.08. Dr Glazebrook has called for the N/W Metro to be scrapped and the N/W rail reinstated as per the 2001 Christie Report. See also the attached SMH report dated 26.02.02 which shows the Christie Report plan of N/W rail extension and planned future Metro lines linking both Hoxton Park and Castle Hill to Parramatta. Parramatta to West Ryde, Sydney CBD and onto the Eastern Suburbs. Also Dee Why and Cronulla linking through the Sydney CBD.

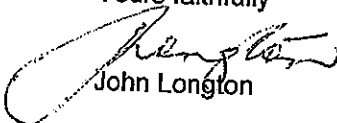
The proposed N/W Metro would destroy the Christie Plan to overcome the major congestion problems on the Western line and also prevent the planned direct rail links from both the N/W and Western line to the planned fourth largest employment zone in Australia being developed at Macquarie Park. See attached SMH reports dated 7.05.08, 18.09.08 and 27.09.08.

Also attached are submissions made to Ministry of Transport dated 5.05.08 and Parramatta City Council dated 25.06.08, outlining concerns regarding Region 4 Bus Network Service Review, route changes, service levels, fares inequity and Parramatta Interchange problems. No replies to these concerns have been received.

A major action to resolve Sydney's transport and planning problems is the need to establish a single body controlling all transport including public transport, road building as well as fares, timetable/ service connections and funding. See attached SMH reports dated 2.06.05 and 4.03.08 supporting this need.

The key problem to new infrastructure funding is GST and Federal funding to the States which has left NSW seriously underfunded with crumbling infrastructure. It is hoped this inquiry will determine that the Federal Government should move to reform Federal and State funding to ensure all states and territories are fairly funded on a per capita basis. See attached SMH reports dated 18.02.06, 25.04.07, 26.05.08 and 2.10.08 on this subject.

Yours faithfully



John Longton

How Costa drove transport off the rails

Linton Besser
Transport Reporter

SYDNEY'S use of public transport has fallen way behind that of other Australian cities and the former transport minister and treasurer Michael Costa must wear much of the blame, says a member of the Infrastructure Australia advisory board.

Peter Newman, the former NSW sustainability commissioner, said Mr Costa's renowned aversion to expensive rail projects was partly why public transport usage in Sydney had failed to keep pace with the growth in population.

Buses pulled from streets - again

At least 15 buses have been pulled from Sydney's streets after cracks were found in the nine-year-old vehicles - the latest of a string of mechanical failures to plague the State Transit Authority.

A "fatigue crack" was found

on Monday after a driver reported a squeaking noise; by late yesterday identical cracks had been discovered in 14 other vehicles. The recall is the fourth in the past year.

Full story - Page 2

His comments come as dramatic new figures show that while Sydney's population grew by 4.1 per cent in the past five years, the use of public transport rose by only 1.4 per cent.

Public transport trips boomed by 41 per cent in Brisbane between 1997 and last year and by 33 per cent in Melbourne in the past decade, according to new analysis by the Bureau of

Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics.

But in Sydney, trips grew by just 2.7 per cent, and were completely swallowed by the 10.4 per cent growth in population over that time.

"What are those other people doing? They are on the road," Dr Newman said. "It means Sydney is going backwards, with more people and less public transport being used."

"The neglect of the rail system is obvious."

The Curtin University professor of sustainability was appointed in May to the Infrastructure Continued Page 2

From Page 1

Australia advisory board, which will help direct the Federal Government as to how best to spend the \$20 billion Building Australia fund.

He said the NSW Government had made a critical mistake in abandoning its 10-year plan to expand the CityRail network with new lines to the north-west and through the CBD.

"I was very disappointed in seeing [the plan] dumped," he said. "It was the cornerstone of the Metropolitan Strategy. It was an outcome of the processes of planning ... and coming up with infrastructure as a result."

He said it was "internal politics" that killed the rail plan, for which he sheeted home responsibility to the outspoken former treasurer.

"Mr Costa was always against the whole planning process and against public transport investment in particular," Mr Newman said. "His legacy there will be remembered."

Mr Costa, when contacted by the *Herald*, declined to comment. In the past decade, journeys on Sydney's rail system have increased by only 6.6 per cent.

The comparable figure in Brisbane was 39.5 per cent, and in Melbourne, the increase was a staggering 58.6 per cent.

In Brisbane, where billions of dollars are being spent on a dedicated busway network, bus patronage increased by 152 per

cent between 1997 and last year. In Sydney it fell 2.1 per cent.

Sydney's strongest growth across public transport modes was actually in light rail, where trips increased by 59.6 per cent.

Mr Newman said the figures were so stark they were "worse than I thought", and could be attributed both to the growth in tollways and the NSW Government's mismanagement of rail.

"The fundamental failure in Sydney was not to have planned for that expansion," he said.

"All they wanted was to keep the system going rather than asking how it could be expanded."

GROWING PAINS

passenger journeys - millions

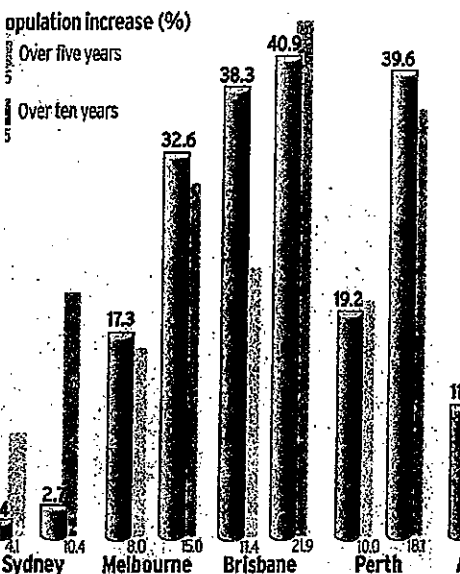
■ Increase over five years

■ Increase over ten years

population increase (%)

Over five years

Over ten years



If your bus is crowded, here's a real oil shock

Linton Besser
Transport Reporter

BUSES have quietly plied their way around the leafy northern suburbs of Sydney without too much trouble for the past two decades. But that is set to change drastically if petrol prices continue to rise, according to an alarming new report by the University of Sydney.

