

## Public transport totally inadequate for oil shocks

ASPO presentation and news release from the National Bus Industry Confederation Conference in Fremantle,

30th October 2007

Australia's public transport is completely inadequate to cope with future oil shocks, a national bus industry conference was told.

Bruce Robinson, Convenor of the Australian Association for the Study of Peak Oil, warned of looming oil shortages when world oil production starts to decline. A revolution or another war in the Middle East could easily create another sudden oil crisis which would make the 1973 and 1979 oil shocks look minor.

Australian transport authorities have no serious planning in place to handle a major fuel shortage. Existing petrol rationing plans (eg. odds and evens number plate days) fail to consider the lack of spare public transport capacity.

If petrol has to be rationed in a future oil shock, then it will be essential to ration access to public transport as well. No Australian city has anywhere near enough public transport capacity to handle even a quarter of existing car travellers if they need to use buses and trains instead.

Elderly people, those with disabilities, mothers with young children and people with essential jobs, such as those working in hospitals, should be given priority access to the limited public transport.

There is a significant chance that there will be oil shortages within the term of the next Federal Government. However, neither major party has any coherent strategy on how to prepare for an oil supply emergency, nor how to tackle Peak Oil. This is the forecast time when the rate of global oil production starts its final decline after over a century of growth trends. This may be happening now, or perhaps it may happen in 2012 or later.

Geological forces will preclude continual increases in the rate of world oil production and lead to the unavoidable decline phase starting soon. Market forces have been unable to arrest declining production in our Bass Strait fields, the North Sea, and Mexico's giant Cantarell field as just a few examples. Australia's oil production has been declining since its peak in 2000. Excluding deepwater oilfields, output from 54 of the 65 largest oil-producing countries in the world is in decline. The peak and then the decline of global oil production is likely to occur in the near future, and we should be preparing for it.

Warning people of future petrol shortages, and preparing to double the capacity of our public transport systems would be a good first step to reduce the nation's high oil vulnerability

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08-9384-7409 0427 398 708 Full presentation available at

[www.ASPO-Australia.org.au/References/Bruce/Bus-Industry-Conference-v2d-sh.ppt](http://www.ASPO-Australia.org.au/References/Bruce/Bus-Industry-Conference-v2d-sh.ppt)