

**SUBMISSION**

**MR. RON CHRISTIE AM, COMMITTEE CHAIR,  
LONGTERM PUBLIC TRANSPORT PLAN FOR SYDNEY**

**INDEPENDENT PUBLIC INQUIRY**

**GPO BOX 248, SYDNEY NSW 2001.**

**[submissions@transportpublicinquiry.com.au](mailto:submissions@transportpublicinquiry.com.au)**

**VICTOR P TAFFA, EDITOR, THE SOUTHERN THUNDERER**

**OCTOBER 3, 2009**

My involvement in Sydney public transport dates back to 1975 and my professional involvement in the Transport Industry have been as a Taxi Driver for nearly 5 years. Currently I am the Editor of a new general on-line newspaper, The Southern Thunderer. Previously as a candidate in the 1999, 2004 Ryde Local Government elections and October 2008 Ryde State By-Election I campaigned to upgrade and expand the Heavy Rail network. Election results and material distributed from these 3 elections are contained in [www.isput.com.au](http://www.isput.com.au)

### *Terms of Reference:*

- **The optimisation and integration of existing public transport operations (including bus, light rail and heavy rail).**

Metro Rail has a different use, purpose and capability to heavy rail. The heavy rail network began in New South Wales in 1855. Metro Rail commenced operations in London in 1863. Integrating the heavy railways with the existing system is very simple and cost effective.

The installation of crossover tracks and 'points' allows for full integration of new heavy railway lines with existing lines. Metro Rail does not require train drivers, guards or station staff. Metro Rail is an isolated system as there is a 3<sup>rd</sup> 'live' rail and no overhead wiring or pantographs. Unlike the heavy rail system metro rail is a privately operating system and the fare structure will be dearer than that of Rail Corp. Metro Rail also operates as a shuttle service in a branch line configuration.

Where would Sydney be now had the City Circle line not have been completed in 1956 and if the East Hills line were still branch lines? The Carlingford and Eastern Suburbs lines are branch lines and it is this reason why they both have operational shortcomings.

As with John Whitton and John Bradfield a holistic approach must be taken to the planning of new railway lines for not just Sydney but New South Wales. It is for this reason that in January 2001 I produced on hard copy an entire map and a series of plans for Sydney. These maps and plans were placed on-line in February 2009. For various officials to 'cherry pick' parts of these plans will ensure that Sydney and New South Wales transport shortcomings remain an unresolved matter. Many of my plans are simply a revival of the long forgotten plans of John Whitton and John Bradfield.

- **The expansion of public transport services and infrastructure as well as cycle commuting infrastructure, over a 30 year planning horizon, taking into account existing transport accessibility problems and integration with future land use changes.**

Brisbane has an elevated heavy railway to the airport that is successful. Cairns also have a 'tilt' train that is of a heavy rail mode. Sydney and indeed New South Wales has the Blue Mountains, Great dividing range, Illawarra escarpment and the Central Coast while areas of natural beauty are also challenging to transport planners. Metro rail contains operational restrictions that heavy rail has overcome. Cowan bank has amongst the steepest gradient of any heavy railway line. The F3 freeway has not only been able to follow a new alignment through large sandstone walls but it has been widened to 6 lanes and even the sandstone wall between the road carriageways has been removed.

Sydney and New South Wales developed with the opening of new railway and tramway lines. The key issue of urban planning vs. railway line planning needs to be addressed and an article that I wrote entitled "Railway line planning and urban planning: Because oil and water does not mix." has been included with this submission.

The John Whitton railway bridge that spans the Parramatta River at Meadowbank, Sydney was transferred to the Department of Lands from the Railways to be used as a pedestrian and cycleway. The Northern railway line uses a bridge in an adjacent position that was completed in 1980 with piers to accommodate 4 tracks. The new use for the old John Whitton Bridge has been very popular with the residents of both sides of the Parramatta River.



John Whitton Bridge Cycleway Meadowbank, Sydney



John Whitton Bridge Meadowbank, Sydney

The Sydney Harbour Bridge opened in 1932 and contained 4 railway tracks and 6 lanes of roadway. The 2 railway tracks on the western side were used for the North Shore railway line. The 2 railway tracks on the eastern side were to be used for the Northern Suburbs railway to Brookvale.

