

LEADWEST MEMBERS / COUNCIL HIGHLIGHT REPORT SEPTEMBER 2010



LeadWest Meeting with Min Pakula & Mr Jim Betts

LeadWest Chairman and LeadWest CEO met with Martin Pakula Minister for **Minister for Public Transport and representatives of the Dept of Transport in relation to the Regional Rail Link Project.**

The Regional Rail Link Project is a key element of the \$38 Billion Victorian Transport Plan and involves the construction of 40+ km of dedicated regional tracks from West Werribee to Southern Cross Station which has a capacity of 9,000 passengers per hour.

LeadWest stressed to the Minister that RRL project presents a once in a lifetime opportunity to integrate land use & transport planning to transform the shape of the western suburbs.

LeadWest Forum NBN Rollout - Implications for Western Councils & Stakeholders

In partnership with Regional Development Australia, LeadWest facilitated a briefing for Councillors and councils' senior officers on the multi-billion dollar investment in the National Broadband Network (NBN).

The light goes green on the creation of the information superhighway

It not for nothing was the broadband network pivotal in Labor's return to power.

With the Gillard government returned to office, the national broadband network is back on track and Australia is again moving towards world-class broadband access and the incalculable social and economic benefits it will deliver.

In explaining why he chose to support Labor, independent MP Tony Windsor hit the nail on the head when he said: "Do it once, do it right, do it with fibre."

Fibre is in many ways the right way to go as optical fibre - small strands of glass - can carry 10,000 times more information than the entire wireless spectrum used by mobile devices. What is more, it is physically impossible for the wireless spectrum to be extended.

That is why fibre has been used in backhaul and transoceanic telecommunications networks for more than 25 years. The national broadband network continues this evolution by bringing fibre to 93 per cent of Australian homes and businesses.

Whilst rewiring the nation with fibre will not be cheap as critics of the project point out. But as Windsor noted, it will only have to be done once. When the fibre is in place, it will provide a durable and future-proof information pipe to every home that will not only provide today's data rates in the range up to 100 megabits per second, but be easily upgraded to 10, 100, or even 1000 times that speed. Who can say how much data we will be using 20 or 50 years from now and it is certainly wise to future proof infrastructure as best we can?

LEADWEST MEMBERS / COUNCIL HIGHLIGHT REPORT SEPTEMBER 2010



Wireless broadband is ideally suited to mobile applications. It is also well suited to sparsely populated areas where the cost of installing fibre could be prohibitive. But the wireless spectrum is already approaching its capacity in urban areas, and in order to achieve the required bandwidth, a proliferation of wireless towers would be needed.

By way of example a city such as Melbourne would have required up to 100,000 new wireless towers. Incidentally, every one of these towers would need to be connected via fibre and the towers would consume 200 megawatts more electricity than a fibre-to-the-home network.

Wireless will always have a role when the user is mobile. In this sense, home fibre networks and wireless networks are complementary, not competitive. Fibre provides the full capacity and power of the internet, providing bandwidths well beyond wireless. On the other hand, wireless provides mobility with access to limited data. Neither technology will make the other obsolete.

Some opponents of the broadband network have claimed a "cost-benefit analysis" will show it is not financially viable. Like other great nation-building investments, traditional financial cost-benefit analyses miss the point because they do not include the social benefits.

I'm sure in the thinking of the rural independents they appreciated the fact that if a cost-benefit analysis had been applied to the construction of our rural road network, it would never have been built. Many rural industries that prosper today (and that will benefit from the broadband network) would not exist. As another example, the network will allow some hospital patients to go home earlier by providing monitoring in the home. This will provide significant savings to the health system and enable patients to return to their families sooner.

Now that we again have some certainty, the debate needs to shift away from politics and the relative merits of different technology options and move to how we can maximise the benefits of broadband to the nation. There are enormous opportunities in areas such as tele-health, aged care, remote distance learning, social networking for isolated communities, online supply chain management, environmental monitoring and smart metering, and water resource management. The list goes on.

