

## OPINION: Sydney Harbour heliport plan has us all spinning

THE State Government only has itself to blame with the furore created by the planned helipad in Sydney Harbour.

By springing the plan on residents unannounced and with a complete lack of consultation, the government and the bureaucrats have achieved the opposite of what they intended. They have hardened opposition to the proposal from the get-go.

Most Sydneysiders, I would argue, look relatively positively on new tourism infrastructure and have an open mind about developments that might help grow the economy.

But the sudden nature of this announcement last month has got people worried. Why weren't we told about this? Are there special interests at play?

Revelations in the Courier that local MPs and the owners of the Sydney Seaplanes operation had not been consulted about the plan prompt locals to assume the worst.

If air traffic issues have not been canvassed - which one would have thought would be a threshold issue - then clearly the State Government has not done its homework.

In a gutsy tweet this week, Wentworth MP Malcolm Turnbull called the approval "reckless and undemocratic" and said Premier Barry O'Farrell should rescind it.

The incident does the government's reputation no favours, particularly in a year which saw a major accounting error in the budget and the uncalled-for "dual roles" legislation.

In 2011, the people of NSW rose up to elect a government which would make its decisions with fairness and transparency.

This ain't it.