

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

The NSW Freight Transport Advisory Council (FTAC) held its second meeting of the year on 30 July 2024. Summarised below are key areas of focus.

Minister's address / NSW Government Transport Priorities

The Minister highlighted the 2024-25 NSW Budget is another important milestone in transforming transport in our state. addressed FTAC noting Government priorities, including highlights from the recent budget for transport.

The Minister also noted the NSW Government has welcomed the Parliamentary Inquiry examining the significant pressures on heavy vehicle drivers, particularly managing fatigue and how these pressures impact road safety as well as drivers' ability to meet industry demands and legal obligations. The government has supported six out of the nine recommendations of the Parliamentary Inquiry including the need for improved workforce skills training and pathways and management of heavy vehicle usage.

Bays Port has been identified as a critical part of Sydney's infrastructure development, with opportunities for growth and improvement.

The Cabinet Office is reviewing the future of the working harbour and is expected to deliver a report in coming months. FTAC noted the critical importance of protecting Glebe Island, consistent with previous advice to Government relating to industrial lands more broadly. Minister Haylen welcomed input from FTAC in progressing the discussion in a positive way with the broader public on how to continue supporting both industrial and residential needs in the intervening period.

NSW Freight Policy Reform Program (Panel: Dr Kerry Schott, Lucio Di Bartolomeo, Dr Hermione Parsons)

Over 120 submissions were received on the policy reform Consultation Paper, Draft Heavy Vehicle Access Policy, and the implementation of the Port Botany Landside Improvement Strategy. All the submissions have now been published on the Transport project website.

Key themes and challenges for the freight transport sector highlight the need for better coordination and strategic planning. Issues include the fragmented rail systems in NSW, which impede efficient transport, and the scarcity of industrial land in Sydney. This land shortage drives up prices and forces businesses to relocate, complicating strategic planning and operational efficiency. To optimise resource use and minimise conflicts, it is crucial to integrate the needs of all stakeholders, including schools, housing, and industrial zones.

Additionally, the sector is grappling with issues related to resilience, skills shortages, pricing, and environmental impact. Technological advancements and efforts to improve interoperability are necessary for

streamlining logistics, and actionable steps with clear timelines are recommended to address these challenges and enhance overall performance. Consultation feedback is currently being reviewed and is assisting with the development of policy options that will optimise the freight system.

Industrial lands

Included as a component of the NSW Freight Policy Reform, the Independent Advisory Panel led a discussion around the preservation of industrial lands and the complex issue of balancing this with different land uses. Current challenges include inadequate supply and limited access to industrial land due to infrastructure constraints, competition with Melbourne and Brisbane for industrial development and the need to develop a new definition of service land that considers factors such as proximity to transport infrastructure, availability of utilities and zoning and land use regulations. Concepts of co-existence between industrial uses and non-residential uses, housing developments, residential housing design and modifications to developments are key elements that need resolution for the proper management of freight vehicles, garbage collection and nighttime economy activities within urban areas.

Strategic Regional Integrated Transport Plans

The government has committed to developing strategic regional integrated transport plans to replace and supersede regional planning. These plans will link to population housing supply forecasts and integrate with the NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's nine NSW regions. The plans will be developed in three tranches, starting with Hunter and South East & Tablelands, followed by Central Coast, Illawarra-Shoalhaven, Central West & Orana, and finally, New England Northwest, North Coast, Riverina-Murray and Far West. The process involves detailed information gathering and stakeholder engagement. Transport will consult with the freight sector on each region, to address supply chain issues and identify constraints and opportunities.

Updates from Infrastructure and Transport Minister's Meeting (ITMM)

A number of matters of relevance to freight, particularly in relation to heavy vehicles and rail, have recently been considered by the Infrastructure and Transport Minister's Meeting:

- It is expected that the National Transport Commission will deliver a Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) legislative package to Ministers for consideration in December 2024
- The HVNL Decision Regulation Impact Statement (D-RIS) will propose amendments to the HVNL in the areas of fatigue record keeping, fatigue enforcement and the new National Auditing Standard
- Ministers agreed to recommendations providing access for heavy vehicles that are longer (19m to 20m), heavier (general mass limits to match current concessional mass limits), and higher (4.3m to 4.6m height) subject to adequate safety assurances.

Attendance

Minister's Office

- Hon. Jo Haylen, Minister for Transport
- Helen Machalias, Senior Policy Advisor to Minister for Transport

FTAC Membership

- Hon. Duncan Gay, Chair NSW 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 (Apology)
- 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.
- Marika Calfas, CEO NSW Ports
- Caroline Wilkie, CEO Australasian Railway Association
- Rick Dani, Head of Store Delivery Woolworths Group (Apology)
- Geoff Crouch, Executive Director Ron Crouch Transport (Apology)
- Austin Vella, Chair Road Freight NSW
- Les Logue, General Manager BlueStar Global Express
- Paul Digney, Managing Director Qube (Apology – represented by Ben Pratt)
- Craig Carmody, CEO Port of Newcastle

TfNSW Representatives

- Matt Fuller, Deputy Secretary Regional & Outer Metropolitan
- Scott Greenow, A/Executive Director Freight
- Bianca Slack-Smith, Director Policy and Regulatory Reform
- Angie Francisco, A/Director Customer Engagement and Delivery
- Simon Hunter, Chief Transport Planner

Freight Policy Reform Panel

- Dr Kerry Schott, Chair Independent Advisory Panel
- Dr Hermione Parsons, Member Independent Advisory Panel
- Lucio Di Bartolomeo, Member Independent Advisory Panel

NSW Dept. of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI)

- Jane Grose, Director, Employment Land Delivery Program, DPHI
- Gregory Joblin, Team Leader, Metro & Cities Strategic Planning, DPHI

FTAC Secretariat

- Peta-Lee Smith, A/Senior Manager Customer Engagement, Freight Branch
- Charith De Silva, Senior Stakeholder Engagement Officer, Freight Branch

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