



Ongoing Transport Reform Must Feature in COAG Seamless Economy Agenda

The Government's second Seamless Economy Agenda must focus on reforms that continue to abolish inconsistent regulation and red tape between states, all of which adds considerable and unnecessary costs to consumers and exports.

In a submission to the Commonwealth Government on the COAG Future Regulatory Reform Agenda, the Australian Logistics Council (ALC) has argued for the national transport reforms to be taken a step further to maximise their economic benefits.

"The journey to reform Australia's transport sector is not nearing its end, in actual fact it has only just begun," said ALC Managing Director Michael Kilgariff.

"The signing of an Intergovernmental Agreement by COAG in August 2011 to establish national regulators for heavy vehicles, maritime safety and rail safety was an important step, but there is still much to do in the regulatory arena to ensure we maximise the economic and social benefits of this important reform.

"The ALC submission on the COAG Regulatory Reform Agenda consultation paper highlights a range of areas where industry believes there is considerable scope for ongoing reform.

"For example, there must be a renewed focus on ensuring that the national transport laws currently being developed are national in both name and in practice.

"This means the implementation of a single set of national laws overseen by national regulators to ensure the laws operate in a uniform fashion nationally.

"These national regulators must be administered under a 'single agency' model, and have full responsibility for policy and legislation development, as well as having the funds and resources necessary to do the job properly", he said.

Mr Kilgariff said the freight logistics industry was concerned by the possibility that some state jurisdictions may choose to derogate from national schemes, which would significantly reduce the productivity and efficiency benefits of the national transport reforms.

"There is little point in having a national regulatory framework if the states are granted too much leeway to go off in their own directions, which in effect will see the same state-based inconsistencies remain," Mr Kilgariff said.

"That is why the ALC submission calls on the COAG Reform Council to review cross jurisdictional regulatory reforms to report on the extent and economic impact of jurisdictional derogations", he said.

ALC also welcomed the consultation paper observations which highlighted some of the everyday challenges the freight logistics industry faces, such as restrictive transport curfews which inhibit the extent to which operators can service the retail sector, particularly at night.

"It is significant that the Government has highlighted this issue, as restrictive curfews not only stifle efficiency in the sector, it can also lead to the perverse social outcome whereby trucks need to operate in peak periods, thereby adding to congestion and emissions, as well as posing a potential safety risk.

"Action on all these issues will assist in the delivery of the COAG objective to lift national productivity and allow transport operators to get products onto supermarket shelves efficiently and our exports to market at the lowest cost", he said.

The ALC submission on the Second Seamless National Economy Agenda Stakeholder Consultation Paper is available on its website www.austlogistics.com.au, or by [clicking here](#).

21 October 2011

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