Overseas studies have shown that large economic and environmental benefits can flow from tele-working for office workers, and substantial greenhouse gas reductions can be achieved by replacing business travel with high-quality video conferencing.

The opportunities afforded by ubiquitous high-speed broadband are limited only by one's imagination. The national broadband network will place Australia at the forefront of developments in these areas. It will not only provide the bandwidth needed for a rich variety of applications, it will provide opportunities for entrepreneurs to develop new technologies and services and bring these to market.

Earlier this year, tele-health technology saved the life of a Wangaratta man who was taken to hospital, unable to move on one side of his body. The hospital was able to use technology to connect to a neurologist at the University of Melbourne, who identified the symptoms of stroke

LEADWEST MEMBERS / COUNCIL HIGHLIGHT REPORT SEPTEMBER 2010



and through quick intervention saved the patient's life. The broadband network will enable this kind of rapid medical intervention just about anywhere in the country.

In conclusion as a nation we need to do things smarter and I believe the broadband network will stimulate a new generation of clever, innovators.

LeadWest attends Wyndham Sustainability Forum

LeadWest CEO joined over 100 other key regional stakeholders in participating in the Wyndham Sustainability Breakfast forum. LeadWest joined both Victoria University and City West Water in supporting this key regional event designed to champion sustainability initiatives across the region.

LeadWest CEO Attends Western Region Councils CEO's meeting

LeadWest CEO participated in the monthly Western Region Councils CEO meeting hosted by Moonee Valley Council. Key issues addressed included:

- SportsWest initiative (briefing by Campbell Rose CEO of Western Bulldogs Football Club
- Regional Rail Link Advocacy Strategy
- New Federal Government – Minority Government and impact on Metropolitan regions
- Shared IT services
- Health Care reform – Impact on Councils

\$63 Million to bring Toyota Engine Line to Altona

The Gillard Government will invest \$63 million to bring production of Toyota's next-generation, four-cylinder engine for the Camry and Hybrid Camry to Altona.

The grant, from the Green Car Innovation Fund, will be used to install cutting-edge plant and equipment. It will lead to a dramatic expansion and renewal of capacity at Toyota's engine plant in Altona, Victoria.

The project will start immediately and be completed by late 2012, when the new line will start turning out over 100,000 engines a year, up to a sixth of them destined for hybrid vehicles.

This is a substantial investment in Australian manufacturing and a substantial step towards creating an economically and environmentally sustainable automotive industry. It will help anchor Toyota's operations in Australia for years to come.

Support from the Gillard and Brumby Governments has enabled Toyota Australia, and its parent in Japan, to make a timely investment decision and base the project in Australia.

LEADWEST MEMBERS / COUNCIL HIGHLIGHT REPORT SEPTEMBER 2010



The decision shows tremendous confidence in Australia's innovative automotive sector and the capabilities of our suppliers and workers – including the 320 employees at Toyota's Altona engine plant.

The new petrol engines built on the line will consume 4.5 per cent less fuel and produce 5 per cent fewer greenhouse emissions than today's equivalent engine. This will cut carbon pollution by up to 20,000 tonnes a year. The locally produced hybrid engine – an Australian first – will consume just 6 litres of petrol per 100 kilometres and emit 142 grams of carbon dioxide per kilometre.

The Gillard Government will continue to work with Toyota and the entire automotive sector to build a modern, innovative and green industry supporting high-skill, high-wage jobs. The new grant complements the \$35 million provided to Toyota Australia for the Australian-made, low-emission Hybrid Camry launched in February 2010.

