



Communiqué

PERTH

FRIDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2016

The 6th meeting of the Transport and Infrastructure Council (the Council) was held in Perth 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 Ports Australia also attended as observers of the meeting and provided their views on the items for consideration by Ministers.

ROAD SAFETY

The Council considered the National Road Safety Strategy Implementation Status Report for 2015 and noted the increase in road deaths across most jurisdictions, with the total in 2015 (1,205) denoting 55 more deaths than in 2014. Road deaths have continued to increase in 2016 (1,273 for the 12 months to September 2016) and serious injuries also appear to be increasing.

The Council noted that the Commonwealth Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, the Hon Darren Chester MP, chaired a forum of jurisdictional road safety ministers on Wednesday, 3 November 2016 to assess the current trends and examine opportunities for stronger national action to reduce deaths and serious injuries.

The Council noted the considerable amount of activity underway in all jurisdictions to implement the 19 actions in the current National Road Safety Action Plan 2015–2017 and strongly supports the continued effort to reduce road trauma, and noted the additional actions agreed at the Road Safety Ministers forum including for greater collaboration on research and data sharing and the need to address the disproportionate amount of trauma in regional and remote areas. The Council agreed that as a priority further work must be carried out in the first half of 2017 to identify stronger actions and outcomes for the next action plan for the National Road Safety Strategy, due to commence in 2018.

The National Road Safety Strategy Implementation Status Report is available on the National Road Safety Strategy website at www.roadsafety.gov.au.

LAND TRANSPORT MARKET REFORM

The Council noted the progress to date on land transport market reform and agreed the immediate priority is development of the paper by state, territory, Commonwealth, and local governments, including a potential road map for full market reform, for COAG's consideration in early 2017. The paper will propose that governments work together on more detailed possible reform directions, as part of ongoing investigations into the costs and benefits of road user charging for light vehicles.

HEAVY VEHICLE ROAD REFORM

The Council agreed to a number of actions to support the next phase of heavy vehicle road reform. The Australian Government will work with states and territories on the next steps to identify options for independent price regulation of heavy vehicle charges and to the trial of elements of heavy vehicle road reform. The Council noted that the current situation where charges related to revenue are disconnected from investment and maintenance decisions needs action. The National Transport Commission will provide technical advice to governments to conduct a review of the heavy vehicle cost base allocators, and develop a working prototype model for a forward looking life cycle cost base for heavy vehicle charges.

INFRASTRUCTURE REFORMS

The Council noted the ongoing work by jurisdictions in driving significant micro-economic reforms to improve the efficiency and productivity of Australia's infrastructure and transport systems through better infrastructure project assessment, selection, delivery and evaluation. In particular, the Council supported further work being undertaken on traffic demand issues to help address congestion in our key cities; endorsed a cross jurisdictional work program for protecting transport corridors and economic precincts with particular focus on ports and airports, which has been designed to strengthen the evidence base, consider policy options and facilitate shared information for improved corridor and precinct protection.

The Council also endorsed the National Digital Engineering Policy Principles which provide a national framework to promote greater consistency in the applications of Building Information Modelling and Digital Engineering in the land transport sector. These initiatives will be delivered through the Infrastructure Working Group, with the majority of projects finalised during 2017.

NATIONAL RAIL VISION AND WORK PROGRAM

The Council endorsed the National Rail Vision and forward work program, which provides the key reform areas for rail including access, pricing and interoperability, safety and incident regulation, environmental regulation and corridor protection along with funding and investment and performance measurement and management.

Progressing the key activities in the National Rail Vision and work program through the cooperation of industry and jurisdictions will support the enhancement of rail productivity and integration with the wider land transport market.

HEAVY VEHICLE REGULATION

Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the introduction of a national registration scheme for heavy vehicles from 1 July 2018, and agreed that further work on the data and system requirements, costs and implementation arrangements be progressed by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, jurisdictions and industry representatives for further consideration by Council early in 2017.

The Council agreed further amendments to the Heavy Vehicle National Law to extend positive due diligence requirements for executive officers to non-Chain of Responsibility offences, giving greater accountability and responsibility for those in the heavy vehicle supply chain. The changes will also bring executive officer liability under the National Law more in line with executive officers' duty provisions under the *Model Work Health and Safety Act 2011*, by focusing the obligations of executive officers on public safety-related matters.

This phase of the Chain of Responsibility reforms complements changes to the National Law to strengthen Chain of Responsibility provisions already agreed by transport Ministers earlier this year. The earlier phase of amendments is currently being considered by the Queensland Parliament. There will be a single commencement date for both the Chain of Responsibility and Executive Officer Liability reforms to ensure all parties in the freight and transport supply chain have been informed about the impact of the changes for their businesses.