When it was announced that the Northern Suburbs railway would not precede these 2 tracks were utilised by the Department of Tramways for the North Sydney lines until 1958. At North Sydney railway station the 2 tram tracks crossed over the Pacific Highway and then ran across the eastern side of the bridge. When tramway operations were replaced by buses these tracks became what are now road lanes 7 & 8.

The decisions that were made to replace trams with buses and lanes 7 & 8 with road lanes have led Sydney into the mess that now exists. This is also an example of why Metro Rail is not any better than heavy rail. The case remains for the expansion of heavy rail and that Metro rail is not a better option.



Sydney Harbour Bridge multiple uses.



Milsons Point tram platforms and heavy railway lines.



The Sydney Harbour Bridge was designed to carry four railway tracks from the North Shore to Wynyard and beyond. However, only two tracks on the western side of the bridge were used for this purpose. The two tracks on the eastern side were used to extend the North Sydney tram services to the two underground platforms at Wynyard. The former tram termini at Milsons Point and at McMahon's Point, which connected with a frequent ferry service to Circular Quay, were closed and the connecting lines removed.

Two O class trams, numbered 1106 and 1212, were placed on the bridge tracks via a temporary connection on 16 February 1932 but were not used immediately. They became the first trams to cross the bridge during a test run conducted on 9 March 1932, after which they were used to train drivers in the tunnels between Wynyard and the exit at Argyle Street. On completion of a further trial on 16 March, the lines were declared suitable for normal operation.

The bridge was opened on Saturday, 19 March 1932 but no trams operated over the bridge on that day. At about midnight the new connection at North Sydney to the Wynyard track was ready for the passage of four coupled sets of O class trams. These cars proceeded to Wynyard and ran a five minutes service to North Sydney until all passengers wanting a tram ride across the bridge had been satisfied.

The last service to cross the bridge was the 1:17am service to Lane Cove operated by coupled O class trams 1347 and 1212. Over 500 passengers were on board when the trams left the Wynyard platforms at 1:27am on Sunday morning, 29 June 1958. Stops were made in the tunnel for photographs. However, the power was turned off in the tunnels on the assumption the trams would have been well clear of the section by that time. The late running trams were just 100 yards from the tunnel exit at Argyle Street. The power was restored 45 minutes later and the over-crowded trams were able to continue their last journey across the bridge.

Milsons Point Tramway Bridge across the Pacific Highway.

- **The most appropriate governance arrangements to guarantee the plan's longevity to remove the negative impact of single-term party politics and to optimise investments.**

The Minister for Transport has to oversee Trains, Buses, Ferries, Taxis and Hire Cars. There should be a Minister for Railways as well a Minister for Transport and that the Transport Infrastructure Development Corporation (TIDC) should come under the direction of the Minister for Railways. As heavy railway expansion must occur over the next 30 years State Cabinet will need 2 Ministers to oversee what New South Wales faces as its largest challenge and that is to provide an expanded and modern railway network for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

The Department of Planning should be abolished and the legislative functions and regulatory procedures absorbed within every State Government Department.

My website contains both a Concise and Detailed Overview report that lists several pieces of Railway and Transport legislation that will set the framework of how to achieve an expanded railway network. These reports are included in this submission or can also be found in [www.isput.com.au](http://www.isput.com.au)

Publicly funded heavy rail projects will best optimise investment for the New South Wales Government and the taxpayers because my plans are simply an expansion of what is already in place as opposed to an entirely separate metro rail network.

As in the 1850's the New South Wales Government has had to be the guarantor of the railways when 2 companies went broke prior to the opening of the Sydney-Parramatta heavy railway line in 1855. Many privately owned tollroads are going broke in many states throughout Australia.

