



JOINT COMMUNIQUE

2 MAY 2008, CANBERRA

Australian, State and Territory Transport Ministers, the New Zealand Minister for Transport Safety and the President of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) met in Melbourne on Friday 2 May 2008 to consider a range of important national infrastructure and transport issues.

A NATIONAL TRANSPORT POLICY FOR AUSTRALIA

Australians want a national transport system that is safe and secure, efficient, competitive and integrated, sustainable and reliable and which supports and enhances the nation's social, environmental and economic prosperity.

This will be achieved when:

- Freight and services logistics systems are integrated across modes and operate efficiently and competitively with only necessary and nationally consistent regulation;
- People can access employment and the services and community resources they need safely, reliably and routinely without undue delay because of urban congestion or lack of public transport; and
- Transport systems are planned, built, operated and regulated to minimise their impact on the environment and energy consumption.

Calls for a seamless national transport system of this nature have come from both industry and the community, as was reflected strongly in the discussions at the 2020 Summit.

With this in mind, ATC Ministers agreed to take a historic first step towards national reforms that will cut down on red tape and result in a more consistent approach to the regulation of transport modes. The overall aim will be to provide better signals to guide both the supply of and demand for transport infrastructure and services, involving whole of transport solutions for corridors and networks rather than simply being mode specific.

ATC agreed that the National Transport Policy would be guided by the vision, objectives and principles set out at [Attachment A](#) to this communiqué. Ministers agreed to the arrangements set out in the following paragraphs.

Governance

Current national governance arrangements in surface transport are fragmented or non-existent.

In order to achieve the vision of a seamless, coordinated transport system, Ministers agreed that the best direction for reform would focus on vehicle registration and licensing and rail safety and investigation.

Consistent with this, it was agreed that Ministers would meet in Canberra in July 2008 to consider proposals for a single national system for the regulation, registration and licensing of heavy vehicles, a national rail safety regulator and a national rail safety investigator.

ATC Ministers agreed that it was important to undertake this work as a matter of priority, with a view to seeking the in-principle support of COAG to their approach in October 2008.

Ministers also agreed to consider at the next ATC meeting in November a proposal for a single national system for motor vehicle registration and a national system for driver licensing.

Ministers also agreed to further work being done towards implementing a single national approach to maritime legislation for consideration in July 2008, and approved more streamlined arrangements for implementation of national marine safety standards.

Ministers expressed their support for investigating the establishment of a National Road Safety Council to provide advice on effective road safety measures that could be implemented on a national basis. They agreed to consider at the next ATC meeting such a proposal including possible terms of reference and membership.

Economic Framework for an Efficient Transportation Marketplace

ATC Ministers have agreed that their goal is to deliver a seamless national marketplace that will allow better signals for the efficient, productive, safe, sustainable and timely provision and use of transportation infrastructure and services. A set of policy principles to guide this work has also been agreed.

Ministers reached an agreement-in-principle that two key initial steps towards achieving this national marketplace are to introduce a national registration scheme for trucks and also to establish a single national driver licence for truck drivers.

Ministers agreed that a national registration scheme is a key step towards future pricing reform as it will introduce the principle of 'the money following the truck'. Ministers noted that implementation of such a scheme will raise whole-of-government considerations, which need to be addressed in the COAG context. It was agreed that the scheme would be developed with a view to implementation from 1 July 2009.

Ministers further agreed that, over coming months, in conjunction with key stakeholders and independent experts, this work stream will identify additional reform

priorities to deliver a seamless or more consistent national marketplace and develop a detailed work program for achieving this.

The work program will encompass the current road pricing focused work under the COAG Road Reform Plan – which continues to develop the research building blocks to enable COAG to further consider the potential merits of a move to mass, distance and location based charges for heavy vehicles.

Infrastructure Planning and Investment

The objective of the Infrastructure Planning and Investment work stream is to create a more predictable and rational investment environment so as to improve certainty in delivering nationally significant infrastructure and improve the prospects for private sector investment.

This work stream will focus on the interface between good planning and investment, explicitly considering the interrelationship between land use planning and the passenger transport task in the planning stage of transport infrastructure investments. A critical part will be identifying a new set of national objectives to be used as the focus for investment in new land transport infrastructure in the future.

