



Communiqué

BRISBANE
FRIDAY, 15 NOVEMBER 2013

The 5th meeting of the Standing Council on Transport and Infrastructure (the Standing Council) was held in Brisbane today. It was the first Standing Council meeting to be chaired by the Honourable Warren Truss MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development since the election of the Coalition Federal Government, and considered a wide range of major transport initiatives and reforms. The Standing Council includes Transport, Infrastructure and Planning Ministers from the Commonwealth, States and Territories, New Zealand and the Australian Local Government Association.

FUTURE STRATEGIC AGENDA

The Standing Council today opened with a strategic discussion on key challenges facing the infrastructure and transport sector over the long-term. Issues discussed include the importance of lifting national productivity performance, the challenging fiscal environment at all levels of government, and infrastructure investment trends. The discussion highlighted the demands on Australia's transport in the future due to doubling of commuter and freight traffic to 2030, coupled with pressures for energy efficiency, improving safety outcomes, balancing transport security risks, understanding the impact of an ageing transport workforce, recognising the spatial changes occurring in Australia, and taking advantage of new opportunities, for example in technology. The Standing Council agreed that the future is positive for the sector but that there are many challenges which will need to be carefully managed across jurisdictions. The Standing Council further agreed to hold a forum in Alice Springs in 2014 to discuss remote and regional transport infrastructure and services issues, in conjunction with the next meeting of SCOTI in May 2014.

NATIONAL TRANSPORT REGULATION REFORMS

The Standing Council took major decisions today to finalise the implementation of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator. This historic reform will provide significant productivity benefits to the transport industry and to Australia's national economy.

The National Heavy Vehicle Regulator was established on 21 January 2013 and has been regulating the National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme and the Performance Based Standards Scheme. Today, the Standing Council noted the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator's inaugural annual report and agreed that the Heavy Vehicle National Law would commence on 10 February 2014 in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia.

The Standing Council also approved in-principle the 2014-15 budget and financial arrangements for the National Regulator, with details to be finalised after further consideration by senior officials.

The Standing Council agreed to initiate work on three measures arising from the recent tragic heavy vehicle incident at Mona Vale, New South Wales. Members agreed to:

- a review of the National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme, to be led by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator;
- bring forward to 2013-14 the National Transport Commission's scheduled review of heavy vehicle inspection regimes; and
- expedite consideration of the introduction of mandatory requirements for Electronic Stability Control on all new heavy vehicle trailers carrying dangerous goods.

The National Heavy Vehicle Regulator and the National Transport Commission will be coordinating the reviews of the National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme and vehicle inspection regimes.

A review of chain of responsibility arrangements is part of the Heavy Vehicle National Law forward work program agreed by the Standing Council last year. Today, the Standing Council received an update from the National Transport Commission on the progress of the review and noted that the final report will be provided to the Standing Council in May 2014.

The Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator commenced operations on 20 January 2013 and the Rail Safety National Law has been enacted in South Australia, Tasmania, Northern Territory, New South Wales and Victoria. Today, the Standing Council congratulated the National Rail Safety Regulator on its inaugural annual report and noted the work the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator is doing with industry to improve safety standards.

The National System for commercial vessel safety commenced on 1 July 2013. Today, the Standing Council received an update on the implementation activities and approved a number of minor and technical amendments to the *Marine Safety (Domestic Commercial Vessel) National Law Act 2012* and amendments to the National Standard for Commercial Vessels to align domestic commercial vessel standards to national laws and international agreements.

Notably, the Standing Council today agreed to the Australian Maritime Safety Authority beginning a cooperative process to streamline the myriad of regulatory instruments and forms. The National System promised the industry simpler safety rules, applied consistently around Australia. This initiative will go to realising the benefits of the reforms, ensuring that the maritime industry benefits from regulatory improvements as soon as possible.

HEAVY VEHICLE CHARGING DETERMINATION

Ministers agreed to the release for public consultation by the National Transport Commission of a draft heavy vehicle charges Determination Regulation Impact Statement. This document is the second part in a combined heavy vehicle charges Review and Determination process agreed by the Standing Council in November 2012. The National Transport Commission will present a set of final recommendations to Ministers for consideration in February 2014, including options for phased implementation.

HEAVY VEHICLE CHARGING AND INVESTMENT REFORM

Ministers noted progress in the consideration of major reforms to heavy vehicle charging and investment. The Standing Council directed officials to develop a detailed implementation plan involving practical, concrete steps for consideration by the Standing Council in May 2014, with industry to be consulted in the preparation of the measures.

INFRASTRUCTURE REFORM

The Standing Council discussed the infrastructure reform agenda brought forward by the Federal Government. Members welcomed the Government's reforms to Infrastructure Australia, and have agreed to work collaboratively to deliver on the infrastructure reform agenda. A report will be provided to the Council of Australian Governments by mid-2014.

The Standing Council also welcomed the announcement of the Productivity Commission Inquiry into Public Infrastructure: Provision, Funding, Financing and Costs. All members have agreed to participate in the Inquiry and to contribute to the work of the Commission.

ROAD SAFETY

The Standing Council noted the 2013 Implementation Status Report on the National Road Safety Strategy, showing that most action items are progressing satisfactorily. The report also revealed that road crash deaths in 2012 had reduced by 8.8 per cent relative to the strategy baseline period (2008–2010), with similar reductions for most of the strategy's key performance indicators. Ministers agreed to publish the report on the Standing Council website.

The Standing Council also approved Terms of Reference for a review of the National Road Safety Strategy, to take place in 2014. This review will include an assessment of progress so far, a review of the strategy objectives and targets, and identification of priority actions for the next three years.

NATIONAL CYCLING STRATEGY

The Standing Council noted the National Cycling Strategy Implementation Report 2012. In 2012, the second year of the Strategy, Australian states and territories placed a strong focus on integrated planning across transport modes, and invested \$97.5 million in cycling related infrastructure, education and promotion. Bicycle sales outpaced car sales for the thirteenth year running, with 1.4 million bicycles sold in 2012.

ACCESSIBLE PUBLIC TRANSPORT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

The Standing Council noted the progress of the 2012 Review of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport 2002 and that release of the draft report is anticipated in the near future.

PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

The Hon Warren Truss MP	Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development (Commonwealth)
The Hon Jamie Briggs MP	Assistant Minister for Infrastructure and Regional Development (Commonwealth)
The Hon Gladys Berejiklian MP	Minister for Transport (New South Wales)
The Hon Duncan Gay MLC	Minister for Roads and Ports (New South Wales)
The Hon Brad Hazzard MP	Minister for Planning and Infrastructure (New South Wales)
The Hon Terry Mulder MP	Minister for Roads, Minister for Public Transport (Victoria)
The Hon Scott Emerson MP	Minister for Transport and Main Roads (Queensland)
The Hon Tom Koutsantonis MHA	Minister for Transport and Infrastructure (South Australia)
The Hon David O’Byrne MP	Minister for Infrastructure (Tasmania)
The Hon Peter Styles MLA	Minister for Transport (Northern Territory)
The Hon Michael Woodhouse MP	Associate Minister of Transport (New Zealand)
Mayor Felicity-ann Lewis	President (Australian Local Government Association)