

R A P S Residents Against Polluting Stacks Inc, Sydney NSW Australia
www.nostack.8m.com

JUNE 2006 NEWSRAPS #2

As the Lane Cove Tunnel section of the Cross City Tunnel Inquiry wrapped up public hearings last week, the NSW Roads Minister was heard to loudly declare to a media throng that it was all a stunt !

But by Friday, in a win for people power and a big step forward for the government he had promised \$50 million for an update on Bob Carr's 2004 pre-election promise to pilot air pollution filtration in a Sydney road tunnel. This time the tender was to be for a particulate and nitrogen dioxide air-filtration 'plant' in the M5 East's western tube to be completed in 2007 and a \$2.5m upgrade of its Bexley-end ventilation fans to be completed by September, 2006.

But was it all another pre election stunt? The new promise was certainly far more specific than the 2004 promise which the RTA had so far spent some \$500,000 investigating. But why was \$50 million buying filtration of only 20% of tunnel air, when overseas less money would have bought 100%? And did the solution include seeking Planning Minister Sartor's approval to change a condition banning dangerous pollution venting at Bexley? And just exactly what sort of plant was the 'plant'?

As a new week dawned, the Roads Minister was under fire on Radio 2GB over his denial of the tunnel's health impacts and details of a \$14 million compensation claim for additional traffic-related maintenance works by the tunnel's operator, BHBB already in dispute with the government over the Cross City Tunnel. By Friday, a release of government papers showed pollution had forced tunnel lane closures 25 times in 20 months to May 2006, and World Health Organisation goals for carbon monoxide had been repeatedly exceeded. The government also announced details of land releases in south-western Sydney; M5-owner Macquarie Bank had confirmed an M5 vehicle carrying-capacity of 150,000 vehicles a day and another step in planning reviews of the government's M5 traffic-inducing expansion plans for Port Botany had been quietly published

Black and white had once again become a murky shade of grey.

What remains clear today is that Sydney's wasteful tunnel planning blueprint is under extreme pressure, air quality health impacts are not being realistically factored into their economic bottom-lines and - as last year's NSW Auditor General's report into air quality noted - no single agency has responsibility and accountability for improving NSW air quality. With a NSW Upper House Inquiry now examining air pollution health impacts in the Sydney basin, RAPS will make a submission but we are but a small, tired volunteer community group. **Will YOU help us or make a submission to the inquiry to effect change?**

NEWS RAPS

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10 'A CLEAN LANE COVE TUNNEL' - ABC NEWS 23.05.2006.

BRIEF RAPS

** Another round of M5 East-related government papers has been released to the NSW Upper House under the NSW Freedom of Information Act.

<http://143.119.255.90/isysquery/97e5ec60-d34d-4a82-b97c-3fdd2e6515ac/2/doc> Links to various FOI websites:

http://blogs.smh.com.au/newsblog/archives/freedom_of_information/004823.html

** **Nominations are open for the Greens Bad Developer Awards to be announced 24 August 2006. RAPS was co-winner of the best community campaign category last year:**

www.sylviahale.org.au

** The Cross City Tunnel Inquiry's submission page now includes all Lane Cove tunnel submissions:

<http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlment/committee.nsf/v3ListSubmissions?open&ParentUNID=A69743663274E980CA2570C10082D5D2>. and GASP's submission:

[http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlment/committee.nsf/0/e2db2e2d964b60c0ca25718d00237192/\\$FILE/Sub%20107%20GASP.pdf](http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlment/committee.nsf/0/e2db2e2d964b60c0ca25718d00237192/$FILE/Sub%20107%20GASP.pdf)

** **The RTA is sponsoring a free TAFE course on measures to reduce truck emissions, improve profitability and reduce risks of fines;**

http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/newsevents/tafe_emissions_course.html