In a worst-case scenario, where the price of petrol soars by \$1 a litre each year to 2017, the number of people trying to climb aboard a Forest Coach Lines bus

between St Ives and the city would climb 1600 per cent.

Instead of carrying about 1500 commuters in the morning peak each day, the buses would have to transport more than 24,000 – an almost impossible task. While Forest currently has 70 buses in service, it would need 480 vehicles for this route alone.

Even a more modest annual increase of 25 cents a litre would see the number of commuters leap to more than 8600.

A rail or metro line is the only
Continued Page 2

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realistic way of transporting this many passengers.

There are huge tracts of Sydney that have vastly inadequate public transport and could suffer even worse consequences. The report focuses on routes serviced by Forest but its implications are dire for a city dependent on private vehicles.

"These kind of patronage figures are a problem because I don't believe we have a long-term strategy for meeting this demand," said Forest Coach Lines' chief executive, David Royle.

"If fuel goes up that significantly and the transport system can't take up that demand, the ultimate result will probably be the economy will suffer and it will affect people's spending."

Demand on every Forest service has soared over recent years. Mature, 20-year-old routes are growing 10 per cent a year, and Mr Royle says this will continue.

But these increases could be just the start of a new wave of demand for public transport. The report's predictions, prepared by David Hensher and Zheng Li at the Institute of Transport and Logistics Studies, present a doomsday scenario of complete social upheaval across large areas of Sydney.

And they are not outlandish predictions. The CSIRO released a report in June that predicted wild increases in the price of petrol, up to \$8 a litre by 2018.

"The increase of \$0.25 per annum would stimulate demand for bus transport by 12.1 per cent within Hornsby-Kuring-gai, and by 11.2 per cent within the northern beaches in 2009 [estimating petrol at \$1.85]," the report says.

"Bus patronage between those zones (or inter-zone) would have a larger growth of 25.3 per cent. If the \$0.25 increase continued until 2017,

there would be a substantial growth (ie. 573.8 per cent) in the inter-zone bus patronage."

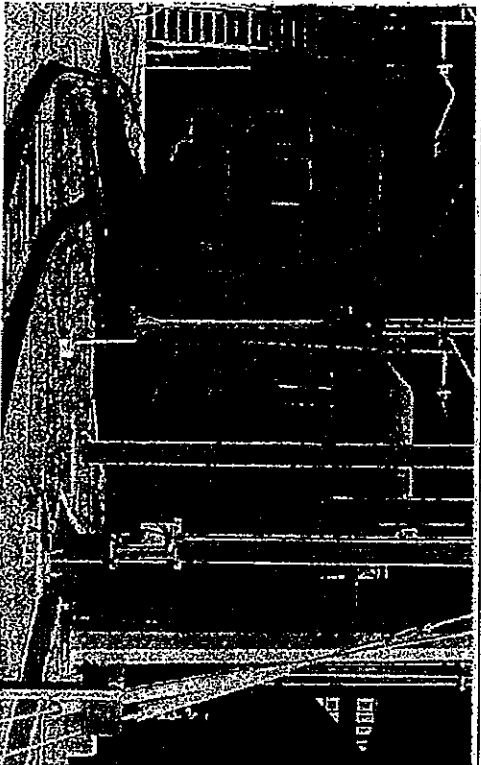
The report found that by 2013, if petrol prices increased by 50 cents a year, then demand would swell more than 1425 per cent along routes between the northern beaches and Ku-ring-gai.

"The implication ... for bus use is quite clear. While the opportunity to grow patronage is encouraging, the ability to do so, given current capacity constraints, is very worrying," the report says.

Mr Royle said the State Government needed a long-term strategy to cope with the challenges confronting the transport industry.

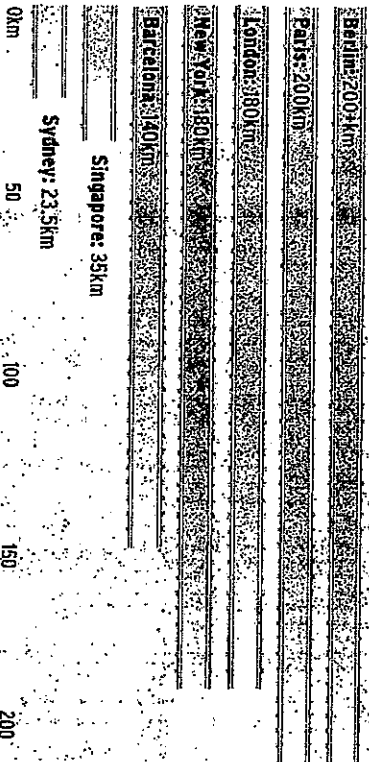
"We need more priority for buses and we need a strategy put in place that says if the current growth continues on this corridor at this rate we will get to a point where buses are not a solution and then heavy rail or metro rail becomes a solution."

Rail embarrassment



End of the line

How much track in each major city



Rhys Haynes
Transport Reporter

HERE'S proof that Sydney's rail network is a laughing stock when compared with its global peers.

Experts have compared Sydney's public transport infrastructure with major cities including New York, Paris and Barcelona — and the embarrassing results speak for themselves.

The special report, obtained by *The Daily Telegraph*, reveals the international cities have as much as eight times the length of track that Sydney does.

And the architect behind the report, says the State Government's failure to build any "significant" transport infrastructure in the past 80 years is the reason for the shocking gap.

Hill Thalis architects submitted the research as part of the City of Sydney's Sustainable Sydney 2030 document, which is undergoing the final touches after public consultation.

Architect Philip Thalis found that the 26.6sq km of Sydney's local government area had just 23.5km of rail infrastructure.

An area of Paris's city centre the same size, had 200km of track while London and New York both had 180km.

Barcelona and Berlin — which have similar populations to Sydney, of four million — had 140km and 200km of track respectively.

"When you compare to other cities,

Sydney has just built nothing," Mr Thalis told *The Daily Telegraph*.

This study shows that the State Government has been asleep at the wheel since the 1920s in terms of public transport.

He said Sydney's railway system was based on corridors of infrastructure in and out of the CBD, rather than moving passengers around the metropolitan areas.

"That means that areas of high density in the middle ring suburbs aren't adequately serviced by the infrastructure," he said.

