



MEDIA RELEASE

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CityLink toll increases discriminate against heavy vehicles

The Victorian Transport Association (VTA) has branded looming toll increases for heavy vehicles by CityLink operator Transurban as discriminatory in correspondence sent to members today advising of the changes.

From April 1, tolls for heavy vehicles using CityLink will increase for day and night travel, with operators paying up to 125% more during the day under the capped arrangement.

In advising members of the toll changes, VTA CEO Peter Anderson said it was disappointing the increases were not reflective of the position the VTA had taken with Transurban and the Government in determining the cost recovery required for CityLink Tullamarine Widening (CTW) works.

“The new CityLink pricing discriminates against the heavy vehicle industry compared to other road users, and is dependent upon the ‘industry’ passing on what can only be described as dramatic cost increases to remain viable,” Mr Anderson said.

“Regrettably, little can be done now to revert the changes as the business case on which they were made was put forward to the Government years ago. The new pricing agreed by the current Government reflects huge increases in the tolling values, and does nothing to discourage heavy vehicles from using smaller arterial roads.

“There has also been little justification from Transurban or the Government for such a large increase. The benefits associated with this widening project will have greater benefit to car users, which have had only a moderate 5% increase in their tolls. The change in the multiple of Heavy Vehicle costing to cars has also had no explanation.”

Mr Anderson said the discriminatory increases would undoubtedly create additional hardship for an industry already under pressure from razor thin margins.

“For the heavy vehicle industry these increases will lead to unprecedented percentage increases in direct operating costs, which will be exacerbated through difficulty recovering costs from customers on fixed contracts.

“Road users on smaller, arterial roads will also suffer the unintended consequences as heavy vehicles may opt to bypass CityLink altogether and use other roads. This is clearly not the preferred option but it is inevitably one that operators who cannot absorb the higher tolls will consider.”

Mr Anderson encouraged operators to integrate the direct operating cost of the increase into their cost model and to inform their customers of the need to accept what is an uncontrollable cost. Other options include re-routing vehicles away from CityLink, applying a congestion levy to invoices, and disputing mistakes on every Transurban invoice.



Mr Anderson said the VTA is currently in discussion with Transurban and the Government on the pricing regime for the proposed Western Distributor.

“We are proposing Multi user discounts, Inner West Rebates and acknowledgment of the dependence of this project by our industry. Now is the time for these discussions and we would appreciate the support of the industry in these negotiations,” he said.

A summary of the changes is as follows:

For travel between 6am and 8pm: - Day

- individual toll points will change from 1.9 times the cost of car tolls to 3 times the cost of car tolls
- the trip cap will change from 1.33 times the car trip cap to 3 times the car trip cap

For travel between 8pm and 6am: - Night

- individual toll points will change from 1.9 times the cost of car tolls to 2 times the cost of car tolls
- the trip cap will change from 1 times the car trip cap to 2 times the car trip cap

The below table provides an indicative summary of the changes based on today’s toll rate:

Trip	Current cost	Indicative new cost from 1 April 2017	% Increase
Trip over Bolte Bridge (6am - 8pm)	\$5.64	\$8.91	60
Trip over Bolte Bridge (8pm - 6am)	\$5.64	\$5.94	5
Moreland Road to Flemington Road (6am - 8pm)	\$4.50	\$7.14	59
Moreland Road to Flemington Road (8pm - 6am)	\$4.50	\$4.76	6
Trip through Domain Tunnel (6am - 8pm)	\$10.14	\$16.14	59
Trip through Domain Tunnel (8pm - 6am)	\$10.14	\$10.70	5
Day trip cap (6am - 8pm)	\$11.85	\$26.70	125
Night trip cap (8pm - 6am)	\$8.90	\$17.80	100

Ends...

For further information please contact Brian O’Neil on 0411 055 284.