

12 August 2016

Mr James Collett
General Manager, Rail and Intermodal
Infrastructure Investment Division
Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development
111 Alinga Street
Canberra ACT 2601

Draft National Rail Vision and Work Programme – ALC Response

Dear James

The Australian Logistics Council (**ALC**) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the National Rail Vision and Work Programme.

ALC acknowledges the time constraints which have led to a relatively short consultation period on the National Rail Vision and Work Programme. However, as outlined in previous correspondence to the Department, it is unfortunate that industry was afforded a limited time frame to provide comment on the paper. ALC believes there are potential significant ramifications from the proposals and initiatives that will flow from this work.

Indeed, the collaboration between government and industry to develop and implement reform aimed at improving productivity, competitiveness and safety will provide a platform for all key stakeholders to construct and implement future investment decisions and logistics solutions for freight producers. The financial, economic and social benefits of such collaboration accrue to shareholders, industry and the general public.

ALC would therefore welcome the opportunity for a more formal dialogue between ALC members and the Department to further discuss the direction of this work programme.

A summary of the major issues raised by members is provided below.

ALC generally supports the high level aims of the draft National Rail Vision, particularly the harnessing of new technologies (that do not prejudice safety outcomes) and the position that jurisdictions should work to ensure common pricing principles are applied for both rail and road access.

Given the last point, ALC seeks confirmation there will be a full exchange of information between the National Rail Vision Working Group and the Heavy Vehicle Road Reform project (**HVRR**).

Members are also of a view that as passenger rail is largely a jurisdictional responsibility the focus should be on a national 'freight' rail vision.

It is also noted that while environmental planning and corridor protection is discussed at the front of the paper, the issue doesn't appear to be dealt with in the summary of proposed rail activities contained in the attachment (**proposed activities**).

This was a central issue discussed in the ALC 2016 elections priorities document *Getting the Supply Chain Right*.¹

ALC believes there is a need to ensure that planning documents deliver buffer zones/land use setbacks from rail corridors that prevent urban encroachment from inhibiting the 24/7 operation of freight logistics chains.

This could include the preparation and implementation of a National Corridor Protection Strategy to protect existing and future freight corridors.

Accordingly, so the efficiency of the freight chain can be maximised, ALC would suggest that one of the proposed activities should be how the development of a National Corridor Protection Strategy can be advanced.

Another proposed activity could be the development of a standard measure of performance of both above and below rail operators.

Finally, it is noted one of the proposed activities is an 'investigation of opportunities for the next wave of National Rail Safety Regulation Reform'.

This proposed activity should be expanded.

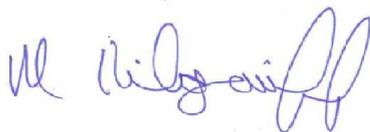
As ALC indicated in its 15 December 2015 submission² on the *Australian Government's Freight Rail Policy Objectives* discussion paper, the task of harmonising Australian law regulating the movement of freight by rail should be expedited.

Accordingly, the review recommended to the Government by Ernst & Young identifying all legislation (including planning instruments and environmental management legislation) impacting directly on the operation of rail freight in Australia should be commissioned and managed as a proposed activity under this work programme.

In conclusion, ALC members believe that this is a very important stream of work. However, it is critical that momentum is maintained to deliver the reforms necessary to enhance the productivity of the Australian rail freight industry. Therefore, ALC looks forward to a timetable being published shortly setting out when activities identified under the work programme will be completed.

Please contact me on 0418 627 995 or at Michael.kilgariff@ustlogistics.com.au should you wish to discuss this matter.

Yours sincerely



MICHAEL KILGARIFF
Managing Director

¹ [Getting the Supply Chain Right – 2016 Election Priorities Document](#)

² [ALC Submission – Draft Discussion Paper on Australian Government Rail Policy Objectives \(15 December 2015\)](#)