Mr Thalis said most of Sydney's major railway infrastructure was originally built in the 1850s, when the line to Parramatta was started.

"We haven't built any significant public transport since the 1920s.

"Since the Harbour Bridge was opened in 1932 we've completed the Circular Quay line in the 1950s, and finished the East Hills and Eastern Suburbs lines. The Airport Link was one of the bigger jobs but look at it — it is only four stations."

A council spokesman admitted the alarming comparisons put Sydney well behind its peers. "The comparisons clearly show there has been an underinvestment in public transport in the Sydney City Centre compared with other global cities," he said.

» How does Sydney stack up compared to these cities?
dailytelegraph.com.au

SMH 18-9-08

Better public transport for \$6b less



GARRY GLAZEBROOK

How can NSW reconcile its wish for better public transport and its perilous balance sheet? Here are three initiatives that could

help. First, scrap the North West Metro beyond Epping and replace it with the original plan, the North West Rail Link.

This saves at least half the metro's estimated \$12 billion cost by using the soon-to-be-completed Epping-Chatswood railway line. It connects the north-western suburbs, the rapidly growing Macquarie Park, the lower North Shore and the CBD, and there is spare capacity on the route to do it.

At least seven or eight more trains an hour could be introduced during the morning peak. It can be built faster than the metro because most of the planning and design work is done, and it provides many more seats for long-distance trips.

The inner part of the metro - from the CBD to Epping - needs to be delayed until the state's finances are healthier, engineering difficulties are resolved, and a total metro network designed, one with other routes, such as along Parramatta Road and to the Warringah Peninsula.

The second initiative would extend the light rail system west from Lilyfield to serve other inner west suburbs, and up Sussex Street in the city to serve the Hungry Mile. Both extensions could be undertaken quickly and cheaply. It's high time Sydney built on the success of its embryonic system - which had 10 per cent growth in patronage last year - to

help deal with congestion and travel demand in the city and inner suburbs.

The third initiative would accelerate services back to the schedules Sydney had before CityRail slowed down its timetable in 2006, and improve the frequencies of trains at weekends and weekday off-peak times by using four-car trains operated by driver-only crews.

This could be trialled on the Eastern Suburbs and Illawarra line (the blue line on CityRail maps), which is largely independent of the rest of the network, making use of the Clearways projects such as the Bondi Junction turn-back and duplication of the Cronulla line.

The Tangara trains operating on this line can be operated by drivers alone, rather than driver-and-guard crews, once cameras are installed to enable the driver to close the doors safely.

These initiatives are little more than

Our railways were once much more efficient.

common sense but all are cost-effective and will move Sydney towards a more sustainable transport system.

Light rail, buses and, potentially, metros are important to the city's transport future, but CityRail remains the backbone. It carries almost 1 million passengers a day and handles 70 per cent of the total distance travelled on Sydney's public transport. Although it is the cheapest of any mode in Sydney on a passenger-kilometre basis, it must be made more cost-effective.

This third initiative would enable other efficiency measures to be intro-

duced to the network, designed to reduce costs by at least \$200 million a year within five years - and boost both patronage and revenue.

For example, having more frequent trains at weekends and in off-peak periods would attract more passengers. Speeding up the schedules would save the equivalent of nine trains across the network, worth more than \$240 million in capital costs. Running four-car trains instead of eight on weekends would save on maintenance, depreciation and energy.

Driver-only crews would reduce the time trains spend at stations and allow guards to be retrained as drivers or customer service officers, improving security and reducing fare evasion.

Once the new trains are delivered in 2011 and the Clearways program is completed, train services could be increased by 20 per cent in peak periods and even more in the off-peak services. Any new services, such as those to south-western and north-western suburbs, could be run more efficiently from day one.

If the Government is serious about improving Sydney's transport it must get together with CityRail management and the unions to forge a new kind of service, a service found in Hong Kong, with a 99.9 per cent on-time running, or in Switzerland, where a train is late if it is 15 seconds behind schedule.

Even our own railways were once much more efficient. In the 1960s the steam-hauled Newcastle Flyer was timed to the half-minute and was considerably quicker than today's fastest trains between Sydney and Newcastle.

This is the last chance for the Government, rail management and unions to improve Sydney's transport system, and they can do it without blowing the budget.

Dr Garry Glazebrook is a senior lecturer at the University of Technology, Sydney.



- Existing Rail Line**

- Inner West Line (Liverpool/Bankstown - City via Regents Park)
 Cumberland Line (Campbelltown - Blacktown)
 Airport and East Hills Line (Macarthur - City via Airport/Sydenham)
 South Line (Macarthur - City via Granville)
 North Shore Line (Berowra - Parramatta via Central)
 Western Lines (Emu Plains/Richmond - North Sydney)
 Carlingford Line (Carlingford - Clyde)
 Northern Line (Berowra - North Sydney via Strathfield)
- Major Interchange Minor Interchange

Metro throws planning on its head

Linton Besser
Transport Reporter

YEARS of careful planning to link Sydney's housing, transport and employment hubs has been jettisoned by the decision to abandon a heavy rail line to Rouse Hill and replace it with an independent metro line, Australia's top planning body has warned.

The announcement of the new \$12 billion North West Metro has scuttled the integrated transport and housing policies that underpinned the State Government's all-encompassing Metropolitan Strategy, says the Planning Institute of Australia.

Thousands of future north-

Unholy row

At least seven new bus lanes are expected to be created in the city centre for World Youth Day. The City of Sydney has accused the State Government of secret plans to retain them without consultation after the six-day festival. **Page 2**

west residents were expected to travel by rail from their new homes to jobs specifically created in the "global arc" between Macquarie Park and North Sydney. But the metro will force these commuters to interchange

at Epping to a line that now will not have room for them. More than 10,000 people an hour could be stuck at Epping during the morning peak, competing for just 4000 spaces on the Epping to Chatswood CityRail line.

The sudden shift of priorities - from an \$8 billion CityRail expansion plan to a single underground all-stops metro - has thrown into doubt the very principles by which hundreds of planning decisions have been made. For instance, no provision has been made for high-density development at key stops on the metro at Rozelle, Drummoyne and Gladesville.

