



Communiqué

CANBERRA
FRIDAY, 4 NOVEMBER 2011

The inaugural meeting of the Standing Council on Transport and Infrastructure (the Standing Council) was held in Canberra today to consider a range of national initiatives. The Standing Council includes Transport, Infrastructure and Planning Ministers from the Commonwealth, States and Territories and the Australian Local Government Association.

The new Standing Council for the first time brings together responsibilities for strategic planning with infrastructure and transport policy and regulation. Bringing these functions together under the umbrella of one Ministerial Council provides a unique opportunity for the development of integrated solutions to address national infrastructure and transport planning and delivery challenges.

NATIONAL TRANSPORT REGULATION REFORMS

On 19 August 2011, the Council of Australian Governments signed Intergovernmental Agreements to establish the national maritime regulator, the national rail safety regulator and investigation system and the national heavy vehicle regulator. The new regulators will come into effect from January 2013.

Ministers are pleased to invite the Hon Bruce Baird AM to be the inaugural Chair of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator Board. Mr Baird has extensive knowledge of the transport industry and brings high level leadership qualities to this important role. Ministers agreed to undertake an international executive search for a Chief Executive Officer for the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator. Ministers noted the importance of identifying highly qualified candidates for this critical and historic position.

Ministers further agreed to commence an international executive search for the position of National Rail Regulator who, as Chief Executive, will lead the establishment of Australia's first national rail regulator.

Ministers also took a major step forward today in this historic reform process by unanimously agreeing to the first national heavy vehicle bill and the national rail safety law. These laws will be introduced into the Queensland and South Australian Parliaments, respectively, in the near future, with passage planned in the first half of 2012.

Ministers further agreed to a timetable for the development and implementation of a second Bill for the heavy vehicle law and a forward work program for future heavy vehicle law reforms.

In relation to the national maritime regulator, Ministers noted the progress with the development of the draft Bill and the timeframes for finalising the legislation in 2012.

These reforms will provide major productivity gains for the economy and will reduce the compliance burden on our transport industry by ending 110 years of duplication and multiple fees. For railways it will mean getting rid of seven separate regulatory authorities and 46 pieces of state, territory and Commonwealth legislation. Heavy vehicle operators will no longer have nine separate regulatory regimes to deal with.

NATIONAL PORT AND FREIGHT STRATEGIES

Ministers agreed that the National Port Strategy be provided to COAG and have agreed to work with Infrastructure Australia to develop a timetable for completion of the Land Freight Strategy. These major initiatives are important in supporting the transport industry and the national economy.

COAG ROAD REFORM PLAN

Ministers agreed that the COAG Road Reform Plan (CRRP) Feasibility Study be submitted to COAG for its consideration and endorsement. Delivery of the Feasibility Study is a key milestone set out in the Seamless National Economy Partnership implementation plan determined by COAG in early 2010.

COAG CAPITAL CITIES REVIEW

Ministers discussed options for advancing cities reforms and acknowledged the significant value in integrating strategic planning with infrastructure and transport planning and delivery. Ministers noted that there are a range of cities reforms currently underway across jurisdictions, including the COAG Reform Council's imminent report to COAG on the outcomes of its cities review. This Standing Council, in its new form, is well placed to progress the cities and COAG Reform Council work following COAG consideration.

POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR INTELLIGENT TRANSPORT SYSTEMS

Ministers unanimously agreed to adopt the Policy Framework for Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) in Australia and cooperate in its implementation. ITS such as advanced traffic management systems and communication systems to connect vehicles will be a critical enabler of future improvements in transport safety, productivity and environmental outcomes. The new framework is intended to ensure they are developed in a consistent manner across Australia.

MARITIME STANDARDS

Ministers endorsed new national standards to govern the structural integrity of commercial vessels. The new standards will be gazetted under section 427 of the *Navigation Act 1912*.

PARTICIPATING MEMBERS

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP	Minister for Infrastructure and Transport (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, Minister Assisting the Premier on Infrastructure (New South Wales)
The Hon Terry Mulder MP	Minister for Roads, Minister for Public Transport (Victoria)
The Hon Dr Denis Napthine MP	Minister for Ports, Minister for Major Projects (Victoria)
The Hon Paul Lucas MP	Attorney-General, Minister for Local Government and Special Minister of State (Queensland)
The Hon Anastacia Palaszczuk MP	Minister for Transport (Queensland)
The Hon Craig Wallace MP	Minister for Main Roads, Minister for Fisheries and Marine Infrastructure (Queensland)
The Hon Troy Buswell MLA	Minister for Transport (Western Australia)
The Hon Patrick Conlon MHA	Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure (South Australia)
The Hon David O'Byrne MP	Minister for Infrastructure (Tasmania)
The Hon Delia Lawrie MLA	Deputy Chief Minister (Northern Territory)
Councillor Paul Bell	Councillor, Emerald Shire Council, Queensland (Australian Local Government Association)