

ALC Forum highlights benefits of boosting freight productivity, efficiency and safety

Delegates attending the Australian Logistics Council Forum in Melbourne have delivered a strong message to government, industry and the wider community that significant social and economic benefits will flow from boosting freight productivity, efficiency and safety.

In his closing address to the Forum, ALC Managing Director Michael Kilgariff said the industry had delivered some powerful suggestions about how to go about the task of regulatory reform and improving Australia's infrastructure.

"The aim of the ALC Forum is to give the industry a chance to air issues, offer ideas and suggestions and to help ALC to define the issues it should be communicating to all governments," Mr Kilgariff said.

"I think I can safely say that this forum has achieved that, and that it has been perhaps the most successful ALC Forum ever.

"A major theme to come out, particularly on this second day of the Forum, is that Australia faces a major infrastructure task and yet the breadth and depth of the task is not well enough understood by the general public.

"Without greater public awareness of the need for greater investment in infrastructure and continual reform of regulatory regimes in the logistics industry, governments will continue to put their priorities elsewhere.

"To date, ALC has built up good relations with governments at all levels and on both sides of politics. But it now seems quite clear that we as an industry will have to go further.

"Our industry now has the task of giving the public a greater understanding of the relationship between, on one hand, infrastructure investment and streamlined supply chains, and, on the other hand, economic growth and increased living standards.

"Bernard Salt presented the underlying source of the future infrastructure challenge – retiring baby boomers and the consequent shrinking tax base.

"A number of panelists pointed to the difficulty of overcoming fears of failure and the difficulty in getting funding for infrastructure.

"We have heard that industry members often have competing aims and priorities.

"But we also heard that there are ways, particularly through ALC, that we can get better results for our industry through co-operation and agreements of industry priorities.

"We have been presented with the challenge of how to tap into the large sources of the money in superannuation funds to provide long-term investment in major infrastructure. We must follow that through.

"We must also continue to work together as an industry to implement practical measures that improve heavy vehicle safety.

"The ALC Forum has given government, our industry and the wider community an enormous amount to think about, and – more importantly – act upon, in this election year and beyond," he said.

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