6 December 2019

Project Director, National Freight Data Hub
Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Cities and Regional Development
By Email: FreightDataHub@infrastructure.gov.au

Thank you for the opportunity to review the first Freight Data Hub discussion paper and participate in your recent workshops, which consultant Angus Draheim attended on behalf of Austroads on Tuesday 3 December in Brisbane.

Austroads is the peak organisation of Australasian road transport and traffic agencies. Our members are the road and traffic agencies in New Zealand and each Australian state and territory, as well as the national local government collective and the Commonwealth Government in Australia.

Austroads’ purpose is to support our member organisations to deliver an improved Australasian road transport network, one that meets the future needs of the community, industry and economy, a road network that is safer for all users and provides vital and reliable connections to places and people, and a network that uses resources wisely and is mindful of its impact on the environment. To succeed in this task, we undertake leading-edge road and transport research. This underpins our input to policy development and published guidance on the planning, design, construction, operations and maintenance of the road network and its infrastructure.

We acknowledge that the National Freight Data Hub has the potential to support the delivery and operations of safer and more efficient road transport operations as a key initiative of DITCRD’s National Freight and Supply Chain strategy.

To deliver on its objectives of supporting day to day operations, improving infrastructure and transport network investment decisions, and enabling end-to-end performance evaluation of Australia’s freight system, coordination of the Hub design with existing and planned data-related efforts will be critical. Parallel research or harmonisation efforts between the Austroads member agencies managing the road network infrastructure at state and local government levels would also likely be of value to the hub design and its future operations.

The Austroads Freight Task Force managed under the Network Program constitutes a unique forum where the Austroads member agencies meet to share on their practical knowledge and experience, coordinate research and work towards harmonised and consistent practice in relation to road freight operations. I refer you to the Terms of Reference joined to this letter and which detail the role and objectives of the Freight Task Force.

DITCRD is represented at this task force as a key member of Austroads, and we look forward to your participation going forward to share update on the National Freight Data Hub initiative but also to recommend coordination and research efforts that Austroads and the task force could undertake in support of the hub initiative and its objectives.
For your consideration, several recently completed or on-going Austroads initiatives could inform or relate to National Freight Data Hub design, some of which you may already be familiar with through your involvement on the Austroads Assets Task Force. Key examples include:

- **Road freight-related project in the Network Program such as:**
  - **NEF6133** Investigation and development of bridge formulae for inclusion in the performance-based standards network classification guidelines, and scoping of a potential future national heavy vehicle bridge assessment system
  - **NEF6209** Decision making framework and tools for road freight access decisions
  - **NEF6237** Investigation of pavement assessment methodologies for PBS access

- **Data-related projects in the Assets Program:**
  - **AAM6068** Data to Support Heavy Vehicle Road Reform and Heavy Vehicle Infrastructure Rating
  - **Recent publication AP-R597-19** on Data Standard for Road Management and Investment in Australia and New Zealand Version 3.0

- **Project NEG6019** on which describes an agreed architecture framework and content for the planning, definition, and integration of technology, information systems, data within road transport agencies. Specific architecture content developed as part of this project could assist with the scoping of the data hub.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss the aforementioned projects at task force meetings, or at your earliest convenience, and identify potential needs for coordination and research that our Programs may deliver in support of the National Freight Data Hub design and operations.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Delplace
Network Program Manager
Objective
Assist road and transport agencies in their efforts to address the future freight task. The task force aims to improve road freight operations and the integration with other transport modes.

Context
The work of the Freight task force will be undertaken in the context of an increasing freight demand as the Australian and world economies grow, changed Federal/State funding arrangements for road and rail infrastructure development and maintenance, a recognised need for better integration of the road and other transport modes and changing international standards for freight movement (e.g. container sizes) and heavy vehicle manufacture.

Added to this is the Australia-wide introduction of road transport ‘Chain of Responsibility’ legislation, emerging technology with potential compliance and enforcement applications, increasing community expectations and demands regarding heavy vehicle safety, traffic congestion, and environmental/community amenity, and national security concerns related to the movement of freight.

Role
The task force has been established as part of the Austroads strategic plan for 2007-12. Freight management – to address the future freight task, is one of five priority areas for strategic research in the strategic plan. Several areas of possible research for road and other land transport agencies through Austroads were accepted by Austroads Council at its meeting in October 2006 (see Appendix A).

