

## **AUSTRALIAN TRANSPORT MINISTERS' MEETING**

**25 JULY 2008, SYDNEY**

### **RECORD OF OUTCOMES**

Transport Ministers from the Commonwealth and each Australian State and Territory met in Sydney today to take forward ATC's national action plan, *A New Beginning for Transport*, agreed at the Australian Transport Council's meeting in May. The plan encompasses a number of key national reforms designed to cut down red tape in the transport and logistics sector and deliver more consistency in the way transport is regulated across Australia.

Ministers agreed to recommend to the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) meeting in October that, subject to the outcomes of regulatory impact assessments, COAG endorse in-principle the establishment of:

- a National Road Safety Council;
- a single national system of heavy vehicle regulation, registration and driver licensing; and
- a single national system for maritime safety regulation administered by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA).

Ministers also instructed the National Transport Commission to prepare a regulatory impact statement (RIS) for a single, national rail safety regulatory and investigation framework.

The Australian Transport Council (ATC, comprising Transport Ministers together with the Australian Local Government Association) would prepare the terms of Inter-Governmental Agreements to underpin these proposed national arrangements for COAG's consideration in early 2009.

#### **National Road Safety Council**

Ministers agreed that the objective of the National Road Safety Council would be to enhance implementation of key reforms from the National Road Safety Strategy and other ATC-agreed road safety reforms by raising the profile of road safety across government, business and the broader community through high level partnerships across key sectors.

The Council's membership would include community leaders and experts from the business, government, academic and community sectors, with expertise in key elements of road safety and/or other essential area. Subject to COAG's agreement, the Council would meet early 2009.

Ministers also agreed to consider at ATC's November 2008 meeting a review of existing road safety management and governance processes to avoid duplication with the new National Council.

## **National Maritime Regulation**

Ministers agreed that, subject to the outcome of the regulatory impact assessment, they support a national approach to Maritime Safety regulation and are inclined towards broadening the application of the *Commonwealth Navigation Act 1912* to apply to all commercial vessels. This will involve AMSA becoming responsible for regulating vessel design, construction, and equipment, vessel operation (eg safety management systems) and crew certification and manning.

In considering the arrangements which would underpin a national system, Ministers agreed to explore the option of existing State and Northern Territory maritime agencies being the delivery agents for regulatory services under individual agreements with AMSA.

The first step in the process to establish a single national system will involve the preparation of a Regulatory Impact Statement for consideration by ATC at its November meeting.

## **National Heavy Vehicle Regulation, Registration, Driver Licensing**

In proposing to COAG a new framework for the regulation of the heavy vehicle industry, the Transport Ministers agreed that the framework could involve:

- the establishment of a single regulation entity by July 2009;
- the implementation of a single national heavy vehicle registration scheme in 2010;
- the adoption of a consistent approach to heavy vehicle driver competency and testing standards and heavy vehicle driver training school recognition in 2010; and
- delivery of a single physical national heavy vehicle driver licence in 2010.

National heavy vehicle laws would encompass the breadth of current heavy vehicle regulation, registration and licensing, including such matters as roadworthiness, mass and loading, fatigue and speed. In recognition of the complexity associated with road use pricing and network access, Ministers agreed that these two areas of regulation would be considered over time by ATC and COAG.

It is envisaged that by 1 July 2009, the Commonwealth would prepare legislation to establish a 'Federal Registration Scheme' (FRS) to apply to all heavy vehicles. Initially, the FRS would work in the same manner as the current 'Federal Interstate Registration Scheme' with all customer service transactions being handled by State and Territory agencies and data records continuing to be managed within the jurisdictions' general registration computer systems.

Licensing reforms will be implemented by all jurisdictions in 2010 delivering a consistent approach to minimum standards for competency and testing for heavy vehicle driver licences, starting with Heavy Rigid and Heavy Combination classes, and recognising heavy vehicle driver training schools' training and testing of drivers.

To support implementation of this very significant reform agenda, and in anticipation of COAG's confirmation of the directions being pursued, ATC has agreed to establish a National Heavy Vehicle Regulation Implementation Team to develop the necessary regulatory impact assessments, Inter-Governmental Agreements, draft laws and design the structure, functions, resourcing and funding arrangements to deliver these future arrangements.

## **Rail safety regulation and investigation**

ATC will consider the NTC's RIS on a single, national rail safety regulatory and investigation framework in early 2009, and make a recommendation to COAG's first meeting next year. The RIS will consider all viable options for establishing a single, national system, and will consult with stakeholders in the preparation of the RIS.

Ministers reaffirmed that in the interim all jurisdictions would proceed with the model rail safety legislation previously agreed by COAG.

## **Progressing ATC's National Transport Policy**

Ministers also noted **progress reports** from each of the Working Groups developing aspect of the National Transport Policy. Ministers expressed satisfaction at the significant progress being made by the Working Groups and noted that the substantive issues would be discussed at the 7 November ATC meeting.

Ministers noted the importance of the national stocktake being undertaken by the Workforce planning and skills working group of labour skills, education and training shortages across the transport and logistics workforce. Ministers agreed to fast-track the deadline for completion and consideration of this work to the November ATC meeting.

Working Groups include:

- Economic framework for an efficient transportation marketplace
- Infrastructure planning and investment
- Capacity constraints and supply chain performance
- Urban congestion
- Climate change, environment and energy
- Safety and security
- Strategic research and technology, and
- Workforce planning and skills.

The Australian Transport Ministers meeting was attended by:

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP	Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, 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 MP	Minister for Roads and Ports (Victoria)
The Hon Warren Pitt MP	Minister for Main Roads and Local Government (Queensland)
Mr Gary Fenlon MP	Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Transport, Trade, Employment and Industrial Relations (Queensland)
The Hon Alannah MacTiernan MLA	Minister for Planning and Infrastructure (Western Australia)
The Hon Graeme Sturges MP	Minister for Infrastructure (Tasmania)
The Hon John Hargreaves MLA	Minister for Territory and Municipal Services (ACT)