



Media release

The Hon Dr Denis Naphine MP

Premier
Minister for Regional Cities
Minister for Racing

Wednesday 7 August 2013

Victoria needs the congestion busting EWL, not Labor delay

Premier Denis Naphine today visited the nerve centre for traffic operations across Melbourne – the VicRoads Traffic Management Centre, to talk to road traffic experts and view Melbourne’s congestion hot spots during the peak traffic period.

The visit highlighted the urgent need for the Victorian Coalition Government’s nation building \$6-8 billion East West Link, which will carry around 80,000 to 100,000 vehicles per day.

Whilst at VicRoads, the Premier discussed how the East West Link will reduce congestion at Melbourne’s two main hot spots recently identified by VicRoads; the Eastern Freeway at Hoddle Street and the Bolte Bridge.

VicRoads discussed how Melbourne’s freeways have slowed from 68km/h to 45km/h during the morning peak over the last decade.

“It is not acceptable for Victorian motorists using the Eastern Freeway to have to crawl along at speeds of less than 20 kilometres per hour during the morning peak,” Dr Naphine said.

“For Victorians sitting in gridlock today – it is only the Victorian Coalition Government with Tony Abbott and the Federal Coalition that will build the East West Link, which will remove congestion on the Eastern Freeway, at Hoddle Street and the Bolte Bridge.

“The East West Link is vital for Melbourne and Victoria; it will remove congestion, improve productivity and create more than 3,200 jobs for Victorians.

The Premier stated that this nation building project was at risk from Labor.

“All Victorians will get from the Victorian Labor Party is dithering Dan with absolutely no plan for reducing traffic congestion across our city,” Dr Naphine said.

“Labor’s sudden backflip on the East West Link is surprising considering most of the current Shadow Cabinet strongly supported Rod Eddington’s recommendations to build an East West Link when they were in Government.”

At least one member of the Labor Party is honest about the need for the East West Link, with Cesar Melham lauding the plan publically on 30 July 2012.

“It is just crazy not to go ahead with the [East West] project,” Mr Melham said.

.../2

Whilst visiting VicRoads, the traffic management team were supportive of the number of other projects being undertaken to remove congestion hot spots including the Rail Crossing Removal Program, with the removals of Springvale Road (Springvale) and Mitcham and Rooks Roads (Mitcham) crossings by the end of 2014.

VicRoads also highlighted further congestion relieving projects with the duplication of High Street Road (Wantirna South), the upgrade and duplication of Cardinia Road (Pakenham), the duplication of Clyde Road (Berwick) and the rollout of the Managed Motorways program along the Monash Freeway from High Street (Glen Iris) to Warrigal Road (Chadstone).

These projects will assist in relieving localised congestion while work is undertaken on longer term congestion solutions such as the EastWest Link and the M80 Ring Road.

In addition to this vital infrastructure for Victoria's road network, the Coalition Government is committed to building our public transport system. Already the following improvements have been made:

- 1,078 extra metro train trips per week;
- 3,400 extra bus trips per week;
- \$4.8 billion Regional Rail Link;
- \$100 million Bayside Rail upgrade (Frankston line);
- \$25 million Dandenong line upgrade;
- more than \$400 million to remove level crossings across Melbourne;
- 15 new X'Trapolis trains - 7 already delivered, 8 on the way;
- 40 new V/Line carriages on the way; and
- 50 new low-floor trams on the way.

Information on morning and afternoon peak traffic periods:

The evening peak hour on freeways now lasts about three and one-quarter hours, generally between about 3.15 pm and 6.30 pm, compared with two and three-quarter hours ten years ago.

The morning peak lasts about two and three quarter hours (generally between 6.15 am and 9 am) compared with one and three quarter hours a decade ago.

Media contact: Martin Barr 0418 101 127 martin.barr@minstaff.vic.gov.au