RAIL REGULATION

The Council approved implementation of a revised cost recovery model for the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator from 1 July 2017 and noted the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator's intent to bring forward a new, risk-based cost recovery model in 2018 prior to settling the final cost recovery model. The findings of the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator's review of jurisdictional laws applying the Rail Safety National Law and actions being taken to address legislative and operational inconsistencies, were also considered by Council.

The Council agreed legislation to implement a cost recovery framework for services provided by the National Rail Safety Regulator for major new rail infrastructure projects, as well as a package of amendments to the Rail Safety National Law and subordinate regulations.

Members approved proposed regulations for rail fatigue provisions in Queensland, which is a significant step towards incorporating Queensland into the national rail safety scheme. The full accession of Queensland to the Rail Safety National Law, expected in 2017, will give the Rail Safety Regulator 100% coverage of Australia's rail sector.

MARITIME SAFETY REGULATION

The Council noted advice regarding the implementation of service delivery arrangements by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority and determined that it should continue to progress towards assuming responsibility for these arrangements but extend the timeframe to 1 July 2018 to allow jurisdictions and industry to better consult and prepare for these significant changes.

Jurisdictions will work with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority to determine the appropriate transition funding required to address the cost recovery transition impacts raised by industry.

The Council noted the arrangements for an independent review of the Australian Maritime Safety Authority's readiness to occur prior to assumption of full service delivery.

TRANSPORT POLICY AND REGULATORY REFORM

Ministers agreed to a range of initiatives designed to facilitate an accelerated introduction of cars and heavy vehicles with greater levels of automation on Australian roads over the next few years.

These initiatives are focused on ensuring Australia can maximise the potential opportunities and benefits that come with more automated vehicles, including improved road safety, reduced congestion on road networks in our big cities, improvements in road freight productivity and the overall performance of the Australian economy. A nationally consistent approach will also reduce costs, provide certainty to industry, promote innovation and competition and ensure that Australians have early access to the newest technologies.

Over the next six to twenty-four months, these initiatives will help to facilitate the testing and trialling of automated vehicles across Australia and encourage an increase in both intra and interstate trials of vehicles with greater levels of automation.

The other initiatives agreed to today are focussed on the development of a comprehensive performance-based safety assurance regime for increasingly automated vehicles. Ministers agreed that ensuring automated vehicles can operate safely on Australian roads under Australian conditions is a key step in allowing greater numbers of these vehicles on Australian roads.

Ministers also agreed on the need to update and harmonise current Australian Road Rules and related state and territory road and traffic laws. The removal of current regulations that may act as barriers to more automated vehicles being allowed on Australian roads was seen as a key priority.

This work flows from the National Policy Framework for Land Transport Technology <http://transportinfrastructurecouncil.gov.au/publications/>.

Ministers also agreed to pursue a national approach to lane filtering for motorcycles.

NATIONAL AIRPORT SAFEGUARDING FRAMEWORK

The Council endorsed a new National Airport Safeguarding Framework Guideline, Protecting Aviation Facilities – Communication, Navigation and Surveillance (CNS). CNS facilities are crucial to the safe operation of aircraft as they enable pilots to navigate while enroute between airports, to conduct instrument approach procedures and to communicate with air traffic control. The Guideline will provide a consistent approach for land use planning decision makers in states and territories to protect CNS facilities operated by Airservices Australia and the Department of Defence.

NATIONAL REMOTE AND REGIONAL TRANSPORT STRATEGY

Council noted progress in the delivery of a number of initiatives of the Remote and Regional Transport Strategy.

PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

The Hon Darren Chester MP	Minister for Infrastructure and Transport (Commonwealth)
The Hon Paul Fletcher MP	Minister for Urban Infrastructure (Commonwealth)
The Hon Duncan Gay MLC	Minister for Roads, Maritime and Freight (New South Wales)
The Hon Luke Donnellan MP	Minister for Roads and Road Safety; Ports (Victoria)
The Hon Mark Bailey MP	Minister for Main Roads, Road Safety and Ports (Queensland)
The Hon Bill Marmion MLA	Minister for State Development; Transport; Innovation (Western Australia)
The Hon Stephen Mullighan MP	Minister for Transport and Infrastructure (South Australia)
The Hon Rene Hidding MP	Minister for Infrastructure (Tasmania)
The Hon Nicole Manison MLC	Deputy Chief Minister; Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (Northern Territory)
The Hon Meegan Fitzharris MLC	Minister for Higher Education, Training and Research; Transport and Municipal Services (Australian Capital Territory)
Mayor Troy Pickard	President (Australian Local Government Association)
