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**REPORT 10**  
*(1215/52/IM)*

## **“TRANSPORT – THE NEXT 50 YEARS” CONFERENCE REPORT BACK**

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### **1. Purpose of Report**

To report back on the 2007 Conference “Transport – the next 50 years”.

### **2. Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 1. Receive the information.*

### **3. Background**

In July, I went to the NZ Conference "Transport - the next 50 years" sponsored by central and local government and a wide range of commercial supporters. It was very wide ranging from coastal transport to cycle networks, from travel demand management to biofuel myth-busting. Transport was set in the context of a rapidly changing world, with population pressures, funding constraints, habitual behaviour and environmental challenges. The conference papers addressed the key questions of past, present and future. What will a transport system that is integrated, sustainable and multi-modal look like 50 years from now?

Three most important aspects were

- the long term vision necessary to look forward, given the lifespan of most Transport infrastructure
- the need to integrate all modes to produce a Transport System rather than a set of disjointed, contradictory projects and pieces of infrastructure.
- the realisation that significant change often produced state transformation rather than linear variation.

Several officers, from Infrastructure, Strategy and Planning, also attended. Since I was presenting on Walking, Living Streets Aotearoa paid my registration while Wellington City Council paid transport and accommodation. Since the Conference was accredited CarboNZero, the delegates' travel emission ghgs were offset by support of NZ planting projects. CarboNZero is administered by Landcare Research, a Crown Research Institute. I cycled to and from Wellington airport, caught the bus from the airport, walked in Christchurch and shared a taxi back to the airport, ensuring a multimodal trip!

The day before the conference, I attended a seminar hosted by ECAN, Canterbury Regional Council, with Peter Zanzoterra, brought out from UK by Land Transport NZ. He talked about Travel Behaviour Change with reference to current thinking on behaviour change rather than the theory of planned behaviour which traces five stages as a decision model. He suggested that travel mode was a *habitual choice* for 80% of the time. Righteous indignation style messages don't work! Time for change in travel mode is when there is a significant life event e.g. new house, new job. Therefore business travel plans should focus on new recruits who would be more open to change. Marketing campaigns needed to be more sustained

## **4. Discussion**

### **4.1 Key issues raised**

Mayor Gary Moore welcomed us to Christchurch and addressed changing transport patterns from early horse and cart, through over-emphasis on the car through to his son's use of cycling or walking six days a week and a car one day a week. He noted that Christchurch has reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 50% in ten years. For local government, he identified a need to mix disciplines up, to change planning and urban design to integrate transport more.

Sir Kerry Burke, chair of ECAN, suggested that whatever oil scarcity and prices eventuated, "There will be ways of fuelling our economy," and referred to the 1851 Energy Crisis – a lack of whales.

Given there were six key-note presentations, 88 papers, a panel discussion and a young person's forum, I have just selected a few of the interesting ideas. The officers and I generally spread ourselves around different sessions to maximise our learning.

### **Keynote speakers**

**Dr Ian Goldin - James Martin 21st Century School of Oxford University  
"Future trends and shocks".**

He congratulated NZ for such a far-sighted conference. Such long term planning is not common. The future is essentially unpredictable in what specific technology will emerge. The pace of change is still accelerating. We must look at the past and understand mega-trends, for example, GDP and world population have been in synch so far. The past does not predict the future e.g. state change – heating water doesn't keep a liquid gradually increasing temperature – it boils!

There have been considerable quality of life improvements since 70s. Global life expectancy has increased 20 years, illiteracy has halved, the number of people with income of less than \$1 per diem is down by 300m, despite 2 billion more people. There is predicted income growth across the world. Set against this, there are absolutely unprecedented risks e.g. Famine/ Pest/War/Drought/ New Pandemics/ loss of biodiversity. Recommended Martin Rees's *Our Final Century* and reckoned 50:50 probabilities that this SI final century for current civilisation.

If we can eliminate anxiety, guilt and depression, enhance, memory and concentration, we are transforming what it is like to be human. Looking at the trends, machine intelligence greater than humans is about 20 – 300 years out. What will happen then? He agreed that exponential growth was not sustainable and will stabilise. Thought at target of 9 billion people was within carrying capacity of planet but that there were no politically palatable ways of controlling population growth.

New Zealand has extraordinary opportunities – 20% of Nears not born here means we have an exchange of ideas and cultures. Inhabiting the Pacific Rim is advantageous in that the economic centre of gravity will return to China. Climate Change is hugely important.

### **Jack Short - European Conference of Ministers of Transport (ECMT)**

#### **“What can we learn from the last 50 years?”**

Again noted significant improvements in GDP, 20-fold increase in World Trade since 1950, increased mobility e.g. number of cars has quadrupled. Reductions in freight costs – sea and air and dramatic reductions in crashes and most transport pollution. However, globally we’re still producing 3 billion tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> and still killing more than a million per annum. We’re looking ahead to a global population of 9 billion, 7 billion people in urban areas. Transport forecasts often miss structural change. Systems will face increasing pressure and congestion.

Most countries have similar policy aims which include vague words of sustainability but few have clear priorities such as “Invest in rail!” Not enough attention is given to demand management. Reiterated importance of Climate Change.

