

Dear Sir/Madam

When I read the letter and I saw “By 31 December 2026 or at a later date ...” it occurred to me that the consulting traffic engineers visualised that until then, white elephants would be carrying the freight and seamlessly integrate into the surrounding traffic congestion.

Back in 2011, senior NSW public servants were committed to the cause of implementing Moorebank Intermodal terminal. The RTA web site had word-smithed text describing how Moorebank Intermodal would be fully operational by 2015. Other web sites showed that it would take 3,000 trucks of the M5 between Port Botany and Moorebank and reduce accidents and reduce pollution. And SIMTA spokes people proclaimed that local traffic congestion would be solved, because “... we (SIMTA) are part of the solution”.

Now in 2023, about seven or eight years after the anticipated fully operational date, Moorebank Intermodal is operating at a very small fraction of its capacity. Senior public servants have to look at Google Maps to see where Moorebank Intermodal is located. For a while now, their focus has been on the process and outcome of the upcoming election. And the toll road industry is screaming because all the infrastructure is in place, but the Moorebank Intermodal trucks have been missing for the last seven or eight years. Those missing trucks have impacted their revenue and what they could have done with that income.

What is blatantly obvious to me is that there is no Captain/Champion for the Moorebank Intermodal Terminal. Someone who believes in the project, and is prepared “to put their money where their mouth is”, by say, putting up their house as surety that they can implement the project.

The reason this needs such a person it because the challenges are significant.

- The NSW Government has a rail policy which roughly translates but over-simplified into: for every container that is carried by rail, three must be carried by truck.
 - For Moorebank Intermodal terminal, 100% of the containers are imported by rail, and 100% are exported by trucks and “little white Utes and Vans”. But because these little White Utes and Vans are not trucks, they do not contribute to the traffic congestion – at least, according the modelling that I have seen.
- “Moorebank Intermodal terminally is ideally located near the M5 Motorway, the Hume Highway and the M7 Motorway”.
 - The latest traffic impact reports that I have seen, late in 2022, seems to indicate that the traffic incidents on the M5 Motorway is roughly 80 times higher than the RMS Guidelines.
 - According the SIMTA EIS 1, and MICL EIS 1, about 25% of the Moorebank Intermodal traffic will travel through Sydney’s highest traffic hot spot on the Hume Highway.
 - The M7 Motorway is about 6.5 km away from the Moorebank Intermodal terminal. A few years ago, the Sydney Morning Herald had an article that quotes a figure of about \$1 billion per km for toll roads.
 - Even if that connection could be made at a fraction of \$1 billion per km, the cost would still be significant. The NSW Government plans show two rail bridges, a bridge of the Georges River, two sets of traffic lights and a high-speed interchange with the M7 Motorway.
 - A simple back of the envelope calculation with the proposed westbound bridge, indicates that the total number of lanes over the Georges River in the westbound

direction is short one lane. No calculation can be done in the eastbound direction because there are no plans for it.

- The proposed westbound bridge solves the weaving issue, but not the merging issue. The average distance between the cars on the M5 is far too short for a truck to merge into the M5 traffic stream. Neither does the proposed westbound bridge solve the capacity issue at the Hume Highway. The Hume Highway is simply not able to absorb the traffic from the proposed bridge. In the MICL EIS 1, this capacity issue was “addressed” by reducing the flow on the Hume Highway by 2,000 vehicles per hour.
- So far, the NSW Government has shown no plans for the M5 east bound traffic issues. The SIMTA EIS 1 reported that the eastbound traffic issues were more challenging than the westbound traffic issues.
- From a traffic engineering point of view, the M5 – Moorebank Av interchange is even more challenging than the M5 – Hume Highway Interchange.
 - The MICL EIS 1 “solved” this problem in an easy way. The 1 km queue from the intersection of Moorebank Av – industrial park, near High lane, which blocked the M5 – Moorebank Avenue interchange was simply ignored. This interchange was modelled as an isolated interaction.

If such a Captain/Champion were to appear, I would be very interested in meeting them. Not only for the solutions to these challenges, but also which charity organisation would benefit if the implementation is not successful.

It may be simpler to acknowledge that “new data has come to light and ...” – and quietly kill it off.

Kind regards

Paul van den Bos