LeadWest participates in Western Region Council Economic Development Forum

LeadWest attended the Western Region Councils Economic Development Forum hosted by Moonee Valley Council. Key issues addressed included:

- Transport Infrastructure briefing
- Health Reform Briefing
- Western Region Jobs Expo update
- Western Melbourne Tourism report
- Regional Development Australia update
- State Government industry support update

LeadWest attends Vistaprint Australia P/L grand opening

LeadWest joined other key Brimbank based stakeholders at the official opening of the VistaPrint manufacturing facility in Derrimut. VistaPrint is a major multinational printing company that will employ over 200 staff in the west when fully operational.

LeadWest attends State Government briefing on Broadband

LeadWest CEO joined other board members of Regional Development Australia at a briefing on the proposed broadband rollout by NBN Co and what the implications are in driving innovation for both business and community users.

LEADWEST MEMBERS / COUNCIL HIGHLIGHT REPORT SEPTEMBER 2010



Melbourne's West in Blindspot for RACV 2010 Redspot Survey

No doubt Melbourne's west has its road network redspots, but if you were to rely only on the RACV 2010 Redspot Survey to prioritise improvements then the West would be left behind.

For almost twenty years the RACV has conducted the Redspot Survey, which it developed to get feedback from the public about areas on the road network that need improvement. In recent times, the survey has been an open on-line survey and this year's survey saw a record-breaking 8,000 Redspots nominated by survey respondents.

A Redspot is a location on the road network that makes motorists 'see red'. It could be an intersection, a section of road, a railway crossing or a bus or tram stop where congestion is experienced.

Once it has distilled the survey results to produce a list of the Top 10 redspots, the RACV sends its transport engineers to conduct site inspections of the ten. These engineers assess the potential improvements needed to reduce congestion and the RACV seeks action on the Top 10 redspots, taking the results of the survey and the advice of its engineers into discussions with local councils, VicRoads and the Department of Transport.

The release of the 2008 survey results saw more than \$190 million in funding announcements made, with a commitment by all levels of government to fix problems flagged by the public.

Yesterday, the RACV released the results of the 2010 redspot survey. The results show most of the Top 10 redspots are in Melbourne's eastern and south-eastern suburbs, some in the north, whilst none are in Melbourne's west. Why? The answer lies in the survey methodology, rather than the reality on the roads.

As a predominantly on-line survey, its response rates are skewed by the patterns of Internet "traffic" in Melbourne. The proportion of the population using the Internet is 15 per cent lower in Melbourne's west than in Melbourne as a whole. Consequently, the survey response rates — if broken down into respondents by postcode — would no doubt show a lower rate of respondents from suburbs in Melbourne's west.

Yet the people of Melbourne's west know the reality of the road network throughout the region. They do see red. Lots of it. And whilst they may be in the RACV's blindspot, they know there are redspots here to be fixed.

LeadWest participates in broadband enabled technologies symposium

LeadWest participated in a symposium held by Melbourne University Institute for a Broadband Enabled Society at which the impacts of broadband technologies will have on both business and the community at large.

LEADWEST MEMBERS / COUNCIL HIGHLIGHT REPORT SEPTEMBER 2010



LeadWest CEO attends Metropolitan Transport Forum held at Maribyrnong Council

LeadWest CEO joined other key regional representatives at a Metropolitan Transport forum held at MCC

The evening provided the opportunity for the government, the opposition and the greens to offer their visions for sustainable transport solutions for Melbourne's western suburbs.

Expansion of Melbourne's urban growth boundary (UGB)

The Victorian Parliament ratified Amendment VC68 on 29 July 2010, paving the way for the expansion of Melbourne's urban growth boundary (UGB).

