



FREIGHT AND LOGISTICS COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Ms Rita Saffioti
Shadow Minister for Planning; Finance; Transport; Infrastructure
Unit One
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Malaga WA 6090

Dear Rita

National Heavy Vehicle Regulator

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed in 2009 that there should be a common set of regulations for the heavy vehicle industry to be introduced by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) across the country.

Notwithstanding this decision, Western Australia has remained independent of the NHVR since that time because of the unique nature of heavy road transport in this State and the efficiency of its operation. Experience since 2009 at both a national and local level has shown the wisdom of this position.

There are still regular suggestions from Federal bodies, however, that Western Australia should join the national scheme. In some cases, these suggestions have been linked to the issue of road funding for the State.

The Freight and Logistics Council of Western Australia has taken a strong position in support of the State remaining independent of the NHVR as outlined in the attached statement. Members felt it important that you be aware of this position.

We would be pleased to provide any additional briefing that you may require.

Yours sincerely

Nicole Lockwood
Chair
27 February 2017

Freight and Logistics Council of Western Australia

Position Statement: National Heavy Vehicle Regulator

Background

The profile of the heavy road vehicle industry in Western Australia is fundamentally different to that found in the Eastern States. In Western Australia, key characteristics include large vehicles travelling very long distances within the State hauling cost-sensitive export commodities to port. In the Eastern States, smaller vehicles travel shorter distances, often across State borders, serving time-pressured retail supply chains.

While the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed in 2009 to introduce a common system of regulations for the heavy vehicle industry across the country under the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR), Western Australia and the Northern Territory have remained independent of the national approach, in the former case on the grounds that to do so provides clear and demonstrable benefits to this State. Ministers for Transport in Western Australia since 2009 have supported this position despite ongoing Federal discussions about Western Australia joining the NHVR.

Discussion

The Freight and Logistics Council of Western Australia has recently discussed the NHVR issue to test the current view of industry. The result is a strong endorsement of the Government's long-standing position of independence from the NHVR. The Council notes that the regulatory regime in this State administered by Main Roads WA is clearly more appropriate to heavy vehicle operations in Western Australia than the national alternative and reflects the focus on facilitating trade that underpins this State's economy. Moreover, administrative systems here are far more effective, indicative of which is the time taken to issue permits to operators, within 24 hours in Western Australia and 28-60 days under the NHVR regime.

Given the efficiency of the system in Western Australia, the NHVR is seeking advice from Main Roads WA as to more effective regulatory arrangements. In addition, there needs to be continuing attention given to regulatory alignment where WA operations involve cross State border movements, albeit that there are relatively few of them.

Summary

Industry, through the Council, encourages the Government to maintain its present position on NHVR, while at the same time encouraging the ongoing cooperation between WA and the NHVR to achieve ongoing improvements in heavy vehicle regulation for the State and the nation.