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Heading: Freight truck increase

By FATIMA MRAD

THE first of three *Landside Improvement Strategy* trials aimed at reducing truck congestion and freight delays at Port Botany began last Monday, with Canterbury and Marrickville councillors warning it will create more traffic on local roads during off-peak hours.

Ports and Waterways Minister Joe Tripodi said during the first trial, Sydney Ports Corporation will measure existing performance, truck by truck on a 24/7 basis until March 2, which Cr Linda Eisler says will maximise truck movement through Canterbury's main roads.

"We already have excessive use of our roads, and problems with people getting to and from work, [with] inadequate public transport to help us move from the roads, and were looking at expanding our [area]."

The Off Peak Incentive Scheme will be part of the third trial in June, making it cheaper to access the port at night, which will increase truck activity around the clock.
"The Government's mismanagement of the Port Botany expansion means locals will have to put up with trucks operating 24 hours a day," Marrickville Councillor Peter Olive said.
Container trade through Port Botany reached 1.7 million in 2007/08, and is expected to almost double to more than 3.2 million by 2020.

"The Port Botany expansion project will put about an extra million container movements onto the roads each year," Cr Olive said.

"Minister Tripodi's announcement of the truck trial reveals his arrogance to the people who live near Port Botany. The trial does not assess the impact on locals."

Major construction on an Enfield Intermodal Terminal is expected to begin this year, and Cr Eisler says this will further throw main roads into chaos.

"What we need to see is an increase in public transport and instead of having an Enfield Terminal we need to be looking at places like Wollongong and Newcastle, where they don't have a heavy population and overburden roads," Ms Eisler said.