** A draft report on environmental and economic impacts of Stage 2 upgrades to Port Botany terminal by an 'independent' panel of experts was quietly placed on Planning NSW' website on Tuesday. Local community groups, supposed to be part of the panel and have been given an extraordinary 14 days to comment;

<http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/asp/das.asp>. Botany Bay Catchment Alliance website:

<http://www.botanybay.info/indexfl.html>

** **Sydney Airport owner Macquarie Bank will spin off the M5, M4 and Eastern Distributor into a new \$1.5b company. The group expects to benefit from a rising south western Sydney population and a predicted doubling of tonnage out of an expanded Port Botany;** <http://www.theage.com.au/news/Business/MIG-plans-profits-around-population-boom/2006/06/20/1150701551472.html>

** A deadly legacy. Labelling it environmental vandalism on a monumental scale, the 9 Network's 60 Minutes program has featured Botany's Orica chemical plant, home to 60,000 barrels of hexachlorobenzene and a creeping plume of toxic

groundwater. http://sixtyminutes.ninensn.com.au/sixtyminutes/stories/2006_06_18/story_1678.asp Orica's Botany Groundwater site: <http://www.oricabotanygroundwater.com>

** **Federal Liberal MP for North Sydney Joe Hockey will seek a meeting with Labor NSW Roads Minister Roozendaal to advance a federal Liberal offer of \$10m to filter the Lane Cove Tunnel;** http://www.northshoretimes.com.au/article/2006/06/20/1310_news.html

01 SUBMISSIONS OPEN FOR UPPER HOUSE INQUIRY INTO AIR POLLUTION HEALTH IMPACTS IN THE SYDNEY BASIN

Last year's NSW Auditor General's Performance Audit Managing Air Quality in NSW, found that no single NSW agency had responsibility and accountability for improving NSW air quality and that inter-agency mechanisms need to be strengthened to drive implementation of strategies and achievement of results. While the Department of Environment and Conservation is responsible for monitoring air quality and coordinating the government's Action for Air plan, it is not resourced or empowered to assure implementation, or to have a strong influence on transport planning.

Audit Executive Summary here:

http://audit.nsw.gov.au/publications/reports/performance/2005/air_quality/inbrief-airquality.pdf

Full Report:

http://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/publications/reports/performance/2005/air_quality/AirQuality-April2005.pdf

Governments Action for Air and Action for Transport Plans:

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/air/actionforair/index.htm>

RTA's Corporate Plan 2003-2008:

http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/aboutus/downloads/the_journey_ahead_sept_03.pdf

General Purpose Standing Committee No 2 will inquire into and report on the health impacts of pollution in the Sydney Basin. Please make a submission and tell the Inquiry about your experiences and what you as a stakeholder in your government believe your government and your bureaucracies should deliver.

** Inquiry home page:

<http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlment/Committee.nsf/0/3ECF8ABFA09039A6CA257187000D2442>

** Terms of Reference:

[http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlment/Committee.nsf/0/3ecf8abfa09039a6ca257187000d2442/\\$FILE/Air%20Pollution%20TOR%20with%20Members.pdf](http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parlment/Committee.nsf/0/3ecf8abfa09039a6ca257187000d2442/$FILE/Air%20Pollution%20TOR%20with%20Members.pdf)

** Make a submission:

<http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/web/Submissions.nsf/Submission?OpenForm&ParentUNID=296C94206F36F2E5CA2571870012C126&House=LC>

** Submission close: Friday August 4 2006.

02 'RESIDENTS WIN FIGHT FOR M5 EAST FILTER PLANT' - SYDNEY MORNING HERALD 18.06.2006

'A \$50 million filtration plant will be installed in the smoggy M5 East tunnel after the State Government bowed to five years of demands to improve the road's poor air quality.

The Roads Minister, Eric Roozendaal, said yesterday a trial plant would be installed at the Bexley Road end of the westbound tunnel to filter the health-endangering particles that cause the haze.

