

# Tunnel figures no use to us

Traffic numbers for the Cross City Tunnel will not be released, with the owners claiming that the public would not understand them. Report KIM SHAW

**C**ross City Tunnel traffic figures will not be publicised on a Web site, as it would take a traffic engineer to understand them, a spokesman for the Cross City Tunnel consortium has said.

Traffic numbers on the troubled tunnel dropped by 44 per cent last Thursday when the \$3.56 toll was reinstated.

Almost 55,000 motorists used the tunnel each day when the route was free. However, that number fell to 12,406 on Thursday, December 1, when tolling resumed.

A spokesman for the Cross City Tunnel consortium said that 26,000 cars took the toll tunnel route on Monday. "We are experiencing a steady increase in traffic and expect it to continue," he added.

A Roads and Traffic Authority (RTA) spokesman said it was up to the Cross City Tunnel consortium to publicise traffic figures, not the RTA, as the consortium owned the recording equipment.

However, the spokesman for the tunnel consortium said the figures would be of no use to the public as it would take a traffic

engineer to understand them. The figures would reveal how profitable the public/private partnership was, affecting the price of a possible government buy-back.

Meanwhile, the RTA has sheeted the blame for roadworks in Kings Cross back to City of Sydney Council.

The recent narrowing of Craigend Street from three to two lanes has frustrated locals, who claim the closure was conducted "by stealth" and without consultation.

During the past month a concrete barricade in Craigend Street has allowed only one lane for turning into William Street, Victoria Street, and Darlinghurst Road.

"We have absolute insanity here now," Kings Cross resident Carole Ferrier said. "They are funnelling us out of our roads and cars are banking across the streets."

The William Street ramp to Potts Point is being narrowed to one lane, and locals expected traffic would bank up behind it for a considerable distance. In Rushcutters Bay, locals complained of a 25-minute wait at traffic lights when turning from McLachlan



Tunnel operators said 26,000 motorists travelled through the tunnel on Monday. Photo: Andrew Trayner

Avenue into Craigend Street in peak hour.

A spokesman for the RTA said a Kings Cross community liaison group had been advised of the changes. He said traffic signal timing changes would be made at the William Street and Darlinghurst Road inter-

section to reduce queuing but that signals at the intersection of McLachlan Avenue and Craigend Street registered – through sensors in the road surface – where traffic was heaviest and gave longer green-time to the peak traffic flow from New South Head Road.

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