Urban Congestion

Ministers agreed to increase cooperation on urban transport and land use policy given the importance of Australia's cities to future national prosperity. Growing urban populations and the potentially adverse economic, social and environmental impacts of rising urban congestion pressures call for cooperation across all levels of government.

This work stream will target its work to:

- improving the quality of information and transport and land use modelling available to decision-makers to support design and selection of the best interventions;
- pilot projects to better understand business transport movements (freight and service sector) in urban areas, including to improve understanding of the growing service orientation of urban economies;
- enhancing integration of transport and land use planning, including emerging issues; and
- a comprehensive study to improve understanding of the impacts and practicality of the range of pricing options available to better manage rising congestion pressures.

The work undertaken by this group will also make a valuable contribution to Infrastructure Australia's national infrastructure audit and priority list.

Supply chains

ATC Ministers identified 12 supply chains which are of national significance: coal, iron ore, livestock and meat, copper, grain, seafood, processed foods (including dairy), wine, forestry automotive, petroleum and general freight (including containers).

With the freight task predicted to double over the period from 2005 to 2020 years it is critical to have good intelligence on how the demand for transport services will play out and how to maximise both efficiency and best practice environmental solutions that take account of governments' climate change objectives.

Ministers agreed to task the NTC with pilot studies into the Intermodal Transport, Livestock, Grain, Oil and Gas, and Coal supply chains to identify regulatory constraints, bottlenecks and provide opportunities to share information.

Road safety

ATC agreed a number of measures that would build on Australia's drive to improve road safety, including:

- Development of best practice speed enforcement measures and a national best practice speed management strategy.
- Establishing better linkages between road construction and safety outcomes through adopting risk based approaches to the road network and developing targeted safety upgrade works for high-risk black spots.
- In-vehicle and at-roadside technology, including the already approved pilot of digital tachograph technology and other potential solutions that use global positioning systems (GPS).
- Subject to the Bracks review into the Australian automobile industry and international approval of a suitable technical standard for stability control, the Commonwealth government would undertake a Regulation Impact Statement for the development of Australian Design Rules, taking into account the Council of Australian Federation's intention to progressively require safety technologies as a condition of registration in new passenger vehicles manufactured after 31 December 2010.
- Development of programs and treatments to address single-vehicle run-off-road crashes and other rural crash problems.
- Investigation of a national 'stars on cars' program to provide consumers with safety ratings on new light vehicles (in consultation with industry).

Climate change

ATC supports efforts to ensure the transport sector makes a positive contribution to addressing climate change impacts.

With a national emissions trading scheme to be implemented from 2010, this work stream will further consider possible measures to complement the scheme, consistent with broader Council of Australian Government processes.

ATC Ministers agreed to investigate issues relating to a national low emissions program, including:

- A mandatory CO₂ emissions standard for cars, light commercial vehicles and sports utility vehicles;
- Design and implementation of a standards for low carbon fuels;
- National standards and targets for government vehicle fleets; and
- Research and development of low emissions fuels and transport technologies.

ATC endorsed the Commonwealth Government's establishment of a Major Cities unit and have referred to it the task of the scoping and development of a national sustainable communities program to benefit urban Australia.

Strategic Research and Technology

Ministers agreed that there was a need to support a new National Transport Policy with a collaborative strategic research agenda that looked beyond a modal focus. Accordingly, the ATC agreed to examine whether existing research bodies, such as the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics, have the capacity to undertake this role or whether the establishment of a new body is required.

Ministers also noted and welcomed the certification of the first service provider under the Intelligent Access Program, a world leading regulatory system using GPS technology.

Workforce Planning and Skills Working Group

Ministers agreed the importance of efforts to improve workforce planning and skills retention in the Transport & Logistics (T&L) sector. This includes the identification of labour skills, education and training resources and the further development of a web gateway that will include access to case studies and successful demonstration projects. The objective is to improve access and awareness to job opportunities and enable increased standards of education and training in the T&L sector.

Social Inclusion

Ministers discussed factors contributing to social exclusion through transport disadvantage. It was agreed that this work should be referred to the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Social Inclusion, the Hon Julia Gillard MP for her consideration.