The plant, which will also remove nitrogen dioxide, should be installed within 12 to 15 months, allowing for a tender process that should be completed by the end of this year'

** Sydney Morning Herald story from 16.05.2006 here:

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/residents-win-fight-for-m5-east-filter-plant/2006/06/16/1149964746460.html>

** Yahoo/7 news here: <http://au.news.yahoo.com/060616/23/zesu.html>

** 7 News video: <http://au.news.yahoo.com/video/index.html?pn=2>

03 'M5 TUNNEL PROMISED FILTER TRIAL' - THE AUSTRALIAN 18.06.2006

'A \$50 million trial to reduce the amount of pollution in Sydney's M5 East tunnel will begin next year, New South Wales Roads Minister Eric Roozendaal said today.

A new filtration system, based on similar models in Japan and Spain, will be fitted at the end of the westbound tunnel, where the Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) says pollution is at its worst.

An extra 12 jet fans will also be installed this September to assist with the poor levels of visibility caused by the heavy traffic smog.

"We need to get some clear hard data as to how reliable (filtration) is, how effective it is and how we can apply it in the M5 East," Mr Roozendaal said.'

** The Australian news story from 16.06.2006 here:

<http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au/story/0,20867,19489462-29277,00.html>

** RTA's 2004 Registration of Interest for a pilot filtration plant in a Sydney road tunnel: http://www.rta.nsw.gov.au/environment/airquality/roadtunnelsvehicleemissions/filtration_system.html

04 'ROOZENDAAL CAUGHT OUT AGAIN ON M5 EAST TUNNEL' - NSW NATIONAL PARTY MEDIA RELEASE 19.06.2006

'Roads Minister, Eric Roozendaal, has again been caught out playing down the negative health impacts of pollution in the M5 East Tunnel, Shadow Roads Minister, Andrew Stoner, said today.

Mr Stoner said on Radio 2GB this morning, Mr Roozendaal stated: "There is no evidence of one motorist's health being affected by driving through the M5 East Tunnel".

"This is yet another example of the Carr-lemma Labor Government putting spin ahead of the truth," Mr Stoner said.

NSW National Party media release from 19.06.2006:

http://www.nsw.nationals.org.au/html/roozendaal_caught_out_again_on_m5_east_tunnel.cfm

05 'STONER SLAMS FURTHER PROCRASTINATION ON M5 EAST TUNNEL - NSW NATIONAL PARTY MEDIA 16.06.2006

"Shadow Roads Minister, Andrew Stoner, has today slammed the NSW Lemma Labor Government for its further procrastination on filtering the M5 East Tunnel.

Mr Stoner said today's announcement by the Roads Minister, Eric Roozendaal, to conduct another filtration trial in a Sydney road tunnel was a pre-election stunt.

"This announcement is aimed at quelling on-going community concern over the health impacts of pollution in and around the M5 East tunnel in the lead up to a State election", Mr Stoner said.

NSW National Party media release from 16.06.2006:

http://nsw.nationals.org.au/html/stoner_slams_labor_s_further_procrastination_on_m5_east_tunnel.cfm

06 "TUNNEL INQUIRY A WASTE: ROOZENDAAL" - DRIVE.COM.AU 14.06.2006

"A parliamentary inquiry into Sydney's Lane Cove Tunnel is a political stunt that will only serve to delay its opening, NSW Roads Minister Eric Roozendaal says.

The upper house inquiry into the Lane Cove Tunnel is starting, with members of the Lane Cove Council due to appear first.

But Mr Roozendaal said it would be more productive to focus on getting the tunnel open.

There is no doubt in my mind that this parliamentary inquiry is a stunt," Mr Roozendaal told reporters.

** Drive.com.au story from 14.06.2006 here:

<http://www.drive.com.au/Editorial/ArticleDetail.aspx?ArticleID=12505>

07 'GAS LEVELS SHUT LANES TO TUNNEL' - NSW DAILY TELEGRAPH 23.06.2006

'Unacceptable pollution levels have forced lane closures on the M5 East tunnel 25 times in the past 20 months, according to documents obtained by The Daily Telegraph.

