

# ENVIRONMENTALLY SPEAKING 7

ROLL UP! ROLL UP!

FOR THE TITLE FIGHT  
DESTROYER OF BOTANY BAY

FRANKIE THE FIXER VS MAX THE AXE



## GRIDLOCKED SYDNEY AUSTRALIA'S SMOG CAPITAL

Sydney is the pollution capital of Australia with smog levels almost 10 times worse than any other city and the only city to have been found in breach of the National Environment Protection Council's air pollution goals according to a Federal Government report recently tabled in Parliament.

The report said Sydney and Wollongong broke the four-hour goal for ozone – a summer smog that can trigger asthma and respiratory diseases set at 0.8 parts per million – 40 times last year.

## LATEST FIGURES FROM THE NATIONAL POLLUTANT INVENTORY ([www.npi.gov.au](http://www.npi.gov.au))

Here is a comparison of some major emissions in our air expressed **as kg per year**. All of the substances are associated with motor vehicles but not exclusively so. Particulate matter is particularly associated with heavy vehicles using diesel.

**Part = Particulate Matter CO = Carbon Monoxide, NOx = Oxides of Nitrogen, C6H6 = Benzene, Substances = total number of substances reported.**

Area	Part.	CO	NOx	C6H6	Substances
South Ward	58,000	2,100,000	330,000	14,000	47
Botany	76,000	2,000,000	1,300,000	14,000	60
Vaucluse	14,000	460,000	45,000	3,300	26

**Oxides of Nitrogen (NOx)** are known to affect the throat and the lung. The main effects are emphysema and cellular damage, which reduce the efficiency of breathing. In levels encountered in polluted air, people with respiratory problems, particularly infants, may be affected. Some studies suggest that asthmatics may experience increased airway resistance at levels as low as 0.3 ppm, but results are not conclusive.

**Carbon monoxide(CO)** affects healthy and unhealthy people. Increased levels of carbon monoxide reduce the amount of oxygen carried by haemoglobin around the body in red blood cells. The result is that vital organs, such as the brain, nervous tissues and the heart, do not receive enough oxygen to work properly. For healthy people, the most likely impact of a small increase in the level of carbon monoxide is that they will have trouble concentrating. Some people might become a bit clumsy as their coordination is affected, and they could get tired more easily. People with heart problems are likely to suffer from more frequent and longer angina attacks, and they would be at greater risk of heart attack. Children and unborn babies are particularly at risk because they are smaller and their bodies are still growing and developing.

### **Particulate Matter**

Recent epidemiological research suggests that there is no threshold at which health effects do not occur. , About 60% of particulate matter is produced by diesel vehicles. Federal Parliament has now established the Energy Grants Scheme, originally intended to encourage conversion to cleaner fuels. However, the scheme will pay around \$3 billion in tax rebates to diesel users each year, and simply maintains the status quo.

**Benzene(C6H6)** is carcinogenic and long-term exposure at various levels can affect normal blood production and can be harmful to the immune system. It can cause Leukaemia (cancer of the tissues that form white blood cells) and has also been linked with birth defects in animals and humans. Acute myeloid leukaemia (cancer of the bone marrow), for example, is linked to benzene, a component of diesel exhaust.

## **HEAVY VEHICLE ROAD USE**

(Page: 20715, Hansard 28/2/06)

**By the year 2020 one in four vehicles on Sydney's roads will be a heavy vehicle.**



**Mr PAUL GIBSON** (Blacktown) [5.29 p.m.]: ..... In the near future changes to be made to the Port Botany area will result in a threefold increase in the number of trucks using the M4.....Let us face it, road transport is the dominant mode for freight movements and will remain the dominant mode for at least the next 10 to 15 years. That means trucks will be carrying up to 500 billion-tonne kilometres by 2020. For the comparatively short haul freight routes—Sydney to Melbourne, Adelaide to Sydney, or Sydney to Brisbane—almost all that freight load will be carried by trucks on New South Wales roads. Developments in technologies used in trucks and the changes to national regulations regarding the use of trucks mean that freight can be moved faster and cheaper by road than by any other transport mode.

There is no practical alternative to trucks for freight movements to warehouses, retail outlets, construction sites and homes, so looking to other transport modes like rail for a solution is not available or practical. Only trucks offer a flexible door-to-door or centre-to-centre service that is capable of handling small shipment sizes through to bulk freight.

## EXPERT LABELS M5 AND CROSS CITY TUNNELS WORST ENVIRONMENT PRACTICE

Dr Peter Manins, [CSIRO Marine and Atmospheric Research](#) scientist has labelled the Cross City and M5 East Tunnels as world's worst environmental practice in a submission to the recent Cross Tunnel Inquiry.

Dr Manins, retained by the Cross City Tunnel Action Group to provide independent advice, also claimed that the NSW RTA continually denied him access to tunnel ventilation plans on "commercial in confidence" grounds.

The submission argues that tunnel particle filtration would have "mitigated the current very poor visibility in the M5East..", and reduced toxic particulate matter within the tunnel thereby lessening the impact on local communities around its Turrella ventilation stack. It also registers disappointment in NSW planning authorities (RTA, DIPNR, Health, EPA) for keeping true pollution impacts secret.

The inquiry released its interim report this week recommending widespread traffic changes, toll reductions, improvements in 'plain English' community consultation and private public partnerships. A dissenting report, written by Labor MLC Amanda Fasio MLC, (caught on TV playing games on a hand held device and often absent during the hearings) has also been published.

- Dr Manins' submission is at: <http://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/prod/parliament/committee.nsf/v3ListSubmissions?open&ParentUNID=A69743663274E980CA2570C10082D5D2>
- Note that one of the recommendations of the Brereton Report is for the M5 to be amplified to handle the additional freight movements from Port Botany.