### **Dr Kevin Trenberth - National Centre for Atmospheric Research**

#### **Global warming is Unequivocal**

The recent IPCC report has clearly stated that “Warming of the climate system is unequivocal” and it is “very likely” caused by human activities. Moreover, most of the observed changes are now simulated by climate models over the past 50 years adding confidence to future projections

The atmosphere is a “global commons.” Air over one place is typically half way round the world a week later, as shown by manned balloon flights. If we look at accumulated CO<sub>2</sub> emission from 1850 to 2004, we can see where most was emitted from Europe and the US.

#### ***Other speakers***

**Liz Yeaman from EECA** spoke about biofuels (renewable fuel from animal or plant sources). She talked about first generation biofuels which are produced from food crops. Even then, waste by-products are often used. Second generation biofuels include sewage, algae, municipal solid waste and forestry. In California, municipal solid waste could produce enough fuel for 50% of petrol requirements. Enzymatic hydrolysis gives an efficiency factor of 70% conversuib to ethanol. Therefore food crops and tropical timber are NOT necessarily at risk from biofuel production, Sewage algae, sugar cane, rice straw and other waste materials could be suitable. We may need an “original source” certification. Scion is looking at forestry waste potential in NZ. Some Malaysian forests

are at risk but Brazilian sugarcane is largely grown on land that is marginal for everything else. Biofuel from lignine seems unlikely. She noted that all diesel in Europe contains 5% biofuel minimum. NZ could use tallow or whey.

Few public transport presentations made much note of the fact one must walk to the stop or station. While technological advances were noted and welcomed, most people were clear that they were only part of the solution and that urban form and transport mode shift were more important right now.

**Maurice Williamson** noted that more people had been killed by the car than war or plague.

There was considerable discussion about wisdom – despite all advances, are we any wiser than 2000 years ago? The disconnect between decisions and effect means that individuals can create mayhem – as terrorists or government sanctioned soldiers, rather than it being face-to-face action and consequence.

I presented on "Walking - The Invisible Mode", looking at many areas where our first mode of transport is ignored. I covered funding, travel benefits, temporary roadworks, street maps and survey data. Even the humble traffic light appears to be designed against the pedestrian when we have to press a button to get a red or green man. Can you imagine driving up to a set of traffic lights and having to press a button to find out whether one can go or not? And then finding that it's inevitably red to start with! "Why don't we see a green woman, since we walk more?" I pondered.

The original conference website had about a dozen photos of different modes - but NO walkers. They retrieved walkers' respect by having a bunch of pro-pedestrian goodies in our excellent conference back packs - umbrella, gloves, hat and scarf - I hope Transit will continue with more walking friendly infrastructure too.

#### **4.2 Materials available**

I have a paper with abstracts, some conference handouts and all PPT presentations are available at [www.transport07.co.nz](http://www.transport07.co.nz)

#### **4.3 Benefits**

The very broad overview of transport was very useful and interesting. The individual presentations varied a little but were mostly competent and interesting. Some workshop/discussion sessions would have been a welcome change! The sessions were very worthwhile and that data analysed in depth,

#### **4.4 Impressions of Christchurch**

Free inner city shuttle bus.

Long distances even in downtown.

Easy to get lost due to flat terrain.

Very wide streets – unpleasant to walk across some intersections.

Little congestion.

City centre seemed empty at night.

I was surprised there was apparently no Ngai Tahu presence at the conference - neither as a formal welcome nor their views on Transport matters.

## **5. Conclusion**

This Council's planning for bus priority lanes and travel demand management is showing good practice but we need to move from strategies and plans to actions. Numbers using public transport, walking and working from home total a good percentage for Australasia but we could do better compared to leaders elsewhere. We are starting from a good base topographically and with reasonable services but haven't been as active as some municipalities in changing trends. Our support for cycling is minimal compared to other places. Our Road Safety messages need to be integrated into sustainable travel planning and focussed on achievable behaviour change rather than general exhortations.

Technological support e.g. GPS for travel surveys could be piloted. Basic signage and interconnectedness is important for walking. Walkability and public transport are symbiotic. Real time information for both public transport times and parking availability are NOT leading edge and it's about time they were developed here. For freight, dialogue between interests in coastal freight, interisland ferry freight, rail freight and road delivery is vital. These modes again need an integrated approach.

Our urban development strategy and our urban containment are helpful in addressing the biggest transport problem – sprawl. Working more closely with the Regional Council could be helpful for matters within Wellington rather than only the Regional Land Transport Committee.

In Wellington City, 32% of greenhouse gas emissions are from Transport. This makes action urgent and important.

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<b>Supporting Information</b>
<p><b>1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome</b>  <i>This project supports Outcome 7.2.B – More actively engaged: Wellington will operate an open and honest decision making process that generates confidence and trust in the democratic system.</i></p>
<p><b>2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact</b>  <i>The project relates to C534: Elections, Governance and Democratic Process.</i></p>
<p><b>3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations</b>  <i>Not applicable</i></p>
<p><b>4) Decision-Making</b>  <i>This report does not seek a decision</i></p>
<p><b>5) Consultation</b>  <b>a) General Consultation</b>  <i>Not applicable</i></p> <p><b>b) Consultation with Maori</b>  <i>Not applicable</i></p>
<p><b>6) Legal Implications</b>  <i>Not applicable.</i></p>
<p><b>7) Consistency with existing policy</b>  <i>Not applicable</i></p>