The closures of both the eastbound and westbound lanes have been made after carbon monoxide levels breached World Health Organisation levels.

While some closures have lasted for five or 10 minutes, several have lasted between 45 and 90 minutes, causing inconvenience for motorists and creating health concerns.

WHO standards require the tunnel be closed when carbon monoxide levels reach 87 parts per million for 15 minutes.

On several occasions the closures were made when the levels had suddenly shot into the mid-90s.'

Daily Telegraph story from 23.06.2006 available through archives at: www.newstext.com.au

08 'M5 IS NOT NEAR THEORETICAL CAPACITY' - NINEMSN.COM.AU 21.06.2006

" Sydney Roads Group (SRG) has confirmed that the M5 is not running near its theoretical capacity.

SRG chairman Bob Morris said that the M5 had a theoretical capacity of average daily traffic of 130,000 to 150,000 greater than its current level of 100,000.

He said between 70,000 and 75,000 vehicles ran through the main plaza and the rest through remote ramps, meaning that the roadway had extra capacity"

** Ninemsn.com.au story from 21.06.2006 here:

<http://news.ninemsn.com.au/article.aspx?id=107760>

09 'OFFER OF THREE LANE TUNNEL WAS TURNED DOWN' - SYDNEY MORNING HERALD 14.06.2006

" The company behind the Lane Cove Tunnel says it offered the Government more money to build three lanes in both directions but was turned down, and now widening is almost impossible.

The chief executive of Connector Motorways, Ian Hunt, yesterday addressed a parliamentary inquiry into the Cross City Tunnel, which has been widened to look at Sydney's newest motorway.

The inquiry also heard if the upfront payment of \$79 million - around 7 per cent of the project cost - had been put towards tolls, they could have been between 14 and 20 cents cheaper."

Sydney Morning Herald story from 18.06.2006 here:

<http://www.smh.com.au/news/national/offer-of-threelane-tunnel-was-turned-down/2006/06/15/1149964675982.html>

10 'A CLEAN LANE COVE TUNNEL' - ABC NEWS 23.05.2006

" But (CSIRO's) Dr Manins says filtration may only help alleviate this problem for those driving through the tunnel.

"Filtration has been a major issue for communities around each of the Sydney tunnels. They have been agitating for several years for filtration to be included on the tunnels, but the RTA has declined to do that on each of the tunnels. Two years ago the RTA started a demonstration design study that said that they would trial filtration on one of the tunnels, but two years later nothing happened. It's been very slow.

"If there was filtration in the tunnels than that could be used to relieve the visibility problem and the particle concentrations in the tunnel [for motorists]. That would also relieve the small impacts that the residents would experience, but overall that would only be a small improvement for the residents in the case of the Lane Cove Tunnel."

** ABC News story from 23.05.2006 here:

<http://www.abc.net.au/sydney/stories/s1645543.htm>

RAPS Inc is an incorporated community group representing residents and workers affected by the M5 East tunnel, ventilation stack and portals. We meet on one Tuesday night of the month at Earlwood Bowling Club, Doris Ave Earlwood NSW, Australia. RAPS Inc is funded entirely by \$10 membership fees and community donations and volunteer time.

We currently have significant costs, and need to build up funds for ongoing outlays such as public liability insurance well and professional advice and help. Please help us to keep going by sending a donation to:

PO Box 270 Earlwood NSW 2206 Australia

Telephone: 061 02 9558 8863, 061 02 9573 0052, 061 02 9559 1278

www.nostack.8m.com

RAPS Inc is a member of GASP, Groups Against Stack Pollution, a coalition of community groups with similar aims and objectives affected by similar stacks from around Sydney's Cross City and Lane Cove tunnels.

<http://www.lctag.com>