The role of the Freight task force is to:
- Develop the identified areas of interest into a program of research to be undertaken over the financial years 2016-2020 of the strategic plan.
- Develop specific project proposals from the program of research and ensure their relevance to Austroads member and related organisations.
- Oversight the conduct of those projects.
- Promote national consistency.
- Liaise with other Austroads task forces / review panels on cross program issues.
- Oversee the dissemination of the results of projects and research to agencies and related organisations.
- Provide a forum for the exchange of information on addressing the freight task between Austroads member and related organisations.
- Provide input into the development of performance-based standards for heavy vehicles.
- Develop, in conjunction with the National Transport Commission, nationally consistent administrative compliance and enforcement guidelines, measures of compliance, and a national compliance strategy.

The dissemination of information to jurisdictions will be undertaken by the task force member from that jurisdiction.

In performing its role and in the development and implementation of projects the task force will give consideration to:
- Environmental sustainability and cultural heritage
- Community consultation and engagement
- Customer service
• Funding and financing options
• Improving data integrity and availability
• Integration between roads and other transport modes.

Engagement of external stakeholders
The task force will include a representative of the National Transport Commission (NTC) to ensure an integrated approach with their operation. The task force may also convene meetings from time to time with other organisations involved in related research as well as industry bodies to obtain their input on the development of relevant research. Organisations that may be consulted include:

• Logistics Council
• Australian Trucking Association
• Australian Freight Council Network
• Rail Freight Operators
• Roads Australia
• Government Departments with responsibility for the rail networks, ports, and broader infrastructure planning in States/Territories
• National Farmers Federation
• Business Council of Australia or Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
• The ACCC (on competition related matters).

Performance management
The task force will use the following performance measures to assess its performance and progress. These align with performance measures for Austroads included in the Austroads Strategic Plan 2016-20.

Implementation (assessed at the end of the strategic plan period)
• What is the take up of Austroads Freight program outputs
• What changes have road agencies made as a result of Austroads Freight program outputs.

Operational (assessed at least annually)
• activities proposed in the strategic plan completed on time
• percentage of projects completed on time
• number of projects more than twelve months late
• managing the activities of Austroads within budget
• meeting financial targets as determined by Council
• decisions from Council meetings actioned appropriately.

Meetings
It is anticipated that Task Forces will meet two or three times a year. Teleconferencing should be considered whenever appropriate. Meetings will be chaired by the Program Manager or their nominee.

Duration of task forces
The task forces will continue for the duration of the Austroads Strategic Plan 2016-2020, that is from 1 July 2016 until 30 June 2020 unless otherwise determined by Austroads Board.
Membership

The task force will include representatives from the following organisations:

The Task Forces may include representatives from the following organisations:

- Roads and Maritime Services, New South Wales / Transport for NSW
- VicRoads, Victoria / Transport for Victoria / Freight Victoria
- Department of Transport and Main Roads, Queensland
- Main Roads, Western Australia
- Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure, South Australia
- Department of State Growth, Tasmania
- Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics Northern Territory,
- Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate, Australian Capital Territory
- Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development
- Australian Local Government Association
- New Zealand Transport Agency

Observers

- National Transport Commission
- National Heavy Vehicle Regulator
- Transport Certification Australia
Appendix A

FREIGHT MANAGEMENT

To address the future freight task.

- Understand the future freight task by:
  - assessing growth in urban freight movements with 24/7 operations, particularly near ports
  - assessing regional and mining growth
  - identifying international trends in truck, machinery and container changes
  - understanding supply chain impacts on the freight task
  - enhancing freight data, modelling capability and national information sharing.

- Understand community impacts and industry needs by:
  - examining noise, emission, and amenity issues of 24/7 freight
  - engaging industry through heavy vehicle access workshops
  - examining land use and impact assessment issues.

- Manage freight growth by:
  - developing guidelines for the identification and protection of freight routes in urban and rural areas
  - developing guidelines for the management of over-size, over-mass freight movements (mining, agriculture & industry)
  - examining potential improvements to truck operations by linking vehicles, technology and roads (freightsmart)
  - examining inter-modal opportunities and constraints.

- Improve truck access by:
  - better coordinating access and permit arrangements
  - examining local government access issues
  - understanding the impacts of heavy vehicle charging.

- Compliance and enforcement
  - nationally consistent implementation of all modules of the compliance and enforcement reforms.
  - maintain close working relationship with the National Transport Commission (NTC) on the development of associated guidelines, measures of compliance and a national compliance strategy.
  - undertake technical and foundation research on higher level implementation issues as necessary.