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The Department of Main Roads, having enjoyed its own considerable source of Commonwealth and State funds, has in recent years become impervious to public opinion, Councils and other government departments alike. It has a highly qualified and competent technical staff who are excellent at designing, building and maintaining good roads. But it is completely inbred and is not adaptable to changing policies in the planning field. Many senior officers are due to retire within the next 18 months and it is possible that things might then change for the better. Meanwhile, the statements and decisions of the present Minister for Highways, Sir Charles Cutler, must be understood as statements and decisions formulated by the DMR.

The Department of Motor Transport has a small but competent technical staff and probably the most open mind about transportation planning. In addition, it is probably the most cooperative Department to deal with.

The State Planning Authority has many vague plans for urban development and the role of transport, but little or no decisiveness, competence, courage, imagination or sensitivity in seeking to define and implement them. It does not possess or retain good top-level professionals or managers. It will hopefully be re-structured under the Minister for the Environment as the new Planning and Environment Commission, but most observers fear it will be the same discredited organisation under a new name.

The Police Traffic Branch has considerable influence on development control as related to traffic generation and parking. Many Development Applications are referred by Councils and the State Planning Authority to the Police Traffic Branch for comment and advice, before approval or rejection. The planning power of the Traffic Branch has built up over the last decade or more and ~~is in itself an indictment of the ineffectiveness of the State Planning Authority.~~

Currently, there are too many organisations attempting to plan and manage land use and transport. While it would not be practicable to incorporate them into one large Department, some rationalisation is necessary. What is required is :-

- (a) A Planning Authority that has legislative and financial control over all forms of State and metro "structure" or "strategic" planning for economic development, land use and transport planning.
- (b) One or more Development Commissions for the implementation of major projects of State or Metro-wide significance in accordance with the policies and plans of the Planning Authority.
- (c) A Main Roads Authority restricted to the design, construction and maintenance of major roads in accordance with the policies and plans of the Planning Authority.