



FREIGHT AND LOGISTICS COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA INC

Hon Rita Saffioti
Minister for Transport; Planning; Lands
Dumas House
2 Havelock Street
West Perth WA 6005

Dear Minister

Local Councils Charging for Access to Local Roads

Local councils at Kwinana, Coolgardie, Northam (among others) have begun charging trucking companies for access to local roads. There is some evidence to suggest that such charging is becoming a growing practice among local councils.

The WA Local Government Association (WALGA) has drawn up a heavy vehicle cost recovery policy guideline for local councils in an endeavour to encourage both consistency and transparency on the part of its members. The policy has been circulated to all local councils.

The key principles within the policy are that:

- any charges on local roads must be for a new, defined road transport task which causes extraordinary damage to the road;
- the charges must be paid by the freight proponent (not the trucking company) and must be agreed upfront; and
- the revenue from the charges must be used to maintain the road in question.

Industry and Main Roads WA support the principles within this policy. However, there is concern that local councils are introducing charging arrangements outside the policy guidelines and that WALGA does not have the power to do anything about it.

The charging arrangements outside the policy guidelines that have been observed include:

- charges being applied to trucking companies rather than freight proponents, and
- charges being applied to existing road uses rather than new freight tasks.

Moreover, there is no consistency between the charging models being introduced across local councils, leading to the potential for a patchwork quilt of different access costs across the State.

Main Roads WA shares all of these concerns. It also points out that the charging models lack transparency, with some instances coming to light suggesting those councils view the proceeds from access charging as a source of general revenue rather than just a source of road maintenance funding.

A joint WALGA-Main Roads WA communique is being prepared to raise the profile of the policy and its key principles with a view to its adoption by all local councils.

The matter has been raised at our Council as one of growing concern, not only for industry, but also for Main Roads WA and for WALGA. We have been involved in related discussions as a result.

This note is to bring the issue to your attention. We will monitor developments going forward and should the practice continue to cause concern, revert to you with further advice, possibly on the desirability of involving the Minister for Local Government.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'N. Lockwood', is centered on the page. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent horizontal stroke at the end.

Nicole Lockwood
Chair
25/10/2017