



Transport and Infrastructure Council

Communiqué

DARWIN

FRIDAY, 18 May 2018

The 9th meeting of the Transport and Infrastructure Council (the Council) was held in Darwin today. The Council includes Transport, Infrastructure and Planning Ministers from the Commonwealth, States and Territories, New Zealand and the Australian Local Government Association.

Industry representatives from Australasian Railway Association, Australian Automobile Association, Australian Livestock and Rural Transporters Association, Australian Logistics Council, Australian Trucking Association and NSW Ports also attended the meeting.

The Council acknowledged the significant contribution of the Hon Bruce Baird AM as Chairman of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator who attended Council for the last time in that capacity.

TAKING ACTION ON ROAD SAFETY

Ministers acknowledged that all governments must do more to address road safety, noting that Australia is working hard to achieve the National Road Safety Strategy targets agreed by all jurisdictions, to reduce deaths and serious injuries from road crashes by at least 30 percent by 2020. In recognition of the importance of continuing action, Ministers endorsed the National Road Safety Action Plan 2018-20. The Action Plan includes nine priority actions which target regional and remote road safety through infrastructure improvements, new technologies and speed reviews, improving vehicle safety standards, increasing roadside drug testing and improving heavy vehicle safety. Implementation of the Action Plan will be monitored and a comprehensive annual report on progress will be prepared for endorsement by the Council.

Council discussed priorities in improving heavy vehicle safety and work being progressed by all jurisdictions, the National Transport Commission and the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator. Council agreed to progress a number of initiatives including examining a national approach to heavy vehicle accreditation schemes, improving the uptake and capacity of telematics for business and regulatory purposes, and the introduction and uptake of safety technologies in the heavy vehicle fleet.

Council also supported work Austroads is doing to develop best practice in addressing driver distraction and to reduce the number of crashes where the illegal use of mobile devices is a contributing factor.



IMPROVING THE NATIONAL FREIGHT SYSTEM

A national approach is essential to ensure freight systems and infrastructure work across state and territory borders to enable the efficient delivery of goods wherever they are required across Australia. To support this Council committed to developing a 20 year *National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy* which will form the basis of an integrated approach to improving the connectivity of all freight modes and supply chains.

Implementation of the Strategy by industry and all three tiers of Government from 2019 will enhance the competitiveness of all Australia's regions in domestic and global markets and help us achieve truly liveable, efficient and affordable cities and regional centres.

The starting point of the Strategy will be to build on the priorities for action set out in the *Inquiry into National Freight and Supply Chain Priorities*, which was led by an industry expert panel and released today by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, the Hon Michael McCormack MP. The Council considered a presentation on the behalf of the expert panel by Marika Calfas, Chief Executive Officer of NSW Ports. The Inquiry generated significant levels of support within industry for the development of a national freight strategy, including support from freight and supply chain operators, miners, retailers, agricultural producers and property developers.

ROAD MARKET REFORM

Council discussed the ongoing work on priority matters under heavy vehicle road reform ahead of taking decisions in 2018-19, including:

- modelling and consultation on the Regulation Impact Statement on implementing independent price regulation of heavy vehicle charges; and
- building on jurisdictional input, refining a prototype model for a forward-looking cost base for heavy vehicle charges – to move to managing road assets on a full life-cycle basis.

Council noted the commencement of the National Heavy Vehicle Charging Pilot – to co-design alternative options for heavy vehicle charges – and the launch of a program to assist jurisdictions develop business cases for location-specific heavy vehicle charging trials.

Jurisdictions will collaborate to investigate improvements to funding arrangements, including assessing requirements and costs for funding non-economic roads in remote and regional areas. This work will also inform future Council decisions.



AUTOMATED VEHICLES

To ensure that automated vehicles, as they become available, are required to be used safely and legally on public roads, the Council agreed that a harmonized, purpose built national law should be developed, noting the importance of not getting ahead of international developments. The Council agreed that the National Transport Commission should analyse existing regulatory frameworks, ahead of making further policy recommendations to Council and propose legislative change. Key elements of the proposed national law would include:

- requiring the automated driving systems to be approved under a future safety assurance system, before they are able to be used legally in vehicles on public roads;
- ensuring that automated system driving entities can be held liable for the actions of vehicles which are operating in automated mode;
- determining who should be held responsible for vehicles operating at low, conditional and high levels of automation; and
- providing mechanisms for ensuring compliance and enforcement.

Council also considered a presentation from Michael Caltabiano, Chief Executive Officer of the Australian Road Research Board (ARBB), on behalf of the Australia and New Zealand Driverless Vehicle Initiative (ADVI).

HEAVY VEHICLE REGULATION

With a view to implementing long-term improvements to national heavy vehicle regulation, Council agreed to bring forward the Review of the Heavy Vehicle National Law from 2020-21 to 2018-19. An approach and Terms of Reference for the review will be submitted for Council consideration in late 2018, with the review to commence soon afterwards.

Council also supported proposals brought by the National Transport Commission and National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, for immediate progression, toward improving heavy vehicle productivity, safety and amenity outcomes, through:

- reforms to the Performance-Based Standards Scheme;
- Heavy Vehicle National Law amendments to raise the height limit for specific as-of-right access vehicles to 4.6 metres; and
- ensuring ongoing mass limit compliance for fully laden two axle buses.

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR DRUG AND ALCOHOL MANAGEMENT FOR RAIL

Council considered a legislative framework that supports the reduction of drug and alcohol risks for railway operations and agreed to:

- the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator to have choice of drug testing methods; and
- mandatory post incident testing by operators following a prescribed incident where ONRSR or Police do not test.

Council also endorsed efforts by the Office of National Rail Safety Regulator and jurisdictions to deliver lower regulatory burden to rail operators without compromising safety, which have resulted in approving an ongoing reduction of the cost of regulation from 2018-19 by \$1 million.



NATIONAL AIRPORT SAFEGUARDING FRAMEWORK

Ministers agreed to the inclusion of a new Guideline on Strategic Helicopter Landing Sites and an update of a Guideline on Windshear and Turbulence, forming part of the National Airports Safeguarding Framework.

PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

The Hon Michael McCormack MP	Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Infrastructure and Transport (Commonwealth)
The Hon Paul Fletcher MP	Minister for Urban Infrastructure (Commonwealth)
The Hon Melinda Pavey MP	Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight (New South Wales)
The Hon Jacinta Allan MP	Minister for Public Transport (Victoria)
The Hon Luke Donnellan MP	Minister for Roads and Road Safety; Ports (Victoria)
The Hon Rita Saffioti MLA	Minister for Transport, Planning and Lands (Western Australia)
The Hon Stephan Knoll MP	Minister for Transport and Infrastructure (South Australia)
The Hon Jeremy Rockliff MP	Deputy Premier, Minister for Infrastructure (Tasmania)
The Hon Nicole Manison MLA	Deputy Chief Minister, Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (Northern Territory)
The Hon Mark Bailey MP	Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Queensland)
The Hon Meegan Fitzharris	Minister for Transport and City Services (Australian Capital Territory)
Mayor David O'Loughlin	President (Australian Local Government Association)