In a new policy paper, the institute says it supports the North-

West Metro line as far west as Epping, but that extending a subway to Rouse Hill contravenes the world's best transport and land use principles. The metro and "its connectivity with Victoria Road overturns years of careful planning by the State Government to integrate land use and transport planning for Sydney's global city corridor from Epping to the airport", it says.

The metro was announced in March as a replacement for the \$8 billion Metropolitan Rail Expansion Program, which would have included the North-West Rail Link and a new rail line through the CBD as part of the CityRail Continued Page 2

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network. The line to Rouse Hill was always premised on the link between housing designated for the north-west and the concentration of jobs in areas between Macquarie Park and Chatswood, St Leonards and North Sydney.

The new line will still service the north-west but will force commuters to change at Epping or Wynyard to reach those employment hubs via CityRail lines.

"The Epping to Rouse Hill leg should be retained as a heavy rail corridor that is part of the CityRail network," the institute says. "This [would] provide a strong direct rail link between the north-western parts of Sydney and major employment locations on the northern side of Sydney Harbour."

The metro will carry up to 30,000 passengers an hour to Epping, where many will be forced to change to the CityRail network to travel to this employment arc. The Government has calculated that 38 per cent of north-west

A BREAK IN THE ARC

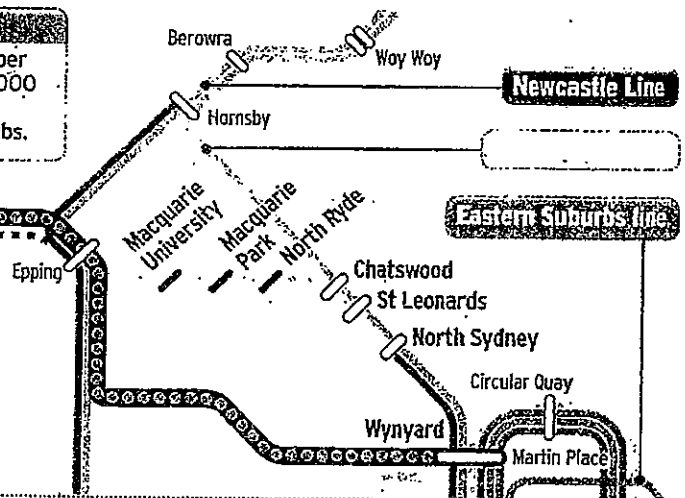
North West Metro
A maximum 30,000 commuters per hour to the city, with more than 11,000 forced to interchange at Epping to reach North Shore employment hubs.

Rouse Hill

North West Rail link (shelved)

Was to directly connect with Macquarie Park, Chatswood, St Leonards and North Sydney, with 10 city-bound trains per hour.

SHH GRAPHIC 705.08



passengers want to access the Macquarie Park corridor, as well as Chatswood to North Sydney. That means 11,400 people an hour in the peak will be trying to change on to a rail line that now

configured for a maximum of 4000 an hour between Epping and Chatswood. Under the former rail plan, the capacity of the Epping to Chatswood line would have been substantially en-

hanced. The importance of a direct connection was recognised by the Government in its 2002 overview report on the North-West Rail Link. "The North-West Rail Link's primary aim is to allow

people from Sydney's north-west direct access to employment, shopping and community facilities in the broad area between Epping, Chatswood, North Sydney, [and] Sydney CBD," it said.

The institute is concerned that strategic planning for Sydney was largely underpinned on a rail plan that has now been shelved. It included a new CBD rail line that would ease congestion at stations like Wynyard. The institute asks about the capacity of the already pressured Wynyard "to support forced interchange of passengers onto the CityRail network".

The Minister for Transport, John Watkins said: "I welcome the Planning Institute of Australia's praise ... they have joined the chorus of support for this vital project."

"Passengers travelling to the business centres at Macquarie Park, Chatswood and North Sydney can interchange with the existing CityRail network at Epping, Wynyard, Martin Place and St James station."

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Dr Garry Glazebrook is a senior lecturer at the University of Technology, Sydney.

ANALYSIS

A line of limited use without the missing link

Linton Besser

IT IS not fair to label the \$2.3 billion Epping to Chatswood line a white elephant.

But what do you call it? When it opens in February, it will provide trains to a part of Sydney that never had them before, and perhaps of equal importance, it also offers relief to overcrowded western suburbs trains.

But unless the NSW Government builds a CityRail extension between Epping and Rouse Hill, as it promised for many years until March, it is going to be virtually impossible to increase the number of trains that service it.

When it opens, four trains an hour will service the five stations along the new line. For the next five years, perhaps even 10, this might be sufficient.

But now the State Government has dumped the Rouse Hill heavy rail line, as Macquarie Park grows (it is designated to become bigger than Perth's CBD), the number of trains per hour cannot be bumped up ever.

Why not? Because there is nowhere for more trains to come from.

Hornsby station is too congested to squeeze through any more trains heading south towards Strathfield. The location of its stabling yard means that trains heading towards Epping have to cross in front of all of the

other "through services". It may sound like transport speak, but that means it is effectively impossible to run more than eight trains an hour south of Hornsby, and therefore impossible to divert more than four an hour along the new Epping-Chatswood line.

Once upon a time, the Epping to Chatswood line was the Parramatta to Chatswood line, and those extra trains would have come from Parramatta. When this was axed in 2003, the trains were then to come from Rouse Hill along the proposed North West Rail Link. The problem is the North West Rail Link is in the bin, replaced by Morris Iemma's ambitious \$12.5 billion metro.

To overcome the ceiling on services, there are three options. Trains along the congested North Shore Line could be diverted to the Epping to Chatswood line - which would never happen.

Or the Government could spend \$50 million on a new stabling yard north of Hornsby and about \$500 million on quadrupling the North Line, which would give more room for those trains.

The third option is to revert to its commitment to build the North West Rail Link. It would not only solve the budget dilemma, but it would also prevent the Epping to Chatswood line being labelled a white elephant.

Mr D Gray
Senior Project Officer - Transport Planning
Parramatta City Council
30 Darcy Street
Parramatta 2150

Dear Mr Gray

Parramatta Interchange and Bus Region 4 Review

Thank you for your letter dated 13.06.08 regarding the above.

