



VICTORIAN ELECTION POLICIES

2010 - 2011

SOUTH EAST AUSTRALIAN TRANSPORT STRATEGY INC.



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INTRODUCTION

South East Australian Transport Strategy Inc (SEATS) provides representation for a population of over 2 million people in one of the fastest growing regions of Australia. Timely transport solutions are absolutely vital to facilitating economic development and employment and in addressing existing transport network deficiencies.

SEATS has the responsibility to provide all major political parties involved in elections with some clear and definitive requests which our community wishes to see addressed as part of a good government role. SEATS will ensure that every political party is lobbied with copies of our requests for transport infrastructure in the south east region of Australia. All individual candidates in each electorate will be given a copy of our requests and will be asked to endorse those policies applicable to their particular electorate.

This paper addresses those issues. It does not purport to be a definitive document. It is presented to enable discussion with SEATS about the transport infrastructure needs in the south east area of Australia.

SEATS will, through the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Executive and the SEATS Chief Executive Officer present these transport infrastructure proposals to the political parties in the coming months. On behalf of our community we wish to ensure that these issues are addressed by all political parties in their election manifesto. We also request that each candidate in each electorate give a clear undertaking to ensure that these issues are adequately addressed by whichever political party wins government.

We will work with you to formulate an appropriate action plan and then to implement that plan to the benefit of the communities which form the vibrant region of South Eastern Australia delivering significant economic development growth and employment opportunities to reduce the high levels of unemployment in all demographics.

These election policy issues have been prepared, using information developed over a twelve month period, provided by SEATS membership representing 25 local government authorities and industry supporters across Victoria, NSW and the ACT.

The various Government or semi-government agencies who are also members of SEATS did not participate in the formulation of this document as they may well be asked to advise Government on the proposals we are advocating for inclusion in election manifestos. However, their advice regarding the practicalities and formulation of the minutiae of these plans has been invaluable.

It should be noted that some matters are cross border issues and will therefore be raised with all governments.

All projects raised within this document are currently priority projects adopted by SEATS in November 2009. Each project has a short description and further information about them may be obtained by consulting the SEATS website on www.seats.org.au.

Cr Sue Whelan
Chairman
South East Australian Transport Strategy Inc
February 2010

Chris Vardon OAM
Chief Executive Officer
South East Australian Transport Strategy Inc

PREAMBLE

All levels of government need to accept responsibility to ensure that a pro-active, co-operative strategic direction is in place to enable delivery of improvements to and upgrade of the transport infrastructure needs in the south eastern region of Australia. This issue is a fundamental platform advocated by SEATS to all Governments in our region.

Partnership plans need to be developed between Federal and State Governments to allow agreement on projects of critical importance for transport efficiency for regional development and growth.

It is apparent that communities throughout Australia want co-operative policies adopted by Federal, State and Local Government to ensure the delivery of best practice to the electorate. It is also apparent that communities are looking for timely, well-planned and properly constructed upgrades of transport infrastructure projects.

Politically appealing rhetoric of shifting responsibility of project delivery from one government to another is no longer appropriate. It has become increasingly apparent that projects which have the full cooperation of local, state and federal government and community and industry groups are preferred.

POLICY ISSUES

SEATS commends the Victorian Government on its delivery of improved transport infrastructure in metropolitan Melbourne and in south eastern Victoria.

SEATS believes that:

- **The Victorian Government should maintain and enhance its commitment to the network improvement plans based upon 5, 10 and 20 year horizons.**
 - **There should be a continuing funding commitment from the Victorian Government for the timely development of transport infrastructure around the growth areas of Dandenong, Cardinia and Casey local government areas.**
 - **The Port of Hastings be developed and the associated infrastructure, including road and rail connections be improved to deliver the maximum benefit to the region.**
- **SEATS believes that the Victorian Government should maintain and enhance its commitment to the network improvement plans based upon 5, 10 and 20 year horizons.** SEATS will support State agencies in the preparation of forward work programs for infrastructure upgrades by the announcement of funding on a five year basis. This position will enable suitable longer-term projects to be delivered in a timely fashion and project confidence within the investment industry.
 - **SEATS seeks continuing funding commitment from the Victorian Government for the timely development of transport infrastructure around the growth areas of Dandenong, Cardinia and Casey local government areas.** The rapid growth of this region demands immediate action from government with regard to all forms of transport infrastructure. SEATS is concerned that the planning for much of this network has been shelved and seeks planning funds to be immediately restored.
 - **SEATS seeks the Victorian Government to develop the Port of Hastings and improve the associated infrastructure, including road and rail connections to deliver the maximum benefit to the region.**

SEATS believes that:

- Adequate planning and funding be available to develop intermodal infrastructure and to improve freight and passenger rail access to the national grids at Melbourne.
- Policy changes be made to existing Victorian regulations to enable interstate passenger buses and local school buses to pick up and set down intrastate passengers within Victoria.
- The Victorian and NSW Governments should establish a joint industry advisory committee to resolve issues affecting the safe transportation of products within Victoria and between Victoria and NSW.
- The Victorian Government should develop a funding program to provide for the replacement of timber bridges.

