



The Bullroarer - Monday 4 February 2008

Posted by [Big Gav](#) on February 4, 2008 - 7:01am in [The Oil Drum: Australia/New Zealand](#)

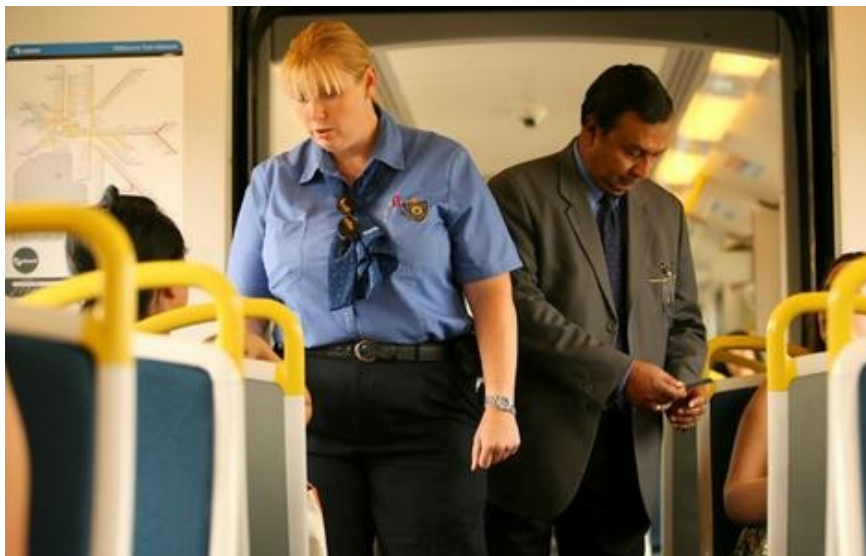
Topic: [Miscellaneous](#)

The Age - [Fischer calls for car tax](#)

FORMER deputy prime minister and senior transport consultant Tim Fischer has backed a congestion tax — similar to London's or Singapore's — as a way of encouraging Melbourne commuters out of their cars and on to public transport. He has called on the Brumby Government to appoint a high-level taskforce to fix the gaps in Victoria's planning for rail, roads and ports as part of a new holistic approach to transport.

Mr Fischer, who was trade minister and deputy prime minister in the Howard government, said car travel was too easy in Melbourne because drivers did not pay the full community resource cost of their road use, such as the environmental impact and the multibillion-dollar drain on the economy from congestion.

The Age - [Passenger number growth underestimated again](#)



The Australian - [Rich Apache on alert over 'use it or lose it' gas leases](#)

HOUSTON-BASED Apache Corporation is looking on with interest as the new federal Government considers tightening up retention leases for offshore explorers. Resources and Energy Minister Martin Ferguson has flagged that the conditions on retention leases may change to encourage a "use it or lose it" strategy on gas reserves. Apache is the

biggest holder of exploration leases off Western Australia and is about to embark on its first exploration program in Bass Strait. A meeting between the chief of its Australian operations, Tim Wall, and Mr Ferguson was mooted during the latter's visit to Western Australia for a federal Cabinet meeting, but failed to eventuate.

The issue for Apache is not that it is locking up reserves; rather, it is in the comfortable position of having an embarrassment of riches as a result of recent exploration success.

The Australian - [Jobs Bonanza claimed For Queensland coal Seam Methane LNG Plant](#)

BRITISH energy giant BG Group has staked a claim on Queensland's massive coal seam gas reserves with an \$8 billion project that guarantees the company a 20-year supply of LNG for the export market and the power to fast-track and consolidate similar developments. Partnering with one-time takeover target the Queensland Gas Company, BG Group will help develop the Surat Basin in southwestern Queensland and pipe gas 380km to a new LNG plant it expects to build in the central Queensland port city of Gladstone.

The project will create 1000-plus construction jobs, and at least 100 permanent jobs, along with a new source of water for the southwest and billions of dollars in royalties for the Queensland Government.

SMH - [Oil survey explosions a threat to sick whales](#)

THE EFFECT of seismic exploration on Australia's best-known blue whale feeding ground is set to intensify, just as signs emerge that the endangered ocean giants are increasingly sick. Surveys with exploding airguns are planned for 5900 square kilometres of waters that blue whales use at the same time, off Victoria and South Australia. Whales avoid seismic noise and concern is growing that these blue whales will miss out on prime feeding opportunities. Some already show signs of being emaciated and parasite-ridden, scientists studying them say.