The next step in the planning process will be to produce high level Growth Area Framework Plans for the new growth areas, and revise existing Growth Area Framework Plans where necessary. These new framework plans will:

- Identify the long term pattern of urban growth;
- Identify the location of broad urban development types, for example activity centres, residential, employment, freight centres and mixed use employment;
- Identify the boundaries of individual communities, landscape values and, as appropriate, the need for discrete urban breaks and how land uses in these breaks will be managed;
- Identify committed transport networks and options for investigation, such as future railway lines and stations, freight activity centres, freeways and arterial roads;
- Identify the location of open space to be retained for recreation, biodiversity protection and flood risk reduction purposes guided and directed by regional biodiversity conservation strategies;
- Show significant waterways as opportunities for creating linear trails, along with areas required to be retained for biodiversity protection and/or flood risk reduction purposes;
- Identify appropriate uses for areas described as constrained, including quarry buffers; and
- Include objectives for each growth area.

As was the case with *'Melbourne at 5 million'*, a whole of Government approach will be applied to the preparation of framework plans. The Growth Areas Authority will lead the preparation of the Framework Plans, and a range of state government departments and agencies will assist in their preparation.

The process of preparing the plans formally begins today, with a call for submissions. Submissions should be sent to the Growth Areas Authority, and must be received by 3 November 2010. They can either be sent to Growth Areas Authority, Level 29, 35 Collins Street, Melbourne,

LEADWEST MEMBERS / COUNCIL HIGHLIGHT REPORT SEPTEMBER 2010



VIC 3000 or emailed to gafpsubmission@gaa.vic.gov.au. It is our preference to receive electronic submissions wherever practical.

LeadWest participates in DOT forum on the Melbourne Metro Rail Tunnel Project

As part of the \$38 billion Victorian Transport Plan, the Victorian government has embarked on a program to create a metro style rail system in Melbourne. The Melbourne metro Rail Tunnel Project is a new rail tunnel that will run between Dynon in the west to St Kilda Rd, intersecting the CBD.

A key feature of the proposed scheme is five new underground rail stations which create new possibilities for the integration of public transport and surrounding land use developments.

Melbourne Age – All about Melbourne’s west feature

In its “M Magazine” the Melbourne Age will feature a “West” edition to be published on the 10th October 2010. The feature will cover community, lifestyle and the history of the region.

LeadWest CEO participates at Star News Group Business Luncheon at Point Cook

LeadWest CEO joined over 100 guests at the inaugural Business West – Business Round Table Luncheon held at Sanctuary Lakes. Organised by the Star News group the keynote speaker was Tim Pallas the Victorian Minister for Roads and Ports.

Establishment of Medicare Locals and better access to after hours care

The Government will invest \$417 million to establish a nation-wide network of primary health care organisations (Medicare Locals) to support health professionals, to improve the delivery of primary care services at a local level and to improve access to after hours primary care. The primary health care system - including GP and allied health services - is fragmented, making it hard for some patients to get the treatment they need. Access to after hours primary care varies significantly across Australia and in many areas is either very limited or not available. The lack of consistent after hours primary care places pressure on our public hospitals.

The Australian Government is taking action through its National Health and Hospitals Network. The Government will invest \$416.8 million to establish a nation-wide network of primary health care organisations (Medicare Locals) to support health professionals, to improve the delivery of primary care services at a local level and to improve access to after hours primary care.

Medicare Locals will be independent legal entities (not government bodies) that have strong local governance, including broad community and health professional representation, plus business and management expertise. They will have strong links to Local Hospital Networks, local communities, health professionals and service providers including GPs, allied health professionals and Aboriginal Medical Services.

LEADWEST MEMBERS / COUNCIL HIGHLIGHT REPORT SEPTEMBER 2010



Medicare Locals will be established in two phases.

- A small number of Medicare Locals will start operating by mid-2011.
- The remaining Medicare Locals will start operating by mid-2012.

Medicare Locals will be responsible for providing better integrated care, making it easier for patients to navigate the local health care system. The roles of these organisations could include:

- facilitating allied health care and other support for people with chronic conditions.
- working with local health care professionals to ensure services are integrated and patients can easily access the services they need
- planning to ensure the availability of face-to-face after hours services for their region.
- identifying groups of people missing out on GP and primary health care, or services that a local area needs, and responding to those gaps by targeting services better
- working with Local Hospital Networks to assist with patients' transition out of hospital, and if required, into aged care, and
- delivering health promotion and preventive health programs to communities with identified risk factors (in cooperation with the Australian National Preventive Health Agency, once it is established).

