

## Lake Burley Griffin to become Sydney Harbour heliport? No



The ridiculous lower deck chopper graphic used to 'promote' the harbour helipad

Let's start a rumor. NSW Premier Barry O'Farrell will this morning announce the relocation of the proposed Sydney Harbour heliport to Lake Burley Griffin.

It will be only a short taxi ride away from Sydney's 2nd Airport, Canberra Airport, and be connected by a fast rail link to Central, which in the absence of the \$25 billion which was the true cost of said rail link at the turn of this century, will add a mere 10 hours in current return rail travel times to a day return business flight to any other nearby Australian capital other than Canberra and render the harbour viewing option totally impracticable.

This may sound totally absurd, but it will position the harbour helipad proposal into total harmony with the intellectual rigor that is so evident in the Premier's *2nd Sydney airport is a-train-to-and-from-Canberra-airport* policy.

Meanwhile, also hovering on the edges of lunacy when it comes to transport policy, the strange determination of the NSW Government to press ahead without any community consultation, and permit the helicopter operation to begin any day soon has drawn fire from a second prominent Liberal in Malcolm Turnbull in a scathing report in the **SMH**.

Turnbull is now alongside shadow Treasurer Joe Hockey in taking on the Premier over aviation matters, Hockey on the 2nd airport farce, and Turnbull on harbour helicopters.

Premier O'Farrell is nothing if not stubborn. He will dig in and refuse to budge. The ridicule will increase in intensity, and the collateral damage to harbour residents, and to the state economy from the airport impasse, will pile up, as will questions as to how a small and from all accounts well run helicopter business in Newcastle could persuade a state government to do by executive decree rather than consultation something that is going to infuriate so many his government's natural constituents.