

# STATEMENT ON THE 16 OCTOBER 2023 MEETING OF THE HEAVY VEHICLE NATIONAL LAW REFORM IMPLEMENTATION STEERING COMMITTEE

10 November 2023

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The ninth meeting of the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) Reform Implementation Steering Committee meeting was held via Teams on Monday 16 October 2023.

The Steering Committee was attended by the following members:

- Ms Paula Stagg representing Mr Jim Betts, Secretary, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA)
- Mr Matt Fuller representing Mr Josh Murray, Secretary, Transport for NSW (NSW)
- Mr Geoff Magoffin representing Ms Sally Stannard, A/g Director-General, Department of Transport and Main Roads (Queensland)
- Mr Gary Swain, A/g Secretary, Department of State Growth (Tasmania).

The Steering Committee continues to receive independent advice from:

- Mr Ken Kanofski
- Mr Sanjiv Sathiah, Director, Transport and Infrastructure Policy, Australian Local Government Association.

The Steering Committee was given a status update on the implementation of a National Automated Access System (NAAS; HVNL reform 2.3). The work underway to implement this key reform involves two important projects running in parallel.

Austrroads presented on their project NEF6393 – Contemporary Heavy Vehicle Access Decision Making for Road Managers. Stage one of the project is assessing the legal and regulatory requirements for a NAAS, understanding current policy settings among road managers across Australasia, and undertaking communications and engagement with government stakeholders.

Representatives from the Tasmanian Department of State Growth gave an overview of the work they are doing developing version 3 of the Heavy Vehicle Access Management System (HVAMS). IT development and testing is well advanced, with the project team aiming to go live with the initial stage of HVAMS v3 by June 2024. NSW and Queensland are also preparing for a limited introduction of HVAMS v3 for some heavy vehicle types in the first half of 2024.

The Steering Committee acknowledged the significant work that has been done by Tasmania, that now provides a strong foundation for a national system to automate access decision making. It is intended that once HVAMS v3 is operational in three jurisdictions, Austroads will take the lead on the national roll-out (hence the preparatory work being done to understand other jurisdictional requirements). The Steering Committee will receive six-monthly updates from Tasmania and Austroads.

New arrangements have been implemented which now see the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) and the National Transport Commission (NTC) attending all Steering Committee meetings for the reform update sessions (both legislative and non-legislative). On this occasion, they were also in attendance for the NAAS presentation.

The Steering Committee noted progress on implementing HVNL non-legislative reforms. The Committee agreed to close two more completed measures:

- Reform 2.4 required the development of an implementation plan for the NAAS. This is the plan developed by Austroads for their project NEF6393, which has been approved by the Austroads Board and the Infrastructure and Transport Senior Officials Committee (ITSOC), and is now being implemented as outlined above.
- Reform 2.5 required approval of the National Access Framework for Heavy Vehicles (NAFHV). The Steering Committee noted the NAFHV was approved by ITSOC in April 2023, and the NAFHV Working Group held their inaugural meeting in September 2023. An Industry Reference Group is being convened to support the Working Group deliver the NAFHV work program—to improve and harmonise heavy vehicle access.

In addition, the Steering Committee agreed to revised timeframes for reform 2.7 (economic appraisals of identified routes on the National Road Transport Network, to be considered for as-of-right access). The new timeframes will see Victoria's assessment of the Hume Highway completed by the end of 2023 and Austroads' evaluation of the methodology used for the appraisal being undertaken in the first quarter of 2024.

The NTC provided its regular update on the HVNL legislative reform program. The Steering Committee acknowledged the timeframes for delivering the full legislative amendment package are extremely tight and will need to be closely monitored in coming months. The Steering Committee noted the Consultation Regulation Impact Statement (C-RIS) was released on 9 October 2023 and will be open for public consultation until 24 November 2024.

The next meeting of the Steering Committee is currently scheduled for 27 November 2023.