- **SEATS seeks adequate planning and funding to develop intermodal infrastructure and to improve freight and passenger rail access to the national grids at Melbourne.** This would enhance the economic attractiveness of the south and central Gippsland. The Gippsland Logistics Precinct proposal developed by Latrobe City Council is considered a most innovative and advanced plan for the delivery of a modern and technologically efficient distribution hub.
- **SEATS requests that policy changes be made to existing Victorian regulations to enable interstate passenger buses and local school buses to pick up and set down intrastate passengers within Victoria.**
- **SEATS believes that the Victorian and NSW Governments should establish a joint industry advisory committee to resolve issues affecting the safe transportation of products within Victoria and between Victoria and NSW.** This body would also be requested to determine a workable policy to enable the development of a funding formula to adequately recompense local government authorities for the use and maintenance of timber roads. *This is a SEATS priority project.*
- **SEATS requests that the Victorian Government develop a funding program to provide for the replacement of timber bridges.** The Gippsland Transport Study identified this as an important issue within this region of Victoria requiring attention over the next five years.

SPECIFIC PROJECTS

SEATS believes that network development plans should be developed for the Gippsland and south east Melbourne identifying major and minor works on a work plan for 5 years, 10 years, 15 years, etc including identifying the basic scope of the work and the timing of such work.

Road Issues (Vic)

SEATS has identified the following road transport projects as priorities within south eastern Australia and requests that these projects be undertaken:

Princes Highway – Traralgon-Sale

Estimated cost: \$500m (\$175m already allocated)

Purpose: This project is to duplicate the 51km section from Traralgon to Sale to provide a four lane divided highway. Where possible the existing road reserve will be utilised, however additional road reserve will be required to accommodate a divided road and minimise impact on native vegetation in a number of locations. Alignment options will need to be considered as part of the detailed design phase.



South Gippsland Highway upgrade – Lang Lang-Sale

Estimated cost: \$56.9m for Sale to Longford, other project costs to be scoped and determined.

Purpose: Upgrading of the Highway to “A” road standard, from Lang Lang to Sale, generally along the existing alignment. Also including town bypasses, improvements to vertical and horizontal alignment, and provision of overtaking lanes.

The current project is the upgrading and flood protection on the Sale to Longford section of the highway (Cox’s Bridge). Works are expected to commence by the end of 2013 for this section.



Bass Highway duplication – Lang Lang-Anderson

Estimated cost: \$40m for stage 7

Purpose: Duplication (upgrade) of the Highway from the South Gippsland Highway at Lang Lang to the roundabout at Anderson. Some sections have already been duplicated with work currently in progress on other sections. The proposed work is for the provision of a four lane divided Highway. Works for the section Grantville to south of King Road were completed mid 2009 with the section King Road to Woolmer Road estimated to be completed by mid 2010.

Planning is well advanced for the section Woolmer Road to Phillip Island Road with the concept being to provide a new 3km link between the Bass Highway and a point 2.5km along the Phillip Island Road. Works are anticipated to start in late 2010.



Bass Highway – Anderson-Leongatha

Estimated cost: Anderson to Wonthaggi \$10m-\$40m; Wonthaggi to Inverloch \$6m-\$20m; Inverloch to Leongatha \$10m-\$50m

Purpose: The Lang Lang to Anderson section of the Bass Highway will by 2011 be completed to a 4 lane divided road. The balance of the highway covering a distance of 55km is proposed as 2 lanes with improvements to, road pavement, widening to at least “B” road standard, provision of sealed shoulders (Inverloch to Leongatha), provision of overtaking opportunities (Anderson to Inverloch) and safety improvements.



Koo Wee Rup Road

Estimated cost: \$40m (Koo Wee Rup bypass only)

Purpose: To ultimately provide a freeway standard linkage along the Koo Wee Rup Road corridor from Pakenham Bypass to South Gippsland Highway (including a Bypass of the Koo Wee Rup township).

In the interim VicRoads intends to duplicate the existing Koo Wee Rup Road and construct a bypass of the township.

Tooradin-Baxter Road

Estimated cost: Not currently available

Purpose: The road section that is the subject of this proposal links the South Gippsland Highway to the Peninsular Freeway, which is already a very significant connection, and will become even more so in the near future. The impending upgrade of the Port of Hastings and the Stony Point to Cowes car ferry will increase both the volume and size of vehicles using this route significantly.

Leongatha Heavy Vehicle alternative route

Purpose: This project seeks to develop a heavy vehicle bypass for Leongatha, the largest town in South Gippsland Shire.

Council has approved the route for the Leongatha heavy vehicle route.

The next step for the Leongatha heavy vehicle bypass route is to commence detailed route and intersection design with VicRoads and to seek State/Federal Government funding for the project.