Unfortunately to date, Parramatta City Council has a poor record in Transport Planning. Rubber stamping busways without any independent transport planning advice. Non consideration of the Hoxton Park - Parramatta - Baulkham Hills 1985 Draft Sydney Regional Environmental Plan for light rail corridor has led to an Bus Interchange that cannot cope with any future growth. Council's poor planning of CBD bus routes, without consideration of user convenient access, has also led to a costly rerouting of bus services.

The City of Sydney Council has engaged independent transport expert advice which has recommended light rail system to overcome the ever growing bus congestion in the Sydney CBD. The attached SMH report dated 10.01.06 outlines Sydney CBD growing bus congestion and provides advice on how light rail has been introduced in 100 cities worldwide to overcome transport congestion. The State Government continues to turn a blind eye to these overseas success examples of light rail.

With regard to your request for more details of concerns generally regarding the interchange and bus services, the following should be of assistance:

1. The submission to the MOT dated 5.05.08 detailed basic concerns regarding inequity for Western Sydney residents served by private buses in service levels, lack of services, ticketing, high fares and lack of interchange transport services information and coordination. See attached SMH report dated 7.06.07 which details the NSW Auditor-General findings which confirms lack of any management of interchanges. The audit recommended the Government appoint a coordinating body, which appears to be still under consideration.
2. The interchange problems is only the tip of the iceberg, lack of any coordinated management of our transport system will perpetuate the shambles. "One Operator Moves It All" in most other Australian capital cities and overseas. See attached SMH report dated 2.06.05.
3. A previous inspection of the interchange on the 16.10.06, by concerned members of the community with Ms Tanya Gadiel MP, was arranged by Councillor C Worthington. The concerns raised then remain today.
4. The concerns raised regarding a consistent fare scale across all metropolitan bus services was a commitment by both the former Premier Bob Carr and former Transport Minister Michael Costa. See attached SMH reports attached dated 1.09.04 and 9.09.04. The attached SMH report dated 31.07.06 details the massive bus fares inequity suffered by private bus users compared to government bus users. The 2004 Bus Review was promised to overcome the major cross regional travel difficulties and fare costs for Western Sydney.

P.2

Travel within Region 4 still requires buying a single journey ticket for each bus trip every day including changes between buses across region 4. While the STA continues to divert traffic lanes to bus only, by far the worst bus delays are due to the long delays caused at bus stops while each passenger is forced to purchase a single ticket for every bus trip. Baulkham Hills Council has timed M2 Sydney buses taking between 10 to 15 minutes to load passengers at the Baulkham Hills Shopping centre bus stop. Bus lanes cannot speed up services with a 1940's ticket system.

5. Research carried out by the University of Western Sydney has found that Western Sydney was the most disadvantaged region for public transport. See attached SMH report dated 21.10.06.

These fundamental transport problems faced by Western Sydney residents cannot be resolved without strong support by our local State Members direct to the Government. It is therefore hoped Ms Tanya Gadiel will make such representations on behalf of the local community.

Yours sincerely

John Longton

cc Clr C Worthington

Ministry of Transport
Transport Planning
227 Elizabeth Street
Sydney NSW 2000

Region 4 Bus Network Service Review

It is requested that the following comments be considered in this review.

1. It was agreed by stakeholders at a Region 4 consultation at Parramatta City Council on 29.04.08, the comments closing date of 9.05.08 be extended due to delays in distributing the proposed network maps to the community.
2. The proposed service levels map did not include any information regarding proposed service levels. A similar map for Contract Area 15 (Busways Campbelltown) included proposed service levels. Services on eight routes indicate 15 minute service levels in peak periods. Baulkham Hills Shire currently has no 15 minute services. Does Busways generally provide more frequent service levels than Comfort Delgro Cabcharge?
3. It was requested at the Parramatta Council consultation meeting for service levels to be provided for stakeholder's information and comment.
4. The 2004 Bus Review Report recommended a consistent fare scale across all metropolitan services. The NSW Council of Social Services (NCOSS) cited in 2006 the fares inequity between private and government buses. A weekly ticket to Macquarie University costs \$55 from Mona Vale for an integrated Travelpass weekly ticket. It costs over \$100 paying separate private bus fares from Horsley Park to Macquarie University, which is about the same travel distance.
5. The 2004 Bus Review also stated that private bus operators should be obliged to offer a Travel 10 (or equivalent) ticket discounted at around 15% relative to a single fare ticket. This has been a standard ticket for ten rides for well over ten years. When will the cost of bus travel be made equitable for all Sydney residents?
6. A key reason for the 2004 Bus Review was to reduce the number of separate bus contract areas in Sydney from over 80 to 10 (now 15). This was necessary to overcome the many bus changes and separate fares paid for any travel across Sydney. With Region 4 operating as one single contract area, it is still required to pay a separate fare with flag fall loading, when changing buses owned by the one operator.
7. The 2007 Audit Report by the NSW Auditor-General found the Government approach to transport interchanges has been ad hoc and was below par compared with other Australian and overseas cities. The Parramatta interchange confirms this finding. Buses depart from Parramatta to all points of the compass with all bus destination signs at the station concourse all simply stating "buses", leaving the public to find the correct bus stops. The report also found the transport Infoline 131500 number did not provide details of private buses departing Parramatta and again compared poorly with other Australian cities such as Melbourne and Adelaide. The report also found far too little car parking available. RailCorp offers about 23,000 dedicated car parking spaces

but in 2004 there were 55,000 cars parked near train stations. The audit recommended the Government appoint a co-ordinating body to set performance objectives. Has any such action been taken?

8. Proposed existing bus route 606 deletes the service to Parramatta for Eastern area residents of Winston Hills and also the service to Winston Hills Shopping Centre.

9. The substitute new T60 service from Winston Hills shops to Castle Hill must provide the cancelled 606 service levels for employment access travel to both Castle Hill shops and Industrial area.

10. Current 600 route 30 minute peak service is overloaded in peak periods.

11. Proposed extending route 600 to Macquarie Centre will make on time running to Parramatta impossible at peak periods.

12. Route 601 services North of Baulkham Hills Shopping Centre, now at 30 minutes at peak is inadequate for the medium density development along this route.