Single term party politics can best be overcome by expanding the railways as an overall network. When the Tramways closed in Sydney, Newcastle, Maitland and Broken Hill this also included the closure of the Kings Cross , Kogarah and Sans Souci Trolley buses, privately operating steam trams in Rockdale and Brighton Le Sands and the isolated tram lines in Sandringham, Arncliffe, Bexley, Sutherland, Ashfield, Burwood , Mortlake, Cabarita, Castle Hill , Manly and Narrabeen.

John Bradfield and John Whitton had a network plan and in 2009 New South Wales is still the richer because a holistic approach was taken.

As a Taxi driver I know from experience that passengers want to complete the one journey on the one mode of transport.

Poor planning decisions with single term politics in mind has been the decision to build isolated bus Transitways and not expand the heavy railways.

The most appropriate governance procedures that will take New South Wales forward are the following:

1. Railway Construction Act
2. Railway (Land development) Provision Act
3. Transport Timetable Co-ordination Act.
4. Transport Zonal Ticketing Co-ordination Act
5. Transport Zonal (Operations) Dissolution Act
6. Transport Zonal (Ticketing) Dissolution Act
7. Transport Zonal Multi Use (Ticketing) Act

Once upon a time Sydney's transport system was organised so that 'the tram had to meet the train'. Once trams were removed the entire transport system became a shambolic mess that has led us to the problems that we now face.

Metro rail has so far not been able to provide answers to:

How can the travelling public ever feel safe on a train that is controlled only by a computer?

How can an aircraft fly with a pilot but we are expected to believe that a train can operate without a driver and guard?

How will Metro rail that has NO drivers and guards ensure passenger safety if the 'security cameras' are out of order?

How will Metro Rail provide the people of Regional and Rural New South Wales with a heavy railway?

How will Metro Rail allow for new heavy railway lines to operate services from interstate at speeds of 300kph?

How will Metro Rail haul freight?

Why do we happily accept electricity power cables to remain strung above our streets but trains have to function without overhead wires and pantographs?

How will new heavy railway lines be funded if Governments build Metro Rail?

How can New South Wales maintain both a heavy and metro rail network and pretend that Governments will expand both simultaneously?

Metro rail carriages are designed for the mass movement of commuters that Hong Kong, London and Singapore has and that Sydney does not have.

Metro rail carriages are not designed to be used by the elderly, disabled or mothers with strollers.

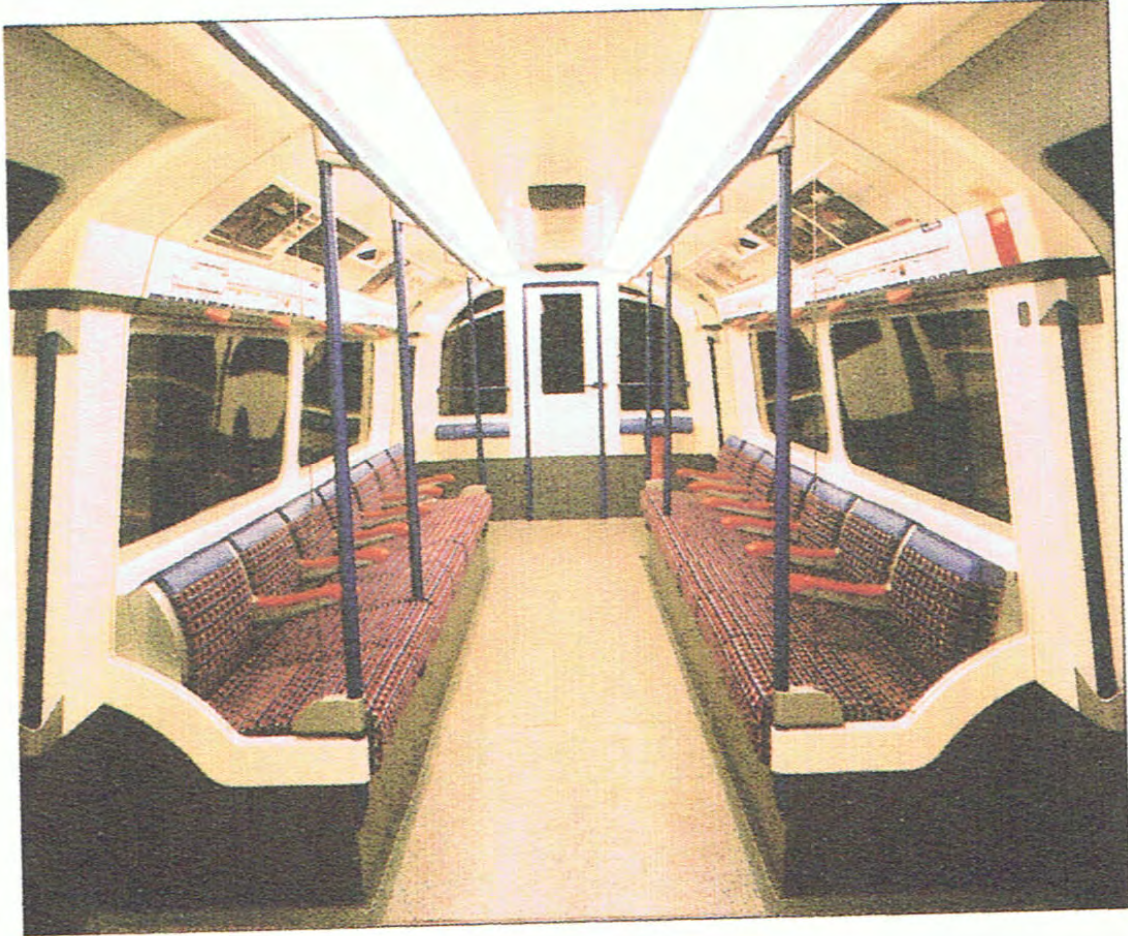
The following are 2 contrasting types of single deck train carriages:



