

Richmond Town Hall
333 Bridge Rd, Richmond
Friday 27th October 2017

2.30 pm



Governance and Decision Making in the Public Interest

Free Public Forum



Introduction

How our democratic institutions 'govern' on our behalf defines who we are as a society. The activities and processes that governments carry out we can call 'governance'. The quality of governance in Australia ultimately determines our quality of life and our capacity to deal with the growing challenges facing us now and in the years ahead. But there is growing concern among serious analysts that governance standards in this country are declining. We believe this reflects not just a lack of vision and leadership but also declining standards and processes of governance.

This problem is not yet endemic, permanent or widespread but it is appearing at times in all levels of government: too close a relationship between public officials and private corporations, too much unaddressed conflict of interest, too little transparency, lazy analysis of problems – grasping at instant solutions imbued with 'optimism bias', manipulated supporting data, enfeebled public scrutiny, and even egregious examples of outright corruption both at political level and within what used to be trusted departments of the public service. This 'institutional decay' was evident in the abortive East-West Link motorway project, and is appearing again in the West Gate Tunnel project.

Transport for Melbourne is of the view that the question of governance has now become critical and is the main reason we have consistently achieved poor transport outcomes in Melbourne and Victoria more generally. Transport for Melbourne does not believe there are easy solutions to this problem but we believe that it needs to be addressed in an open forum. This forum will therefore include contributions from a number of highly respected Australians in an attempt to provide a better insight into the scale and dimensions of the problem, generate interest and give publicity to this important issue, and help build momentum for change. The issues covered by this forum have profound implications for all Australians.

Program Outline

Time	Program
FRIDAY 27 OCTOBER 2017	
2.30 PM	Registration
	Chair Welcome and Introduction
	The Hon Dr Ken Coghill
	William McDougall
5.00pm	Cr Jackie Fristacky
	Panel discussion and questions
5.00pm	Summary and Close

Speakers



The Hon Dr Ken Coghill was member for Werribee, Parliamentary secretary and Speaker in the Victorian Parliament. He is an Associate Professor at Monash University and leads research in governance and parliamentary studies. He teaches *Governance* (postgraduate level) and conducts research into the enhancement of parliamentarian's knowledge, skills and capabilities including ethical competence. He is a director of a number of civil society organisations including the Accountability Round Table and the Australian Open Government Partnership Network and is a member of the 75 nation Open Government Partnership. He has maintained an active interest in urban planning and the central role of transport during his public life.



William McDougall is a transport planner, engineer and economist with over 40 years' experience in the UK, Australasia, Asia and the Middle East.

William has extensive experience in strategy and policy development/analysis, and transport demand modelling. He conducted the Northern Central City Corridor Study in Melbourne in 2001-3. More recently, he directed the Rowville Rail Study, a review of the future for Melbourne's tram system and assisted in the national High Speed Rail Study. He advocated for a station at South Yarra on Melbourne Metro, and also undertook a critical review of the West Gate Tunnel project.



Cr Jackie Fristacky is an independent Councillor of the City of Yarra since 2002, with 3 terms as Mayor (2005/06, 2012/13, 2013/14).

Jackie has a background in law and public policy, and has played an active role in local transport issues. She is an executive member of the RFI transport think tank and is a delegate to the Municipal Association of Victoria Transport and Infrastructure Group. She is a strong advocate for cycling and improving passenger transport to deal with city congestion, more efficient land use, social equity, community health, and environmental sustainability.

Chair

Professor Michael Buxton is Professor of Environment and Planning, RMIT School of Global, Urban and Social Studies.

Professor Buxton has contributed extensively to government policy and maintains strong industry and professional connections. He is frequently requested to comment and advise on urban issues nationally by Australian media

Convenor

Roger Taylor

Chair Transport for Melbourne

About

Transport for Melbourne

Transport for Melbourne is a small think tank and advocacy group of transport professionals whose mission is to promote a better understanding of transport issues that Melbourne faces now and how these can be better addressed by applying lessons learnt from cities that have been confronted with similar problems and become models of international best practice. Our concern is that the transport crisis we face today in Melbourne is to a large extent a result of our government's failure to appreciate and apply these lessons.

The transport problem is always seen in terms of infrastructure: 'we don't have enough, therefore we must pour money into building more'. But the immediate problem is that we don't use what we have effectively and efficiently. There are many cities in the world with superior transport systems that have far less infrastructure than Melbourne.

Melbourne needs a new vision for transport and a new plan to implement the vision. The plan must start not with new infrastructure but with institutional change and better management of our public transport system and new investment priorities. We want transport on rails and transport on roads to be planned as a single integrated network. Thinking about transport must be joined up with thinking about the future shape of our city. Walking and cycling must be treated as transport modes needing safe infrastructure. We need a plan that reflects the best international practice. We also need a new freight plan.

There are no simple single fixes to these problems. They require actions in many areas and will require new infrastructure investment but it has to be invested where it is needed. It is our view that considerable

improvements could be made to Melbourne's transport problems relatively quickly: much of it within a four- year parliamentary term if the government had the mindset and commitment to make it happen and this could be implemented at a cost that would be considerably less than the major road tunnel projects that the government is committed to today.

Transport for Melbourne has prepared a "Transport Charter" that provides the community with a clear statement of what it should expect from our public transport system and what needs to be done to achieve it.

Acknowledgements

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