13. Routes 613 and 614 to Sydney only total eight services each day to Sydney with route 613 proposed deletion. This will ensure the Bella Vista combined 614 route buses will be packed before reaching Winston Hills, forcing many to stand each day to Sydney and many to walk greater distances to catch buses. Both services should continue and also provide an hourly service all day including evenings.

Yours sincerely

John Longton

London to a brick, one operator moves it all

Tim Dick

Sydney's main roads are governed by the Roads and Traffic Authority. Its trains are run by RailCorp, its buses are run by private companies and Sydney Buses, both regulated by the Ministry of Transport, and a new statutory corporation runs the ferries. A fledgling cycleway program is overseen by the RTA and councils.

In London, Transport for London looks after it all: its double-decker buses, black cabs, the Underground which goes everywhere, the Docklands light rail, its new trams at Croydon, the main roads and all the city's 4600 traffic lights.

Sydney's transport is divided between two state departments, and two different ministers. London has one combined bureaucracy to run it all, and one man responsible: the Mayor, Ken Livingstone. He is the same "Red Ken" who won an earlier office in the 1980s on a campaign to reduce fares, which was declared illegal by the House of Lords and had the unfortunate result of doubling them.

In his second incarnation as leader, he is proving more effective,

best known for the congestion-beating £5 (£12) charge for cars to enter the city centre. It has cut traffic delays by 30 per cent, which seems on first sight like being good only for

those wealthy enough to pay the toll, but public transport has boomed. With fewer cars about, buses move faster and keep to timetable, encouraging more people to use them.

Since 2000, the car's share of people's trips has fallen by 5 per centage points to 42.3 per cent (Sydney car share is 70.2 per cent), with buses taking up much of the slack. Nearly a million

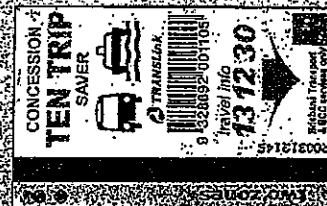
more trips are now made by bus with its share up to 17.5 per cent of trips and public transport up to 33.4 per cent from 30.9 per cent, all of which has happened under a unified transport bureaucracy.

WHAT OTHERS HAVE THAT SYDNEY DOES NOT

BRISBANE The first fully smartcard system in Australia, Sydney's smartcard system is the only one in the world that allows train and ferry fares to be topped up at a single ticket outlet that serves both south-east Queensland and the Noosa to Coolangubach and west to Helidon. The port of Sydney Government's passenger annual budget is just four million, but it has a passenger patronage of 1.6 million trips in less than a year.

LONDON Over 10 million smartcards issued to users of London's public transport system, with the London Underground, which is a single authority, having a fare cap that includes the rail fare to the airport. The Mayor, Ken Livingstone, has a campaign to reduce fares, which was declared illegal by the House of Lords and had the unfortunate result of doubling them.

HONG KONG The Octopus smartcard system, which was introduced in 1997 for use on all public transport, has been used by 1.6 million people in the last year. The system is popular with the



deducts fares from credit stored on the card and means commuters can board buses and pass through fare gates faster. Commuters are given fare discounts when they transfer between bus and rail, and between buses.

HELSINKI Cardboard tickets were replaced with smartcards in 1999. By 2001 they were being used across the city and it is expected they will soon be used on as many as two-thirds of all trips.

GENEVA Commuters carry the EasyRide smartcard but there is no need to swipe it against access terminals. A weak wireless transmission detects the card when the passenger passes.

The 8 million cards in use far exceed the population of about 6.5 million. Transport operators have also raised ticket prices for commuters travelling before the morning peak.

SINGAPORE The e-zink smartcard replaced the paper one in 2002. The system

SMH 4-03-08

Rail the only way out of mess, planners say

Mark Coultan

A CAR-dominated Sydney is ill-equipped to cope with the coming economic shocks of carbon constraints and oil which could reach \$150-\$200 a barrel within a few years, a transport planner has warned.

Garry Glazebrook, a lecturer in urban planning at University of Technology Sydney, told the Herald round table that Sydney had some very car-dependent suburbs. "We're not really equipped for the sort of economic shocks that are coming. We saw what happened in the 1970s."

The main priority should be to complete the government railway building program, which includes lines to Rouse Hill and Leppington, and separating Sydney's complex system of rail lines. "That's the most important

single investment for this city. It links the new areas in the north-west and south-west and half a million jobs. It unblocks the rest of the rail system for 50 years.

"If we don't make it I predict that in five to 10 years we won't be a world-class city."

Transport and planning experts invited to the round table were uniformly disappointed and frustrated by the lack of long-term commitment to public transport, and the series of announcements by the State Government which were then deferred, cancelled, modified, or replaced by new, different promises.

Julie Bindon, state president of the Planning Institute of Australia, said: "There seems to be an apparent lack of a really well-researched growth management plan that is actually linked to infrastructure."

Dr Glazebrook suggested there should be a single body controlling all transport, including public transport, road building, road pricing and parking, as well as fares and funding. This occurred in Germany and Singapore, while Queensland had a body to organise road, rail and buses into one transport system, he said.

He advocated appointing a commissioner of transport who could not be sacked unless both sides of politics agreed. This would be one way of guaranteeing support and financing for projects which required many years to plan and build, such as new rail lines.

Chris Stapleton is a transport expert who last year proposed a radical new Sydney transport strategy involving new light rail, heavy rail and bus services. The strategy aimed to have public

transport within 400 metres of 95 per cent of houses and businesses, with services leaving every 10 minutes.

Mr Stapleton said moving people by rail cost one sixth of private road transport.

The round table was in agreement that it was the State Treasury which was blocking plans for extra rail lines.

Chris Brown, the managing director of the Tourism and Transport Forum, said Treasury despised rail. "The one form of transport Treasury liked was the Cross-City Tunnel. It was because it didn't cost them a cent," he said. He paraphrased the attitude of the Treasurer, Michael Costa, as "Any person who steps on a train costs me money."

Mr Brown supported the concept of new metro lines but wondered if they were just an excuse

to cancel the north-west rail link to Rouse Hill.

A planning consultant, John Mant, said one plan to integrate land use and transport planning had been thwarted partly by the professional rivalries of the planners themselves.

The one note of scepticism about public transport came from Tony Recsei, president of the community group Save Our Suburbs, which opposes over-development.