Sydney Single Deck 'red rattler'.



London 'tube' train arriving at Baker Street Station.



Metro rail carriage seating layout.

- **Key environmental sustainability issues.**

Heavy and Light rail can coexist whereas Metro Rail cannot. When the issue of environmental sustainability is considered expansion of heavy and light rail will stack up far more successfully against that of metro rail and buses.

### **Train/Tram/Light Rail Coexistence:**

Unlike Metro Rail, Heavy Rail and Light Rail and Tramways will coexist throughout New South Wales. Until 1934 the movement of tramcars to the tramway system from the heavy railways occurred at West Ryde. From the Northern Line at West Ryde a single track tramline proceeded from the heavy railway tracks onto Ryedale Road along Victoria Road and Church Street where the line joined the tramway system at Blaxland Road.

This joint use of tracks also occurred at platforms 3 & 4 of Milsons Point railway station until 1958 where the heavy railway lines on the eastern side of the Sydney Harbour Bridge were used by the tramways.

As such the use of heavy railway lines can enable tramcars and light rail vehicles to join streets in suburbs, towns and cities throughout New South Wales.

This multi use of heavy railway lines will allow for the provision of a very frequent service for all communities particularly in regional and rural areas. Where the 'tyranny of distance' forces the permanent isolation of vast numbers of people this multipurpose approach to the use of railway lines will bring people together and in turn revive towns that are currently struggling. Heavy rail, tramways and light rail operate on the same rail gauge and overhead wiring system.

Heavy railway lines operate on a higher voltage than for trams or light rail vehicles. The multiple uses of heavy railway lines will encourage the need to duplicate and quadruple railway lines which will allow for the separation of freight, express and slower passenger services.

- **Key social and economic issues.**

Social issues that should be considered are the interaction of commuters and staff with one another. Metro Rail is intended to be without drivers, guards and the minimal level of station staff. Heavy rail requires staffing and this in turn allows for social interaction with the travelling public.

Economic issues to be taken into account are the financial failures of private railway companies in Sydney in the 1850's and in 2009 with toll road companies. Public transport will always have a low return on investment and thus the New South Wales Government will be best placed to manage transport infrastructure.

- **Proposals for short term and long term funding.**

My 4 point funding formula was written in January 2001 and still remains a well balanced way of financing of new railway lines.

