



Employee News

25 October 2007

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

As you know, Yarra Trams has again been the focus of media attention since Tuesday's tram to tram collision on Flemington Road, North Melbourne.

Fortunately, in this incident, neither of our tram drivers was seriously injured.

While the media always looks for someone to blame in such cases, I have been careful in all my interviews with journalists, not to point the finger at individuals.

I have explained that Yarra Trams has made improvements in all aspects of safety. I have also pointed out that there is more pressure on tram drivers these days, with increasing road congestion, while our accident rate has declined.

Questioned about whether trams or tracks have caused recent collisions, I have explained that tests have revealed no faults with the vehicles or the infrastructure, but I have said that it is too early to jump to conclusions.

A report is being compiled by the Office of the Chief Investigator, the independent authority whose objective is to improve public transport safety. The primary focus of these investigations is to determine what factors caused the incident, rather than apportion blame for the incident, and to identify issues that may require review, monitoring or further consideration.

The Herald Sun has published an editorial today which recognises our improved safety record, "given that trams travel a staggering 22.5 million km a year, 80 per cent of this in mixed traffic."

This support from Melbourne's biggest selling newspaper is welcome.

I want to let you know that Yarra Trams recognises and appreciates the contribution made by all employees towards our goal of delivering a safe, reliable public transport service for the people of Melbourne.

Dennis Cliche
Chief Executive Officer

YARRA TRAMS

Here's what I have said on TV and Radio:

Channel 10 (Melbourne) - TEN News
23/10/2007 05:06PM
Comperes: Helen Kapalos & Mal Walden

"Before saying a driver was at fault we go through every possible angle and option to make sure we're not going to condemn one of our employees wrongly."

Channel 7 (Melbourne) - Seven News
23/10/2007 06:06PM
Compere: Peter Mitchell

"When you look at the frequency of this, it's a very small number, safer than driving your car."

Channel 9 (Melbourne) - National Nine News
23/10/2007 06:07PM
Compere: Peter Hitchener

"So we're actually reducing those numbers (of tram collisions) but I think the magnitude of the accident we had on St Kilda Road has focused everybody's attention to it."

3AW (Melbourne) - Morning
23/10/2007 08:39AM
Compere: Neil Mitchell

"The challenge for our drivers in mixed traffic, if you're coming up and the tram in front has to come to a sudden stop, the tram behind the driver has to make a split second decision. Does he bind the brakes and send everybody flying, which often results in injury or does he accept that he's going to have a very low speed impact with the tram in front."

ABC 774 Melbourne (Melbourne) - Mornings
23/10/2007 08:53AM
Compere: Jon Faine

"There is a lot more pressure on the drivers and anyone who drives motor vehicles knows that's the situation. Our drivers do 22.5 million kilometres per year in mixed traffic, we run 80 per cent with cars and other forms of vehicular traffic."

ABC 774 Melbourne (Melbourne) - Drive
23/10/2007 05:17PM
Compere: Lindy Burns

"Congestion is increasing and there is stress on the drivers; we try to manage all of that. We have to find a compromise between delivering a good effective service that Melburnians expect and want in an environment that's getting increasingly difficult."