



# National Freight Data Hub: Discussion Paper #1

## Introduction

The need for better freight data was a key focus of the industry led *Inquiry into National Freight and Supply Chain Priorities* and is an important part of delivering the National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy. Better freight performance and location data is one of the critical action areas in the associated National Action Plan.

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities, and Regional Development (the Department) is seeking your input to help settle the design of the National Freight Data Hub, building on the valuable feedback received in the development of the Freight and Supply Chain Strategy and the recommendations in iMOVE's *Freight Data Requirements Study*.

The questions in this paper build on the work undertaken to date and are designed to help elicit views on the data hub design. You are welcome to provide feedback in addition to these questions or to only address in your submission those elements of the paper that are most relevant to you. This Discussion Paper covers the purposes of the Hub, priority datasets for inclusion, sharing principles and priority outputs. Issues around hosting and funding of the Hub will be covered in a future Discussion Paper.

Submit your views by email to: [freightdatahub@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:freightdatahub@infrastructure.gov.au).

You may use the attached form if desired, or provide answers in an alternative format. Please include in your submission:

- a. The name of your organisation.
- b. Contact details for a person within your organisation to whom any correspondence in relation to your submission can be addressed.
- c. A brief description of why your organisation is interested in the Data Hub.

Submissions close on **Friday 6 December 2019**. Your submission will help inform the design of the National Freight Data Hub, and will be published on the website unless you request otherwise. Information collected during this consultation process may be provided to persons making an application under freedom of information laws. Personal details will not be published in any report.

You can find further information on the National Freight Data Hub [here](#), the National Freight and Supply Strategy [here](#), and the iMOVE Freight Data Requirements Study [here](#).

## Purposes

The purposes of a Freight Data Hub, as informed by iMOVE's review of Australia's freight data needs, will be to enhance access to freight data, across all modes, to:

- Support day to day operations,
- Improve infrastructure and transport network investment decisions, and
- Enable end-to-end performance evaluation of Australia's freight system.

We expect primary users of the Hub to include industry, government, regulators, the research community, and the community more broadly. Different user groups are likely to have different uses of the Hub, and a key challenge will be finding a way to serve these disparate uses. One possibility would be for different users to interact with the data in different ways, for example with different levels of permissions or different degrees of aggregation. The following table provides examples of potential use cases against the purposes listed above.

Purpose	Example use cases
<b>Support operational decisions</b>	Enhanced supply chain visibility, allowing a manufacturer to track their product on the way to customers, or to prove the provenance of a product
<b>Improve investment decisions</b>	Improved infrastructure and transport network investment decisions to cater for changing freight volumes and customer needs
<b>Performance measurement and benchmarking</b>	Governments to monitor freight efficiency and productivity, and how these are impacted by bottlenecks or regulatory impacts Primary producers wanting to understand freight costs compared with international competitors

### Question 1

a) Of the following, what are the most important purposes of the Hub?

Purpose	Importance rank (High/Medium/Low)
<b>Support operational decisions</b>	
<b>Improve investment decisions</b>	
<b>Performance measurement and benchmarking</b>	

b) What other purposes should the Hub have?

## What data to include?

There are numerous possible datasets that could be incorporated into the Hub. iMOVE reported demand for freight movement data and performance indicators, particularly around cost and time. Specific areas of interest identified include urban freight, first and last mile, regional issues, gateways, nationally significant corridors and some specific commodities. A key consideration at this stage is which datasets users would like to see prioritised for inclusion in the Hub. This could include improving accessibility to existing datasets, such as those held by BITRE, or inclusion of new data.

### Question 2

- a) For each purpose, what are the most critical things to include in the Hub?

In the attached form, list all elements and data sources that you see as important.

Purpose	Data element	Current/new data sources
Support operational decisions	Example: Real time freight consignment location	Being explored in Freight Data Exchange Pilot project
Improve investment decisions	Example: Freight volumes on specific road segments or bridges	State government truck counts
Performance measurement and benchmarking	Example: Train travel times Melbourne to Perth	BITRE Trainline
Other purposes		

- b) Are there other critical data elements that should be included in the Hub?

## Sharing data

The protection and confidentiality of data is a key concern of stakeholders that could inhibit participation in the Hub, therefore lessening the potential network wide benefits. Key considerations include cyber security and the protection of commercial in confidence material.

The iMOVE study found that there are differing appetites for sharing data depending on the data set, who will be able to access it, and for what purpose. It will be important to ensure that the data sharing and dissemination model produces shared benefits, and that the data outputs meets expectations of timeliness, cost-effectiveness and utility. Industry concerns about the use of data for purposes not agreed to, such as regulatory compliance, will also need to be properly addressed in the hub's design.

Sharing of freight data is also hampered by inconsistent and disparate approaches, such as data that cannot be compared across supply chains or states. A recommendation of the iMOVE study was that "a mechanism should be established to define and implement nationally a framework of standards for freight data to facilitate aggregation and comparison across diverse data sources".

### Question 3

- a) What are the barriers to sharing data? (Please provide examples in the attached form)
- b) How could these barriers be overcome?
- c) What are the benefits of greater data sharing?

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Barrier to sharing	How to address?	Potential benefit?
Example: Confidentiality	...	...
Example: Lack of trust	...	...
Example: Differing data standards	...	...
Example: Lack of a central location to share data	...	...

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## Products

Key aspects to be considered in relation to data dissemination include the level of aggregation for reporting, the frequency of data reporting, and different access needs for different purposes.

### Question 4

- a) What products are required? (Please provide examples in the attached form)
- b) What is the best way for Hub products to be made available?
- c) How frequently should data be updated?

Type of product	Product frequency	Method of reporting
Example: consignment location	Real-time	API
Example: safety incidents	Monthly	Dashboard
Example: crane rates	Quarterly or 6-monthly	Dashboard
Example: Freight volumes and forecasts	Annually	Data file
Example: in-depth commodity supply chain study	Once-off or irregularly updated	Spatial database or maps

## Next steps

Your submission will help inform the design of the National Freight Data Hub. In addition, we will be holding workshops with stakeholders to seek further feedback on issues raised through the submissions.

Please email [freightdatahub@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:freightdatahub@infrastructure.gov.au) if you have questions, would like to further contribute your views on the hub design project, or would like to join a mailing list to receive updates on the hub design project.