1. Federal Govt. Funding: The commonwealth constitution provides for the construction of railways.
2. State Govt. Funding: Every government department **EXCEPT HEALTH** would have their budgets cut by **10%** for **Four years** to pay for new railway lines. When costing of Capital works is undertaken all stages and reports that are required will be produced in the one report thus reducing the overall cost of the project.
3. Private Consortium Involvement: Enables new railway lines to be built years ahead that is normally possible.
4. Railway Bonds: These are the same as government bonds. Railway bonds would have the guarantee of the NSW Treasury.

- **The cost-effectiveness of solutions, taking into account short term financial costs and benefits, and longer term environmental, congestion and other external costs and land use and accessibility benefits.**

Put simply there is no magic overnight solution to Sydney's chronic peak hour traffic congestion. The cheap option for today has invariably been the wrong long term answer. Time and again Sydney and New South Wales has picked poor ill conceived transport solutions. The worst decision was to abandon the tramways and not to expand the heavy railways.

John Whitton had to overcome supporters of horse drawn tramways in order to build a standard gauge railway that grew from 36 km of completed track to more than 3,500 km of completed railway lines.

John Bradfield could have built Metro rail in the 1920's and gave Sydney single deck 'red rattler' carriages and a metropolitan network that is only half complete and still a better option than anything else on offer.

Had John Whitton and John Bradfield completed all of their plans then Sydney and New South Wales would not be in the transport mess that we are in and this Independent Inquiry would not have been required.



Sydney Harbour Bridge



John Bradfield.



John Whitton "The father of the New South Wales Railways"

Attachments:

- Article: “Family goes to war against late trains”, Northern Herald October 10, 1985
- Article: “Railway line planning and urban planning: Because oil and water does not mix.” The Southern Thunderer October 2009.
- Concise Overview: Expansion and upgrade of the Sydney Metropolitan, Regional and Rural New South Wales Railways. Victor P Taffa, September 30, 2009, [www.isput.com.au](http://www.isput.com.au)
- Detailed Overview: Expansion and upgrade of the Sydney Metropolitan, Regional and Rural New South Wales Railways. Victor P Taffa, September 30, 2009, [www.isput.com.au](http://www.isput.com.au)

Maps to be included with this submission:

1. Expansion of the New South Wales Rural Heavy Railways
2. Expansion of the Sydney Metropolitan Heavy Railways
3. Expansion of the Sydney CBD Heavy Railways.
4. Expansion of the Hunter Heavy Railways.
5. Expansion of the Illawarra Heavy Railways.
6. Bankstown Line Extension.
7. Brookvale Line.
8. Bradfield Line.
9. Campbelltown Line.
10. Carlingford Line Extension.
11. Cronulla Line Extension.
12. East Hills Line Extension.
13. Eastern Line Extension.
14. Eastwood Line.
15. Ermington Line.
16. Hills Line.
17. Lower Blue Mountains Line.
18. Macarthur Line
19. North Shore Line Extension.
20. North Western Line.
21. Northern Beaches Line.
22. Northern Line Extension.
23. Princes Line.
24. Richmond Line Extension.
25. South Eastern Line.
26. Winston Hills Line.

27. Armidale Line Extension.
28. Broken Hill Line.
29. Central Western Line.
30. Central Coast Line.
31. Cessnock Line.
32. Grenfell Line.
33. Hunter Line.
34. Illawarra Line Extension.
35. Narromine Line.
36. Newcastle Line.
37. Pacific Line.
38. Raymond Terrace Line.
39. Riverina Line.
40. South Coast Line.
41. Southern Line Extension.
42. Whitton Line.

Victor P Taffa,  
Editor, The Southern Thunderer  
4/69a Darvall Road, West Ryde NSW 2114  
PO BOX 1165, Meadowbank NSW 2114  
Ph/Fax: (02) 9874 1542  
Mob: 0416 134 650  
[www.isput.com.au](http://www.isput.com.au)  
[vpt000@y7mail.com](mailto:vpt000@y7mail.com)

*Source: personal research and information gathered over many years. This includes press clippings dating back to 1979 and many conversations from volunteers at transport museums of whom are former tram and train conductors and drivers.*

**OCTOBER 3, 2009**