



Important Milestone Reached On National Transport Regulation, But The Journey Is Far From Over

The commencement of the National Rail Safety Regulator (NRSR) yesterday and the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) today marks an important milestone in the establishment of national transport regulators, however the journey for truly national laws and regulation in the logistics industry has only just begun.

“At this important juncture, ALC recognises and applauds the leadership of the Council of Australian Governments, federal Minister Anthony Albanese and all transport ministers; without their support and commitment this important national reform would never have reached this critical stage,” said Michael Kilgariff, ALC Managing Director.

“We also recognise the enormous amount of work that has gone into creating these two new bodies by the staff and boards of the NRSR and the NHVR, and the work being carried out by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority which will become the body responsible for domestic commercial vessel safety.

“ALC has supported the establishment of national logistics regulators to drive productivity, efficiency and safety improvements in the industry, but there is more work to be done to ensure the estimated \$30bn in economic benefits from these important reforms are fully realised.

“A national law applied consistently around the country for road and rail transport will assist operators to develop business systems that are consistent throughout Australia and which will boost productivity, increase efficiency and ultimately reduce supply chain costs that are passed on to consumers,” he said.

Mr Kilgariff welcomed the NHVR taking responsibility from today of its first tranche regulatory responsibilities – the Performance Based Standards Scheme and the National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme – and said he looked forward to further regulatory reforms being implemented to deliver on the anticipated benefits of the heavy vehicle reform, which is estimated at some \$12 billion.

“For example, there are some important goals that need to be achieved before the NHVR becomes the ‘one-stop-shop’ for a range of transport services for the heavy vehicle industry from the middle of 2013,” he said.

“One of these is ensuring the necessary steps are taken to deliver a truly national regime for administering access applications for key transport routes which are currently the responsibility of state, territory and local governments.

“This involves finalising the necessary guidelines and regulations that will dictate when and how the owners of bridges and roads can permit heavy vehicle operators to access routes connecting freight generating areas, with air and sea ports, intermodal terminals and markets.

“It is critical that this work is done in a timely fashion and takes into account the views of industry, as more equitable access arrangements will lead to improved productivity.

“Ultimately, we would like to see a culture shift within government agencies at all levels, where asset owners increasingly regard their role as ‘asset managers’ rather than ‘asset protectors’ – hopefully the NHVR can help facilitate this culture shift.

“It also remains a concern to ALC that Service Level Agreements between the NHVR and the states have not been completed as these will dictate who ultimately does what and for how much – both of which are critical issues for ALC as these costs will ultimately be borne by industry.

“ALC would like to see these documents made public so it is transparent what services jurisdictions will provide the NHVR and how much they will be paid for providing those services.

“ALC believes those funding services – heavy vehicle operators – have a right to access information about the services being provided to ensure they are receiving value for money and are not being used as a general revenue source to fund non-logistics related services,” he said.

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