**More on Tunnel Vision: Letters to the Sydney Morning Herald that don't get published:2/3/06**

*While it is an interesting and important issue the publicity on the cross city tunnel is out of proportion to the numbers impacted and the cost to the State. It is minor in comparison to the congestion, pollution and loss of amenity which will be inflicted in southern Sydney as a result of the Port Botany and airport expansions, Laurie Brereton's Intermodal terminals and supporting billions of dollars in road infrastructure. While the Herald has given the tunnel front page billing on many occasions it has covered the Southern Sydney Port and Brereton disasters once and on that occasion the news was hidden away on page 9.*

## FISHING BAN IN SYDNEY HARBOUR

Some reactions to the Sydney Morning Herald report: *Well what a surprise-we have poisoned the fish stocks of Sydney harbour! ...Geez, after years and years of pouring industrial waste into the harbour, along with pollution from commercial and recreational boats, PLUS household/commercial runoff from stormwater drains, you'd think everything would be fine eh? Oh well, doesn't mean you can't fish, just don't eat anything. Especially those 3 headed fish from near the old Union Carbide factory at Rhodes, or the aggressive heavy metal fish of the Cooks River....* Mark Slocum 24/1/06.

*Anyone thinking the harbour was pristine must have their head buried in the sand. Dioxins don't go away - period. If you want to talk about a polluted waterway - look at the Cooks River - its got Buckley's of ever being cleaned. ...* Fred 24/1/06

AND DESPITE the fishing ban in Penrhyn Estuary, DESPITE the Orica EDC plume, and DESPITE the knowledge of toxins in the sediments in and around Penrhyn Estuary, Sydney Ports will be allowed to dredge – over 7 million cubic metres.

Health is supposed to be a high priority on the Government's Agenda. From August 2004 to January 2005, the Head of Treasury was touring the United States. He was commissioned by the then Treasurer, Michael Egan, to explore policy options to respond to long term budget pressures from an ageing population and trends in expenditure growth. **You would think it**

was self-evident that the first priority was to keep the population healthy. Don't make them sick with excessive air and noise pollution and ensure the amenities to support healthy exercise are available.

**Environmental Health Experts from the State's Department of Health agree. From Department of Health Submission in response to Port Botany Expansion.**

*Regular physical activity is vital for good health and well being. It provides people with a range of significant physical, social and mental health benefits throughout the lifespan. Physical activity is of clear evidence-based benefit in five of the six current Australian National health priorities, including heart disease prevention, diabetes prevention and control, the prevention of some cancers, injury prevention, and the promotion of mental health.*

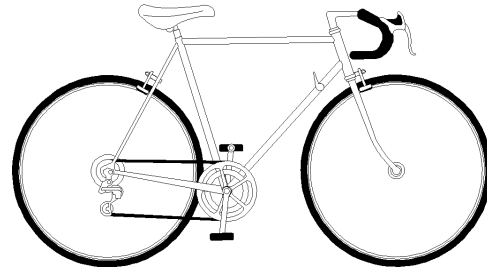
*It is vital that the community has access to places in which to be physically active. Places that are safe, accessible and are in pleasant surroundings are more likely to attract visitors and encourage physical activity. Agreeable, outdoor locations such as Foreshore Beach therefore offer the community a valuable venue in which to participate in physical activities such as walking. Limiting the community's access to Foreshore Beach may in turn decrease their options for locations in which to be physically active. The increased traffic and noise level and loss of visual amenity may also make the location less enjoyable with subsequent loss of appeal for potential visitors. ....*

*NSW Health is concerned that the expansion of Port Botany will both temporarily and permanently deny access to Foreshore Beach and the accompanying recreational activities.....*

*Any action that changes open spaces and in doing so decreases opportunities for the community to participate in regular physical activity should be recognised as entailing a potential health effect.*

Health also noted the air and noise pollution impacts which in some cases will exceed acceptable standards.

**Lynda Newnam March 2006  
BOUND FOR BOTANY BAY BIKE  
RIDE TO CELEBRATE BOTANY  
BAY WEEK: COOK'S ENTRY TO  
THE BAY 29 April**



Two groups of riders from La Perouse and Kurnell will meet at Cook Park Ramsgate. The La Perouse riders commence at Cann Park at 10.00am. The route will take them through Bicentennial Park at Yarra Bay, and continues to Sir Joseph Banks Park where they will regroup. The following rest stops are at Mascot Park, Tempe Reserve, Much Avenue Car Park. The full trip from La Perouse is 22.4 km but there is opportunity to join the riders along the journey.

For further details phone Adrian Boss 9363911 [www.bikeeast.org.au](http://www.bikeeast.org.au)

**ECOLIVING CENTRE**

The University of New South Wales (UNSW) Ecoliving Centre comprises a house and garden site, which operates as a research and demonstration facility for ecologically sustainable urban living. The Centre is run by those who work as volunteers with the support of a full time co-ordinating Program Manager. The Centre also engages Project Officers for specific projects and activities as they are required. Participation is actively sought from all people interested in sustainability from within the university and from the broader community. Currently the Centre is conducting a membership drive. The Centre offers a range of activities from various Arts in the Gardens activities to courses on permaculture. You can join a number of teams including gardening, composting and chook management. Memberships range from \$5 for university students and staff, \$12 for pensioners, seniors and other students, to \$25 for a household. You can visit anytime for free to enjoy the garden – 14 Arthur Street, Randwick. [www.ecoliving.unsw.edu.au](http://www.ecoliving.unsw.edu.au)