The Australian - [Aboriginal rock art removed from Pluto LNG site](#)

The Australian - [Gas version of OPEC fails to ignite](#)

The Australian - [Iran Hails Large Gas Find](#)

ABC - [Company looks to speed up geothermal efforts](#)

A geothermal company is going to fast-track its work in south-west Victoria. Hot Rock wants to be the first company in Australia to generate power by tapping into the hot water that is underground. The company has identified four locations where it wants to do further research.

Hot Rock's managing director, Dr Mark Elliott, says the sites were selected because of their petroleum qualities, and more work needs to be done to test their geothermal characteristics. "We're about to embark on the geophysical method to help us select the

best parts of these extensive aquifers in the Otway," he said.

ABC - [Mitsubishi says no decision made on factory future](#)

Scoop.co.nz - [NZ's first Dedicated Busway inaugurated by PM](#)

After Gutenberg - [Linking Bicycle Commuting with Bus Rapid Transit](#)

Dominion Post - [Editorial: Get real, NZ needs turbines](#)

It is time for opponents of wind farms to get real. If they want hot showers in the morning and they don't want nuclear power plants or more smoke-belching coal or gas-fired power plants constructed in New Zealand, then they have to accept the appearance of wind turbines on the horizon.

Inevitably the construction of turbines in remote, windswept parts of the country changes the landscape and inconveniences a few. But windpower is the most environmentally sensitive way humanity has yet devised of producing large quantities of affordable electricity.

Power Engineering - [New Zealand's Contact Energy to build gas fired plant](#)

Scoop.co.nz - [Walking the Walk: time to end coal mining!](#)

The National Business Review - [Meridian Energy forms Spanish joint venture for WhisperGen](#)

Spanish manufacturer Mondragon and state-owned generator Meridian Energy have formed a joint venture to mass manufacture New Zealand's WhisperGen system in Spain for distribution in Europe. Meridian Energy has confirmed a joint venture with Spanish manufacturer Mondragon to mass-produce a domestic heating and power unit for Europe's market, the Energy Business Review website reported today.

WhisperGen, which designed the small gas-fired power generator, will own 40 percent of the joint venture and Mondragon, one of the largest co-operatives in the world with 83,000 staff, will hold 60 percent. WhisperGen will also receive a royalty in addition to any returns from its share in the venture, in recognition of it licensing the technology, marketed as a micro CHP (combined heat and power) unit.

SMH - [ALP must clear party hurdle on electricity](#)

Reuters - [New Zealand's environment more 'khaki' than green](#)

Kiashu - [Every drop counts](#)

Christine Milne - [Why do we want to cut emissions?](#)

I find it extremely troubling that both Prime Minister Rudd and Professor Ross Garnaut appear to see climate change in purely economic or political terms, and are largely sidelining the science that lies at its heart. Certainly there are a host of political and

economic issues that are central to the climate policy debate, but there is one reason and one reason alone for reducing carbon emissions – and that is to do our best to reduce the risks of climate change as far as possible.

RTT News - [Australian Beef Exports To Fall 5.5% In 2008](#)

Trading Markets - [Clough Wins Contract For Expansion Of Apache's Varanus Island Project](#)

Trading Markets - [Roc Oil starts two well exploration/appraisal drill offshore Perth](#)

Energy Current - [Tap withdraw from some WA, NZ permits](#)

ABC - [Pro-GM farmers reject Canadian's concerns](#)

ELEANOR HALL: Australian farmers who support genetically modified cropping have rejected Canadian claims that Australia's export markets will shrink if farmers here embrace GM technology. Representatives from Canada's National Farmer's Union are touring Australia to warn that GM technology has not only cost them export markets but has also dramatically increased the cost of their farming. But GM advocates here have accused the Canadians of behaving like an anti-progress religious sect as Alison Caldwell reports.

ALISON CALDWELL: In North America and Europe, where the technology has been in place for a close to a decade, it's referred to as genetic engineering, or GE, but here it has a much more benign tag, genetic modification, or GM. Later this month the moratorium on GM canola will be lifted in Victoria and New South Wales. In the lead up, Greenpeace and the Network of Concerned Farmers have brought two farmers out from Canada to share their GE experiences with farmers here. Terry Boehm is the vice president of Canada's National Farmers Union.

TERRY BOEHM: Very quickly you will have the whole country contaminated and you do that at your peril in terms of markets.



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