

NSW DRAFT FREIGHT AND PORTS PLAN PORTS AUSTRALIA SUBMISSION

Ports Australia welcomes the opportunity to comment on the NSW Government's planning for the freight and logistics network of the State.

Ports Australia consulted with its members from NSW in outlining the proceeding information and putting forward views to the NSW Government so that it is better informed in meeting the future freight and logistics challenges of the State.

Ports Australia – Representation

Ports Australia is the peak industry body representing all port authorities and corporations, both publicly and privately owned, at the national level. Ports Australia is a constituted company limited by guarantee with a Board of Directors, comprising the CEOs of eleven member ports. Our website is at www.portsaustralia.com.au.

Ports Australia aims to work closely with the Government and its agencies on the development and implementation of policies and regulatory settings that will facilitate the efficient and safe operation of the nation's ports and ensure that they have the ability to develop their capacity to meet Australia's freight task.

Ports Australia – Position

Ports Australia agrees with the NSW Government's view outlined in the beginning of the NSW Draft Freight and Ports Plan (pg. 5) that freight and port networks are fundamental to our economy and that the State's future economic growth and prosperity are built on the safe, efficient and reliable movement of goods. Unfortunately, the intent of this view is neither included in the key actions for creating a future transport system (pg. 5), nor fully comprehended in the rest of the document.

The future planning and management of the ports network in the NSW Draft Freight and Ports Plan (outlined in the Priority Action Areas) is drafted at a very high level. While this may be warranted to allow scope for actions, the subsequent section (Section 5) outlines limited actions that correlate with the Priority Action Areas. As a result, the document lacks clarity and is likely to raise ambiguity among the community and uncertainty for businesses looking to invest.

For example, section 4.3 speaks to the vision of protecting existing freight precincts and ensuring sufficient future land use without specifying any location/region. The expectation that ports would be a key priority for this vision given the report title states "Ports" should be a foregone conclusion. However, when reviewing section 5, there is almost no consideration about protecting corridors to the ports, securing buffer

zones around the ports, or securing land for future port development over the coming 20 year horizon or the 'long-term' horizon. Clearly the rhetoric preceding section 5 is based on logical and considered planning concepts, but this does not translate to meaningful actions for the future of this State and its ports network.

Ports Australia would also implore the NSW Government to take a leadership role in coastal shipping policy. This issue has been highlighted in the draft plan as a policy requiring investigation (pg. 38). However, a review of the proposed actions the NSW Government plans to undertake supporting this thinking is limited to some operational changes with a timeline of investigation between 10 and 20 years from now. Analysis conducted for the *Inquiry into National Freight & Supply Chain Priorities* suggests that while Australia's freight task is projected to double in the next 20 years, even with extra investment, our current transport infrastructure will be hard pressed to meet this demand.

Policy action is needed now. The draft plan speaks to "reforming road, rail and maritime regulations to harmonise cross border regulatory regimes that will drive economic efficiencies" (pg. 5). It is well documented that Australia's existing coastal shipping regulations are limiting the country's ability to drive economic growth and is inefficient.

Furthermore, the Premier's stated priorities (pg. 9) speak to growing the economy, building infrastructure and delivering better services, improving road travel, reducing road fatalities and creating safer communities. Ports and the shipping industries are clearly at the heart of growing the economy given their key role in trade. It is also the most environmentally clean mode to transport mass cargo, creates little to no noise emissions impacting residents, helps alleviate congestion on roads through the need for less trucks, leads to improved road travel, does not impact on community safety and will lead to improved health of truck drivers due to reduced distances travelled.

Ports Australia suggests the NSW Government investigate the benefits of an improved coastal shipping regulatory framework for the State and engage with the Commonwealth accordingly. Ports Australia is currently undertaking a nationally study on the matter which is being conducted by Deloitte and would be happy to engage with the NSW Government on this matter.

Over 98 per cent of the nation's trade traverses Australia's ports, worth \$1.2 billion on any single day. Clearly the future planning and management of NSW's ports network to progress the State's economy needs to be considered and reflected in a more robust manner.

Lastly, Ports Australia suggests the final NSW Freight and Ports Plan be improved through the inclusion of the policy positions aimed at freight management, outlined in the final *Greater Sydney Region Plan*. These policy positions resulted from sound consultation processes with stakeholders and are aimed at a sustainable and progressive future for the region. In particular, policies to consider include:

- providing buffer areas to nearby activities that are sensitive to emissions from 24-hour port and freight functions such as residential uses
- protecting industrial lands for port, intermodal and logistics uses from the encroachment of commercial, residential and other non-compatible uses which would adversely affect industry viability to facilitate ongoing operation and long-term growth
- requiring sensitive developments within the influence of port and airport operations to implement measures that reduce amenity impacts
- identifying and preserving land for future port and airport, intermodal and rail infrastructure

In summary, Ports Australia considers that the draft NSW Freight and Ports Plan is limited in its consideration of the future planning and management of ports. Ports Australia is aware of the recent restructure within Transport NSW. This appears to have led to a diminished focus on the NSW ports network given the lack of considered planning and investment outlined in the draft NSW Freight and Ports Plan. Given the importance of ports to the freight network and the future of this State, Ports Australia hopes to see increased resources within the government allocated towards this industry and for improved consideration in the final NSW Freight and Ports Plan.



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