As part of the Australian Government's aged-care package, from 2012-13, Medicare Locals will be provided with a flexible funding pool to target gaps in primary health care services for aged care recipients.

Medicare Locals will also help roll out the Australian Government's chronic disease package for diabetes patients by coordinating allied health services for those enrolled in the diabetes management program.

Where possible, Medicare Locals will be drawn from the Divisions of General Practice that have the capacity to take on the roles and functions expected of Medicare Locals. They will be expected

to have some common board membership with Local Hospital Networks.

LeadWest Lodges Transport & Freight submissions to State Government

LeadWest has lodged detailed submissions to the State government in respect of the following key transport infrastructure and freight initiatives:

- WestLink Route Option
- Regional Rail Link
- Shaping Melbourne's Freight Future – Intermodal Freight Terminals

LEADWEST MEMBERS / COUNCIL HIGHLIGHT REPORT SEPTEMBER 2010



LeadWest has also been able to secure the support of Regional Development Australia in endorsing the thrust of the LeadWest submission.

LeadWest attends Western Region Councils Forum

LeadWest CEO attended the Western Region Councils forum hosted by Maribyrnong Council. Keynote speakers at this bi annual event included: Stephen Bradford CEO of the Port Of Melbourne, Murray Cullinan Executive Director of the Regional Rail Link Project and Anne Barker CEO of City West Water.

LeadWest Chairman meets with Qenos

LeadWest Chairman, as well as the CEO and directors, met with Jonathan Clancy Managing Director of Qenos. Qenos are one of Victoria's major petrochemical companies and one of the west's major employers.

Bernard Salt Report - Go west ... and they have, in droves

LeadWest CEO joined other key regional stakeholders at the launch of the Bernard Salt report on Melbourne's west. The report commissioned by the Western Bulldogs Football Club received strong media attention and highlighted the strong population growth taking place.

Population growth in Melbourne's west has quadrupled in a decade, making it one of the fastest-growing areas in Australia, research shows.

The growth in areas such as Melton, Werribee and Wyndham Vale has been attributed to housing affordability.

The research was commissioned by AFL club Western Bulldogs, and was prepared by KPMG demographer Bernard Salt using Australian Bureau of Statistics figures.

It showed in the 12 months to June last year the local government areas of Wyndham and Melton were in the top 10 fastest-growing municipalities in Australia. When the two were combined, growth in the western region of Melbourne outstripped that of the Gold Coast, resulting in more than 18,100 new residents.

A decade ago the west had a growth of 4000 people a year.

The research showed how the growth in Melbourne's west shifted a traditionally lopsided growth to the east.

In 1980s, Lilydale and Croydon were the main areas of population growth, adding 83,000 people. In the 1990s, the area around Cranbourne and Pakenham took the lead with 73,000 new residents. But in the past decade, it was explosive growth in the west with an extra 135,000 people.

LEADWEST MEMBERS / COUNCIL HIGHLIGHT REPORT SEPTEMBER 2010



Victoria's Parliament recently expanded Melbourne's urban-growth boundary by 43,600 hectares, with large expansions in the west. Melbourne's first new train line in almost 80 years will soon be built there.

Mr Salt believes the west will remain Melbourne's population growth hot spot for at least the next 20 years and predicts growth of more than 120,000 people a decade.

He said the big driver of the growth was cheaper housing such as house-and-land packages for \$257,000 in Melton and \$279,000 in Werribee.

The research was commissioned by the Bulldogs to help change public perception of the western suburbs.

"For too long the western region has been neglected. For too long the western region has been criticised, has been stereotyped," Bulldogs president David Smorgon said.

