

The NSW Freight Transport Advisory Council (FTAC) provides strategic advice to the NSW Government on freight transport strategies, policies, and projects in NSW. The Council also provides a link between the Minister for Transport and the freight transport sector.

FTAC Meeting 29 August 2023

Members of the NSW Freight Transport Advisory Council (FTAC) met on Tuesday 29 August, for their first meeting with the Hon. Jo Haylen as Minister for Transport. The new Secretary for Transport NSW, Josh Murray, was also in attendance.

The appointment of three new members to the group by Minister Haylen further broadens the capability of the Council and represent transport workers' perspectives. The appointments demonstrate the government's commitment to constructive engagement with people in the transport industry. The new appointees are:

- Alex Claassens, NSW Secretary and National Executive Member, Rail, Tram and Bus Union
- Richard Olsen, NSW State Secretary, Transport Workers Union
- Paul Garrett, Deputy Secretary, NSW (Sydney), Maritime Union of Australia.

Minister's address / NSW Government Transport Priorities

Minister Haylen spoke with members about her key transport priorities for the NSW Government and the government's ongoing commitment to support the growing freight task. The Minister emphasised the need for a non-partisan approach to achieve the significant and important reforms necessary for the transport sector, as well as national cooperation and coordination between federal, state and local government.

Minister Haylen acknowledged the shifts in the landscape since many of the policy frameworks were formed as well as the independent reviews being considered by government, providing a timely opportunity to inform the future strategy for freight. In particular the Minister noted the NSW policy relating to ports, rail freight and heavy vehicles are to be reviewed, recognising the interconnected nature of the supply chain. The Minister committed to identifying strategic solutions and, importantly, putting a plan into action to deliver the necessary reform agenda. Preserving industrial land and freight corridors was also recognised as a critical enabler for freight to operate productively, as well as essential in servicing communities.

The discussion covered key priority areas for members, including, skills shortages, Sydney Train's network access arrangements, workforce shortages, heavy vehicle rest areas, decarbonisation, interoperability and harmonisation across networks, safety, worker well-being and maximising NSW export markets.

The Minister encouraged the council to formulate their priorities and looked forward to ongoing engagement as they worked through this significant agenda.

Tolling Review

Members were engaged by Transport NSW Deputy Secretary Trudi Mares and Executive Director Rachel Simpson in an in-depth discussion on the significant policy review into motorway pricing reform across New South Wales. The Tolling Review is being undertaken by Professor Allan Fels AO, former chairman of the Australian Competition & Consumer Commission (ACCC), and Dr David Cousins AM, former Chair of the Prices Surveillance Authority and Director of Consumer Affairs Victoria and has been commissioned by the NSW Government to lead an 'overhaul of the toll network'.

Members provided a range on comments back to the review team, including the need for further refinements to the classification of vehicle types and sizes, and ensuring the fee structure and charging system remained integrated between road and rail so that unintended market conditions were avoided.

An interim report from the Tolling Review is scheduled to be delivered at the end of 2023 and a final report by end of July 2024.

Members were encouraged to provide any further insights on freight considerations directly to the Tolling Review Secretariat.

Ministerial attendance

- Hon. Jo Haylen – Minister for Transport
- Scott Gartrell – Chief of Staff to Minister for Transport

Member attendance

- Hon. Duncan Gay, Chair of Freight Transport Advisory Council
- Hermione Parsons, CEO Australian Logistics Council
- Neil Johns, Executive General Manager Namoi Cotton
- Wade Lewis, President Livestock Bulk and Rural Carriers Association
- Scott Walker, National Transport Manager Mondiale VGL
- Craig Carmody, CEO Port of Newcastle
- Les Logue, COO BlueStar Global Express.
- Warren Clark, CEO NatRoad
- Andrew Harding, Chair Freight on Rail Group
- Michael Gallacher, CEO Ports Australia
- Alex Claassens, NSW Secretary and National Executive Member, Rail, Tram and Bus Union
- Richard Olsen, NSW State Secretary, Transport Workers Union
- Paul Garrett, Deputy Secretary, NSW (Sydney), Maritime Union of Australia.
- Austin Vella, Chair Road Freight NSW (Apology)
- Marika Calfas, CEO NSW Ports (Apology)
- Paul Digney, Managing Director Qube (Apology)
- Caroline Wilkie, CEO Australasian Railway Association (Apology)
- Rick Dani, Head of Store Delivery Woolworths Group (Apology)
- Geoff Crouch, Executive Director Ron Crouch Transport (Apology)

TfNSW representatives

- Josh Murray, Secretary, Transport for NSW
- Matt Fuller, Deputy Secretary Regional & Outer Metropolitan
- Scott Greenow, A/Executive Director, Freight Branch
- Jen Travis, Director, Customer Engagement and Delivery, Freight Branch
- Bianca Slack-Smith, Director Policy and Regulatory Reform, Freight Branch

Presenters: Tolling Review

- Trudi Mares, Deputy Secretary, Greater Sydney, TfNSW
- Rachel Simpson Executive Director, Strategy & Implementation, TfNSW
- Sahar Shahin, Director Tolling PMO

FTAC Secretariat

- Angie Francisco, Senior Manager, Freight Branch
- Charith De Silva, Senior Stakeholder Engagement Officer Freight Branch
freight@transport.nsw.gov.au