M5 corridor expansion – traffic

The M5 transport corridor is the main road freight, commercial and commuter route between Port Botany and Sydney Airport, and south west Sydney. In recent years traffic levels and the number of heavy vehicles on this route means the corridor is operating at or near capacity during peak periods. This impacts on Sydney’s economic productivity and competitiveness.

This fact sheet provides information on current traffic conditions, economic growth and the benefits associated with the expansion.

What expansions are proposed?
The proposal will increase capacity on the M5 Motorway, improve travel times and reduce congestion.

Key features of the proposed M5 corridor expansion are:
- Widening the existing M5 South West Motorway from two to three lanes in each direction.
- Widening the M5 East Freeway east of King Georges Road to four lanes in each direction.
- Four new lanes in tunnel next to the existing M5 East tunnel.
- A new four lane surface arterial road from the M5 East tunnel to the airport and the industrial areas of inner southern Sydney

What are the existing traffic conditions along the M5 transport corridor?
Over the last decade, demand for all forms of travel within the M5 corridor has increased substantially. The road network is now operating at or near capacity, particularly during the AM and PM peak travel periods.

The COAG Report on Urban Congestion (December 2006) forecast urban congestion costs in Sydney to be $7.5 billion per annum by 2020 – an increase of 123 per cent over the estimate for 2005.

Current operating conditions are:
- Weekday traffic volumes along the corridor routinely average around 95,000 vehicles per day and heavy flows are increasingly extending into business hours and weekends.
- Average vehicle speeds during the eastbound AM peak range from 40 km/h to 60km/h and
- Average vehicle speeds during the westbound PM peak range from 55km/h to 75km/h.
- Surrounding arterial roads have limited capacity.
- The steep grade of the westbound M5 East tunnel exit reduces traffic speeds.

What future growth is planned along the M5 corridor?
The current congestion along the M5 transport corridor is likely to be compounded by significant and planned growth of population and employment growth along the corridor.

Predictions of further growth that will increase demand for transport along the M5 transport corridor include:
- The population of Sydney is expected to expand by at least 1.1 million people over the next 25 years.
- Container trade at Port Botany is anticipated to nearly double by the early 2020s. At present, eighty percent of containers travel to and from Port Botany on the road network.
- Sydney Airport passengers are forecast to grow by 250 per cent and air freight to double from 471,000 tonnes to over 1 million tonnes by 2029.
- Redfern and Waterloo will accommodate 4,000 new residents and 18,000 jobs.
- Green Square will accommodate 33,000 new residents and 25,000 new jobs over the next 25 years.
- The South West Growth Centre is planned to accommodate around 110,000 new homes and about 270,000 people in the next 30 years.
- Western Sydney Employment Hub - 1,500 hectares of industrial land has the potential to generate more than 1,000 net hectares of additional employment land.

**What are the predicted benefits for businesses in inner southern Sydney?**

The M5 corridor expansion is critical to supporting this growth. It will deliver additional capacity and benefits to southern Sydney businesses including:

- Improving access for business owners, customers, clients and suppliers to Port Botany and Sydney Airport.
- Improving travel times particularly during the AM and PM peaks.
- Increasing reliability.
- Reducing congestion in both the corridor and the surrounding arterial network.
- Supporting the prosperity, economic productivity and competitiveness of Sydney as a global city.

**What are the predicted travel time improvements for those using the M5 corridor?**

![Travel Time Improvements](image)

For further enquiries, email m5expansion@rta.nsw.gov.au, visit www.m5corridorexpansion.com.au or call the free number 1800 633 332

71 – 79 Pyrmont Bridge Road, Pyrmont, NSW, 2009,
PO Box 609 Pyrmont NSW 2009

www.rta.nsw.gov.au  13 22 12  T 1800 633 332  F 02 9352 9566
Publication number : RTA/Pub. 09.497F
Will the M5 East Tunnel be tolled following its duplication?

Funding for construction has not been determined. A mix of government and private investment is likely. The preliminary overview report includes traffic forecasts with or without tolls on the project. No decision has been made regarding tolls.

Will the existing tolling arrangements remain?

No decision has been made about changing the existing tolling arrangements.

What further studies will be undertaken?

The RTA will continue to develop and refine the concept design in accordance with further traffic modelling and assessment. Studies will include:

- Updating the strategic traffic model to include 2006 Census data.
- Undertaking traffic modelling to assess interchange performance and how the M5 and surrounding road network would integrate.
- Undertaking traffic modelling to determine further network improvements that may be required north of Campbell Road in Erskineville.

The RTA will undertake an environmental assessment for the project in accordance with Part 3A of the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979. The environmental assessment will include an assessment of potential traffic impacts during construction and operation, and proposed measures to minimise these impacts.

More information

For more information on the project and the planning and approvals process, please contact the M5 corridor expansion free call number on 1800 633 332, email m5expansion@rta.nsw.gov.au or visit the website at www.m5corridorexpansion.com.au.