Mr Salt said the population growth in the west was phenomenal. "Eighteen thousand people have picked up and relocated to the western edge of Melbourne in a single 12-month period," he said. "I have never seen that before. You can track this data back going 35 years and you will never see a sub-metropolitan region adding a figure like that." He said that while population growth on the Gold Coast had been steady, there had been "explosive growth" in Melbourne's west. A spokeswoman for Planning Minister Justin Madden said recent changes to the urban growth boundary re-oriented Melbourne's growth patterns to the west and north of the city.

Federal election - Local government outcomes

With the federal election outcome now resolved, the Gillard Government has a number of programs of relevance to local government during the life of this parliament. Of particular note to local government are the following election promises:

- \$80 million Low Carbon Communities initiative with grants up to \$500,000 to help local councils to cut pollution and reduce energy costs through efficient upgrades to street lighting, community facilities and council buildings, plus grants of up to \$5 million for larger community facility projects, and \$5 million for practical support to help councils better manage parks and other green spaces in urban areas;
- \$5 million Accessible Communities package to assist councils to make buildings and public spaces more accessible for people with a disability;
- \$100 million to expand the stormwater harvesting and reuse program.

LeadWest is particularly pleased that both the Low Carbon Communities initiative and Stormwater Harvesting initiative directly responds to the work done by LeadWest and Western Councils in Canberra earlier this year and is a significant outcome in that a Federal Government is willing to directly contribute to councils' public lighting infrastructure and stormwater harvesting costs.

LEADWEST MEMBERS / COUNCIL HIGHLIGHT REPORT SEPTEMBER 2010



As a result of negotiations with the Australian Greens and the Independents, additional initiatives include a commitment to hold referenda including recognition of local government in the Constitution, and a new \$1.4 billion Regional Infrastructure investment to commence after the conclusion of the current Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program, with projects to be identified by local communities.

Jobs Expo for the West in November

LeadWest members are supporting a major Skills + Jobs Expo to be held on Monday 8th November in Wyndham. Centrelink and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations will work closely with key western region employers and regional stakeholders to deliver this important initiative.

LeadWest arranging Health Reform Briefing for Council CEOs in October 2010

LeadWest is arranging to have senior representatives of the Victorian Department of Health brief Western Suburb Council CEOs on the proposed health reform program and its implications for service delivery in the west. Key items of interest will be a My Hospital website, impacts on Community Health Services, and the formation of Medicare Locals (and their boundaries).

Western Region Environmental Sustainability Forum to be held on 7th October 2010 in Sunshine

LeadWest as the auspice body of the Western Region Environmental Sustainability Accord is holding a forum for key western region stakeholders on key aspects of the region's environmental scorecard. Key areas to be addressed will cover Energy, Water and Bio Diversity.

LeadWest Directors tour Westgate Bridge strengthening/upgrade work on 17th September 2010

LeadWest directors toured the Westgate Bridge strengthening and upgrade work on 17th September 2010. The Westgate Bridge / M1 upgrade are key elements of the Victorian Transport Plan and are designed to raise the carrying capacity of this transport artery linking Melbourne's CBD and the communities of the Melbourne's western suburbs.

LeadWest CEO attends meeting of Westlink Community Reference Group

LeadWest's CEO attended the August Westlink Community Reference group meeting. Key issues addressed were the

- Regional Rail Link Project update
- Truck Action Plan Update
- Westlink Route option release

LEADWEST MEMBERS / COUNCIL HIGHLIGHT REPORT SEPTEMBER 2010



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- Western Ring Road upgrade
 - Westgate Bridge Strengthening / M1 project
 - Metro Rail Tunnel

LeadWest CEO attends meeting of Advisory Board of Regional Development Australia

The Regional Development Australia (RDA) program has the potential to support initiatives that can assist with the further development of Melbourne's west. LeadWest's CEO attended the regular RDA Board meeting hosted by the Moonee Valley City Council.

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