

Coalition of Transport Action Groups (CTAG) No Tunnels - Sustainable Public Transport Rally a Significant Success

On Sunday, 26 October 2008 the newly formed **Coalition of Transport Action Groups (CTAG)** held its first rally at Flinders Street Station. Around 1000 protesters, representatives from residential, community and environmental groups from east, inner and western Melbourne, participated.

The Rally opened with an acknowledgement of the *Wurundjeri People*, the traditional owners of the land, and then Daniel Brown, from the Public Transport Users Association addressed the rally.



Daniel spoke of the history of neglect of public transport in Victoria and the current government's failure to address public transport in population growth corridors, the escalating costs of fossil fuels and carbon emissions. He also spoke with specific reference to the Doncaster Rail, the electrification of the Deer Park to Bacchus Marsh Line, the upgrade of the Sydenham and Belgrave Lilydale lines and the construction of the Rowville and South Morang lines.



Speakers from the *Yarra Campaign Against the Tunnel (YCAT)*, *Flemington Association*, *Royal Park Projection Group*, *Brimbank Tunnel Action Group (BTAG)* and *No freeway 4 West Footscray* addressed the local impact of the proposed tunnels, elevated freeways, toll roads, traffic congestion in local roads and the loss of local amenity.

Each of the speakers reiterated their community's awareness that the East-West Tunnel proposal was for the *transportation of freight* between Hastings and the Melbourne Ports and would increase not diminish traffic congestion in local neighbourhoods.

All groups were united in their opposition to the recommendations in the *Eddington Report* and expressed frustration at the *lack of vision* shown by the current Victorian Government.

The speakers were united in their concern that no *new vision* for sustainable transport will form part of the *Victorian Transport Plan* due for release *November/December 2008*.

The Rally then passed, by acclamation, the following resolution:

Resolution

This Rally demands the State Government immediately abandon the *Eddington Report* and reallocate the \$18 billion on sustainable public transport and rail freight.

Specifically we seek:

- The rapid transit rail to Doncaster along the Eastern Freeway
- The electrification of the Deer Park to Bacchus Marsh line
- The urgent upgrade of the Sydenham rail line
- The construction of the Rowville line
- The upgrade of the Belgrave/Lilydale line
- The development of the South Morang line.

We demand that the State Government negotiate funds from the Federal Government, to standardise the gauge, to enable rail freight transportation in Victoria.

Colleen Hartland undertook to deliver this resolution to Mr. Brumby on behalf of *Coalition of Transport Action Groups (CTAG)*.

Freda Watkin



A Significant Rally – Flinders Street Station, 26 October 2008

The rally and, particularly, the long neglected Western Suburbs received excellent coverage on the Channel 7 & 9 and ABC news and will be featured in the local papers in the east and west this week.

A reporter from 3CR interviewed a number of children for the breakfast show and Channel 31 featured the Rally on Scare TV.

However, the most significant aspect of this Rally is the coming together of residential, environment and community groups under the Coalition of Transport Action Groups (CTAG) banner. This is the first time this has occurred and in the current political climate is both encouraging and significant.



There have been numerous rallies on public transport issues in recent months across Melbourne but this rally is the most important.

The Coalition of Transport Action Groups (CTAG), which is comprised of several large umbrella groups as well as local neighborhood groups, unites upwards of 140 residential, community, environmental and action groups in a single, focused campaign.

This is a significant, grass-roots campaign for *sustainable public transport*, not roads and not tunnels and the campaign is gathering momentum.

Freda Watkin