

# Road Charging Scheme: Australia - Melbourne (CityLink)

## Type of Scheme

- 22km toll road.

## Date of Introduction

- 2000.

## Background

- Originally a public sector scheme, the 22 kilometre City Link Toll Road is now a privately-operated, electronic toll road that links major routes between Melbourne Airport, the port and industrial centres in the south-east.

## Aims

- Primary objective is to reduce congestion in central administrative district (CAD).
- Secondary objectives are to:
  - improve vehicle access to the CAD and many facilities within inner-city Melbourne.
  - improve access for freight movements for manufacturing industry and primary producers to the port, rail facilities and the airport.
  - make environmental improvements to adjacent areas.

## How it Works

### Charges:

- Users are required to register with the operator, either by opening an account or by buying a DayPass.
- Those who open an account receive an electronic tag to install on the vehicle's windscreen.
- Toll statements are mailed quarterly and accounts must be topped up when balance falls below a certain level.
- Motorists without an electronic tag using the DayPass are allowed unlimited travel for a single day or weekend, and can pay for it up to 72 hours after first travelling without being regarded as a violator.

### Technology:

- City Toll operates a fully electronic, cashless tolling system without toll stations or barriers.
- The system allows motorists to travel the entire route without stopping or slowing to pay tolls.
- Pre-paid electronic tags fixed to windscreen communicate with the overhead gantries.
- Each e-TAG has a unique number stored in its electronic memory. The e-TAG does not contain the vehicle's licence plate number, the driver's name and address or other personal details.
- When a vehicle carrying an e-TAG passes through a toll zone, the e-TAG is detected by a scanner mounted on a gantry above the roadway and the identifying number is recorded. This number is linked to the driver's toll account in the central tolling computer system located in South Melbourne.
- When a driver's e-TAG is recorded passing under a

gantry, the tolling computer deducts the toll for that toll zone from the driver's toll account. This process represents a single 'transaction'. Each transaction is similar to a withdrawal from a bank account and is entered into the records of the driver's toll account.

#### **Enforcement:**

- It uses automatic vehicle identification technology (similar to London).
- Drivers without e-tags who fail to pay by noon next day have their registration number sent to the traffic camera office with a digital image of the vehicle.
- Offenders are fined a flat fee of \$100.
- 99.9% of vehicles are captured electronically.

#### **Revenue**

- Currently raises \$231m in revenue.

#### **Benefits/Results**

- Congestion has been reduced in north and west Melbourne.
- Pollution has been cut.
- Safer conditions have been obtained on local streets.
- In 2001, a Royal Automobile Club of Victoria ([RACV](#)) study reported:
  - Major improvements to journey times across the road network served by the City link Toll Road.
  - Reduced journey times were calculated to save a typical commuter (10 peak period trips a week) between 2.8 and 3.25 litres of fuel a week.
  - Since opening in 2000 number users has increased rapidly. By June 2003 City Link had over 650,000 customer accounts, plus a million infrequent users without accounts. In total, motorists were using the toll road for more than 700,000 transactions a day.

#### **Public Opinion**

- In 2001, a Royal Automobile Club of Victoria ([RACV](#)) study reported:
  - 89% of motorists surveyed said that City Link saved them time and 86 per cent indicated that the toll road made getting around the city easier.

#### **Websites**

##### **VicRoads:**

[www.citylink.vic.gov.au](http://www.citylink.vic.gov.au)

##### **Transurban Group:**

[www.transurban.com.au](http://www.transurban.com.au)

#### **Contact**

[mcla@mcla.vic.gov.au](mailto:mcla@mcla.vic.gov.au)

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