Intermodal Development

Gippsland Logistics Precinct (Morwell)

Purpose: In 2002, Latrobe City Council acquired a 64 hectare site three kilometres east of the Morwell CBD, adjacent to the existing, underutilised, Gippsland Intermodal Freight Terminal (GIFT). The site was purchased for the strategic purpose of developing an expanded (GLP) to service the Latrobe Valley and the Gippsland region.

The Gippsland Logistics Precinct shall:

1. offer fair and equitable access to the terminal for all enterprises regardless of commercial arrangement;
2. provide open access between the GIFT and the adjacent 64ha site including preserving the potential for construction of rail spurs into the GLP;
3. be fundamentally a rail focused terminal with other modes, being road and potentially air, providing a supplementary but subordinate role; and
4. be controlled via a long term lease held by Latrobe City Council.

Strategic Study Projects

Cross border issues (includes timber roads, heavy vehicle and regulation issues)

Estimated cost of study: \$200,000

Purpose: A study to identify policy, regulatory and transport network issues that have an impact on the efficient and effective cross border movement of freight and to propose solutions.

The study to include identifying and proposing solutions to government, to eliminate irregularities in government policies and regulations, to allow vehicles to be manufactured, configured and loaded in such a way to be legal in all states.

The study also to investigate and evaluate the adequacy of the local and regional road network within the SEATS region to service the harvesting of timber from public and private forests and the delivery of logs to places of production, processing or ports. The study will be used to develop a strategic policy to assist government (local, state & national) to formulate a funding formula to develop and maintain the network of rural/regional timber roads and to formulate consistent cross border policies and regulations.

Victorian School Bus System

Purpose: To make changes to the Victorian school bus system to allow the carrying of other fare paying passengers. The study has been completed and has Municipal Association Victoria (MAV) and Gippsland Local Government Network (GLGN) support. Under the School Bus Flexibility Project, trials have been conducted in Gippsland over the last two years. Advocacy for the adoption of eight recommendations, arising from the trials, for the State Government to streamline access to school buses for rural Victorians to better facilitate carriage of the general public, post secondary students and access to school buses is required.



Rail Issues (Vic)

SEATS recognises the vast array of necessary projects required in the Victorian rail network both passenger and freight rail. SEATS recommends and commends the planned Dandenong 3rd rail line.

Port Issues (Vic)

It is requested that consideration be given to access to Port Melbourne and to Port of Hastings with appropriate rail connections. This is becoming increasingly important to allow for wanted expansion of intermodals in the Narre Warren, Bairnsdale and Sale regions. It is also necessary to plan for inland ports in the City of Casey and Dandenong areas

Other Policy Issues (Vic)

SEATS in conjunction with the Gippsland Local Government Network supports the Gippsland Logistic Precinct and seeks funding for the plan, design, development of this important infrastructure.

Air Transport Issues (Vic)

SEATS seeks further development of Latrobe, West Sale and Bairnsdale Airports to enable further employment opportunities.

With many regional airports and rural airports being maintained by local government, it is becoming increasingly urgent for funding to upgrade the tarmac at certain airports is forthcoming.

SEATS has identified the following air transport issues as priorities within south eastern Australia and requests that the following projects be undertaken:

- Some airports such as Latrobe, West Sale and Bairnsdale will require significant upgrades in the next five to eight years. This is beyond the ability of the responsible Councils and requires some action by both Federal and State Government by 2012 – 2015.
- SEATS requests that the State Government seek support from the Federal Government to assist with strengthening of regional airport runways to meet existing and new loadings.

Supported projects (letter of support)

Lang Lang Bypass

Estimated Cost: Stage 1 \$3m, Stage 2 \$3.5m - totalling \$6.5m

The Lang Lang region contains significant sand resources making it of State economic importance. As a result of sand extraction to cope with current demand, considerable traffic traverses through Lang Lang town centre. The Bypass proposes a two lane two way carriageway diverting traffic around Lang Lang at Westernport Road east of the township and reconnecting with Westernport Road west of the town.

Signalisation of Princes Freeway and Old Princes Highway intersection at Beaconsfield:

Estimated Cost: \$1m

The inability of Beaconsfield residents to directly access the new Pakenham Bypass (Princes Freeway) results in congestion through Berwick. Signalisation at this intersection was originally planned but was not undertaken.

McGregor Road duplication from Pakenham Bypass to Princes Highway:

Estimated Cost: \$6.7m

McGregor Road is identified in the Victorian State Government's "Growth Area Framework Plan 2006" as an arterial road providing access from Pakenham Bypass to the residential and business districts with the Urban Growth Boundary. This framework also recognizes McGregor Road is an important link from the Pakenham Bypass to the proposed employment precinct south of the freeway.

References

Gippsland Transport Study 2005	Meyrick and Associates	August
Princes Highway Economic and Social Significance Studies 2005	Sd&D (on behalf NRMA, PHocus and SEATS)	August and September
Kings Highway Study 2005	NRMA	September
Australian Capital Region Road Transport Priorities Study 2000	Maunsell McIntyre Pty Ltd	June
SEATS Strategic Network Document 2009	SEATS	November
SEATS Project Templates 2009	SEATS members	November

Website

www.seats.org.au