"The only way you're really going to get public transport to be the dominant transport system is in a city like Hong Kong where you've got something like 50,000 people per square kilometre," Dr Recsei said. "And if Sydney was to be like that, you'd have all of Sydney within five kilometres of Central Station. Do you really want to live like that?"

Honest broker blows lid on GST scam

COMMENT
Matt Wade

IAN MACFARLANE has blown the whistle on a great tax scam: the way the \$37 billion GST is carved up.

By branding the huge GST subsidies flowing from "slow-growth" NSW and Victoria to the boom states of Queensland and Western Australia as illogical, the Reserve Bank Governor has increased pressure on the Federal Government to fix the antiquated system of allocating money to the states.

Compared with the state and federal politicians who routinely fight over money, Macfarlane is an honest broker. And he is not alone in his view that federal-state relations are in need of a revamp.

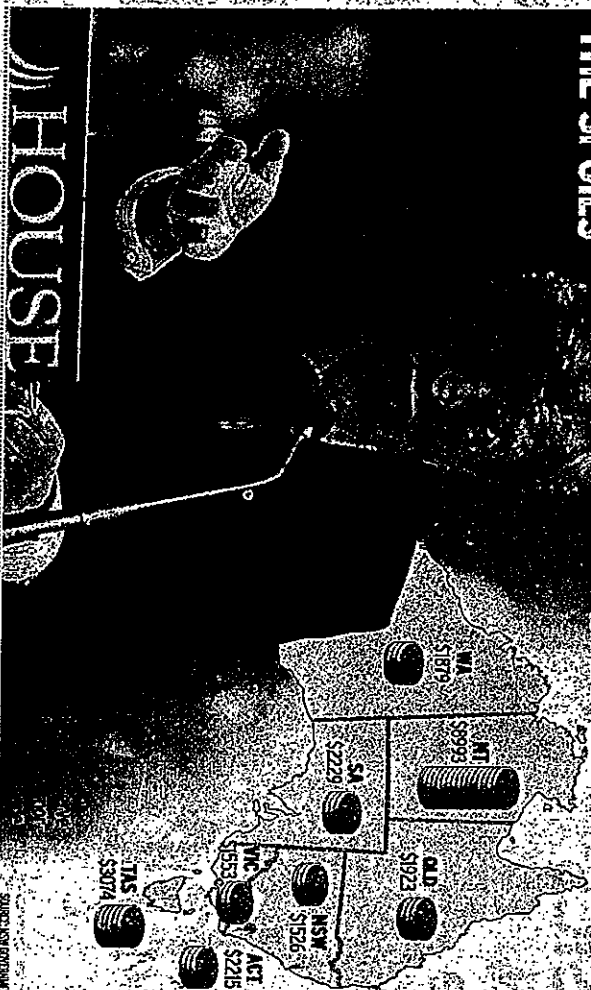
Some of the country's top economists and tax experts say the system for distributing the GST is overly complex, inefficient and not transparent. The distortions in the state grants system have the potential to exacerbate regional downturns and damage the national economy.

Fixing the problem that Macfarlane has highlighted should be at the top of the national reform agenda.

Cross-subsides from NSW and Victoria have grown sharply over

SHARING THE SPOILS

GST distribution per person 2005-06



SOURCE: NEW ECONOMIST

the past decade. The State Government estimates that NSW will subsidise other states, including Western Australia and Queensland, by \$2.8 billion this financial year – a transfer of \$407 from each NSW resident. NSW will get back just 79 cents for each \$1 of GST generated in the state.

The average GST grant to the

donor states – NSW and Victoria – will be \$1537 per person compared with \$2211 per person for the recipient states.

The policy of "equalisation", where poorer states are subsidised by bigger ones in an attempt to allow comparable social services, underpins the GST controversy. But this is a

complex task and the Commonwealth Grants Commission, which advises the Treasurer on how the GST should be allocated, admits there are flaws in the system.

While there is a case for smaller states and territories like South Australia, Tasmania and the Northern Territory to

receive a subsidy, Macfarlane said subsidies to Queensland and Western Australia do not make sense.

For example, this year \$232 million will flow from NSW, with an unemployment rate of 5.7 per cent, to Western Australia, which has an unemployment rate of 4 per cent. Queensland, which can afford to give its residents an eight-cent-a-litre petrol discount, gets \$636 million worth of GST revenue generated in NSW.

Despite the clamour for change, the Treasurer, Peter Costello, yesterday dismissed calls by the NSW Government for a fairer deal. On ABC radio, he advised the new state Treasurer, Michael Costa, not to get into "this old state versus Commonwealth argument".

The federal Treasurer has authority to revamp the system, but Costello says it is up to the states to agree on a new GST distribution – a remote prospect.

Costello likes to point out the GST has made the states better off in aggregate. But now even the Reserve Bank Governor is telling him that is the distribution of the tax, not the aggregate amount, that is the problem.

Macfarlane's comments show this is an issue that is not going to go away.

SMH 25-04-07

■ BUDGET

States get a smaller slice of tax pie

John Garnaut and Matt Wade

THE states are receiving less money from the Commonwealth than at any time in three decades, contrary to claims they are receiving "windfall gains" because of the GST.

The calculations by Macquarie Bank, which adjusts for taxes the states gave up for the GST, show the states received grants from Canberra worth 5.1 per cent of gross domestic product last financial year, down from about 7 per cent two decades ago.

While the NSW Treasurer, Michael Costa, is struggling with a \$509 million deficit, the federal Treasurer, Peter Costello, is expected to announce another upward revision of tax revenue forecasts in the budget on May 8.

Economists are concerned that yesterday's benign inflation data has removed the threat of an interest rate rise and therefore the most effective constraint on Federal Government spending.

In his research note on government finances, a Macquarie Bank economist, Rory

Robertson, castigated Mr Costello and the Treasury department for publishing "seriously misleading" figures that hid the fact that GST was raised by the Commonwealth and that it replaced a series of state taxes.

"Its effective funding of state and local functions remains at a three-decade low," he said. "Today's seriously misleading budget aggregates effectively hide the fact that Canberra is collecting more taxes as a share of GDP - and keeping more for its own use - than ever before."

