

The
Age

Rethink for CityLink

"Comment"

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It is becoming monotonous: heavy vehicle involved in accident on CityLink; hours to deal with the damage; Melbourne in gridlock. It happened again last Friday morning, when a car and a truck were involved in an incident on the overpass between Flemington and Footscray roads. Result: thousands of frayed tempers and millions of dollars in lost productivity and congestion costs.

As *The Saturday Age* reported, transport experts say the confusing and potentially dangerous arrangement of on and off-ramps near the Bolte Bridge is compounded by vehicles that enter from Footscray and Dynon roads and have to cut across lanes of traffic in order to get to the West Gate Freeway exit. Clearly, these obstacles

require swift remedy. A wider problem, though, is the increasing traffic on CityLink, particularly heavy vehicles. This is the inevitable cost to a state that favours road over rail for its freight needs. This congestion will worsen with the state government's recent decision to allow 30-metre B-double trucks on all of Melbourne's major freeways and toll roads, plus B-triples up to 36.5 metres long on major highways between the Port of Melbourne and regional centres.

Premier Denis Naphthine says the proposed east-west link would ease some of the chaos caused by serious crashes, but it is what *causes* the crashes that is a more serious and immediate concern than a project that has yet to be determined, let alone started.

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