Rail level crossing safety

Ministers also agreed to the development of a package of railway level crossing safety initiatives, including consideration of:

- a major trial of low-cost level crossing treatments;
- national media and enforcement initiatives for level crossings; and
- other best practice initiatives to improve level crossing safety.

Transport security

Ministers agreed to continue progressing nationally important transport security work through the Transport Security Working Group (TSWG). The TSWG comprises representatives from all jurisdictions and is an established forum through which to address transport security issues and coordinate policy implementation. The TSWG is the lead forum for coordination of national transport policy response to transport disruptive incidents or potential incidents from terrorism.

The TSWG is continuing a work program of initiatives that mitigate the risk of transport security incidents and complement the National Counter Terrorism

Arrangements and other national planning arrangements for security and emergency management.

NTC Strategic Plan and 2008-09 Workplan

The ATC today endorsed the NTC's 2008/09 – 2010/11 Strategic Plan and their 2008 - 09 Work Program. The Strategic Plan and Workplan have been developed to align with the National Transport Policy Framework, and focuses on the major issues facing the road and rail sectors.

Ministers also approved the National Marine Safety Committee (NMSC) Strategic Plan for 2008-2013.

National Standards for Commercial Vessels - Communications Equipment

ATC Members agreed to an update to the Uniform Shipping Laws (USL) Code to reflect changes in distress and safety communications technology on board commercial vessels and endorsed new standards for communications equipment. Ministers noted that the standards are designed to apply to new vessels only, with no extra cost or regulatory burden placed upon current vessels.

The ATC meeting was attended by:

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP	Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development and Local Government (Commonwealth)
The Hon John Watkins MLA	Minister for Transport (New South Wales)
The Hon Eric Roozendaal MLC	Minister for Roads (New South Wales)
The Hon Lynne Kosky MP	Minister for Public Transport (Victoria)
The Hon Tim Pallas MLA	Minister for Roads and Ports (Victoria)
The Hon Warren Pitt MP	Minister for Main Roads and Local Government (Queensland)
The Hon Alannah MacTiernan MLA	Minister for Planning and Infrastructure (Western Australia)
The Hon Patrick Conlon MHA	Minister for Transport, Minister for Infrastructure and Minister for Energy (South Australia)
Mr Graeme Sturges MP	Parliamentary Secretary assisting the Premier on Infrastructure (Tasmania)
The Hon John Hargreaves MLA	Minister for Territory and Municipal Services (ACT)
The Hon Harry Duynhoven MP	Minister of Transport Safety (New Zealand)
Cr Paul Bell	President, Australian Local Government Association
Mr Richard Hancock	Chief Executive, Department of Planning and Infrastructure (NT) on behalf of the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure

Vision for Australia's Transport Future

Australia requires a safe, secure, efficient, reliable and integrated national transport system that supports and enhances our nation's economic development and social and environmental well-being.

Transport Policy Objectives

To achieve this vision, Australia's Transport Ministers commit to the following policy objectives:

ECONOMIC

To promote the efficient movement of people and goods in order to support sustainable economic development and prosperity

SAFETY

To provide a safe transport system that meets Australia's mobility, social and economic objectives with maximum safety for its user

SOCIAL

To promote social inclusion by connecting remote and disadvantaged communities and increasing accessibility to the transport network for all Australians

ENVIRONMENTAL

Protect our environment and improve health by building and investing transport systems that minimise emissions and consumption of resources and energy

INTEGRATION

Promote effective and efficient integration and linkage of Australia's transport system with urban and regional planning at every level of government and with international transport systems

TRANSPARENCY

Transparency in funding and charging to provide equitable access to the transport system, through clearly identified means where full cost recovery is not applied.

Transport Policy Principles

Australia's transport policy framework is underpinned by the following guiding principles:

INFRASTRUCTURE PRICING

Sending the appropriate signals to influence supply and demand for infrastructure

COMPETITIVE MARKETS

Establishing competitive markets wherever possible to minimise the need for regulation

PRIVATE SECTOR

Involve the private sector, where it is efficient to do so, in delivering outcomes

NATIONAL REGULATION

A national perspective should be adopted where regulation is required

NATIONAL MARKETS

Encourage national markets where possible

CUSTOMER

Customer – focussed. Equitable access for all users