■ TAXATION REVIEW

Federal-state system out of kilter, says Opposition

Brian Robins

AN OVERHAUL of state and federal relations is needed to tackle major inefficiencies in the tax system, says a panel set up by the NSW Opposition.

"It is nonsensical that 80 per cent of tax revenue goes to the Commonwealth while only 16 per cent is collected by the State Government yet the State is responsible for 40 per cent of outlays," said the shadow treasurer, Greg Pearce.

The Opposition finance spokesman, Mike Baird, said: "This inefficient system means we have \$20 billion sitting in a federal surplus while infrastructure and services in NSW are crumbling."

The Opposition statement adds to a chorus of calls for a tax overhaul, including from the State Government, and comes as the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal finalises its review of taxation.

The State Government is con-

cerned that its tax revenues cover just 40 per cent of outlays, with Federal Government grants covering another 40 per cent, much of it tied to specific projects and programs.

The balance comes from income from government-owned trading enterprises such as the electricity industry.

The State Government has been in dispute with the Federal Government over the split of GST revenues, especially since NSW subsidises Queensland.

The heavy reliance on payroll taxes in NSW is a continuing source of complaint from business, and the property industry, in a submission to the tribunal inquiry this month, referred to what it said was the role of inequitable property taxes in the rental accommodation crisis.

The Real Estate Institute said in its submission: "Stamp duty on real property transfers and land tax are disincentives for investment in rental accommodation in NSW."

Stamp duty on property sales and land tax also contributed to the accommodation crisis, it said.

"The retention of transfer duty on real property transactions and land tax at the same time as abolition of stamp duty on other asset transfers discriminates against real property as an investment asset."

Property taxes account for a third of the State Government's tax revenues, the same proportion as raised through payroll taxes.

Bursting at the seams

But we can't afford to keep Sydney running, says Rees

Brian Robins, Sunanda Creagh and Wendy Frew

SYDNEY has grossly underestimated the population explosion that will squeeze its resources over the next 20 years, but the cash-strapped Premier admits it is "pointless" to promise the billions of dollars in extra spending the city will need.

Nathan Rees yesterday signalled deep cuts in the capital spending program and a radical departure from the \$140 billion infrastructure strategy of the former premier, Morris Iemma.

On the same day that it emerged Sydney will need almost 900,000 extra homes by 2031 - a third more than estimated three years ago - Mr Rees told a news conference: "Governments can boast about capital works programs extending out five, 10, 15 years. But essentially what you're boasting about is the level of debt you have."

Mr Rees said income or revenue was needed to service the debt.

"If we can't, it's pointless boasting about a capital works program," he said.

Treasury pressure on infrastructure spending is apparent again today, as the *Herald* reveals the Government is facing renewed pressure from its officials to dump Mr Iemma's promised \$1.36 billion South West RailLink, a 13-kilometre line to the new population growth centre at Edmondson Park and Leppington. Expressions of interest were invited only weeks ago from companies to build the line.

Population growth in such areas will be a big test for the city's future infrastructure needs. A soaring immigration rate means Sydney will need to squeeze in a third more houses and flats by 2031 than was estimated only three years ago. [Full report - Page 6] The city's flagging infrastructure is already struggling to cope with population pressures. But falling tax revenue had left the Government little choice but to slash spending, Mr Rees said.

Mr Iemma and his treasurer, Michael Costa, had boasted that their 10-year, \$140 billion infra-

A BRIDGE TOO FAR

Governments can boast about capital works programs extending out five, 10, 15 years. But essentially what you're boasting about is the level of debt you have. If we can't [service that debt], it's pointless boasting about a capital works program.

PREMIER
NATHAN REES

HEADING NOWHERE

A cloud hangs over the much vaunted "historic" headland park at Barangaroo. Page 6

NO LUCKY STATE

Rees has said he plans to build back credibility "day by day" and "brick by brick". Good luck after yesterday.

Andrew Clennell, Page 6

structure plan was the "largest capital expenditure in the state's history". This was central to their efforts to overcome the legacy of the tight-fisted policy of the previous premier, Bob Carr, and his treasurer, Michael Egan, of not upgrading ageing infrastructure and instead reducing debt.

Mr Rees said his Government would do whatever was needed to retain its triple-A credit rating from Standard & Poors and Moody's, a statement that drew immediate fire from the former prime minister and treasurer,

Paul Keating. Amid fears that the planned harbour headland park at Millers Point could be delayed for years by the cuts, Mr Keating said: "Let's not worry too much about Standard & Poor's and Moody's. And I would say to the Government that it shouldn't be doing handstands to worry about essentially whether the place is AAA or AA+."

"The whole of Australia is much stronger on all its fundamentals than the United States."

But the Rees Government is drawing up a mini-budget, to be completed in five weeks, with a review of spending proposals under way. The state budget faces a revenue shortfall of more than \$1 billion from the downturn in the property market. The Treasurer, Eric Roozendaal, also signalled last week that GST revenue would fall by \$400 million.

Mr Rees said: "Unless we get the fiscal platform right then, frankly for the rest of it, we may as well whistle Dixie. I don't relish these circumstances. But I'm not afraid of them, either."

He and the other premiers will meet the Prime Minister in Perth today to discuss the impact on the Australian economy of the collapse of large parts of the US banking and finance industries along with health funding.

Mr Rees will be briefed by federal Treasury officials.

NSW Treasury is concerned about the downturn in stamp duty from property transactions and GST revenue, coupled with the possibility of higher funding costs for the Government's ambitious infrastructure spending.

"There is a new reality we are facing now - the financial crunch at the state level, compounded by the international situation," Mr Rees said.

He will push Canberra to lift health payments to NSW.

"If the [states] and the Commonwealth aren't able to get on top of the funding formula, and [with] increasing demand for health services in Australia, health will consume most [states'] budgets entirely," Mr Rees said.

"We want the state funded on a per capita basis - which is a departure from the past, and what

was initially a 50-50 funding from the feds has been diminished over the past couple of decades. I'd like to see that restored. But the critical issue is how we deal with growth in demand of some 8 per cent a year."

Under the Grants Commission funding process, Mr Rees said, NSW had been penalised.

Discussion over the Federal Government's computer roll-out for schools will also be debated, with NSW adamant that Canberra pay for the software and other costs.