

STATEMENT ON THE 4 SEPTEMBER 2023 MEETING OF THE HEAVY VEHICLE NATIONAL LAW REFORM IMPLEMENTATION STEERING COMMITTEE

22 September 2023

The eighth meeting of the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) Reform Implementation Steering Committee meeting was held via Teams on Monday 4 September 2023.

The Steering Committee was attended by the following members:

- Mr Jim Betts, Secretary, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts (DITRDCA)
- Mr Josh Murray, Secretary, Transport for NSW (NSW)
- Mr Geoff Magoffin representing Ms Sally Stannard, A/g Director-General, Department of Transport and Main Roads (Queensland)
- Mr Gary Swain, A/g Secretary, Department of State Growth (Tasmania).

The Steering Committee continues to receive independent advice from:

- Mr Ken Kanofski
- Mr Sanjiv Sathiah, Director, Transport and Infrastructure Policy, Australian Local Government Association.

Prior to the September meeting, members of the Steering Committee met with representatives from a range of industry groups for a discussion on the progress of the HVNL reform program. The industry dialogue on 23 August 2023 provided an opportunity for a longer and more in-depth discussion on key reform areas. The industry discussion included a joint presentation from the National Transport Commission (NTC) and DITRDCA on the status of both the legislative and non-legislative reforms and highlighted key areas where industry input and engagement will be needed. During the discussion, industry representatives highlighted areas of interest and concern to them and sought clarification on several specific issues. In response to questions it was confirmed that while vehicle length was outside the scope of the current Australian Design Rule review of vehicle width, NTC will consider vehicle length as part of their reform work. NTC will also consider the impact of proposed changes to mass limits on specific vehicle combinations as part of their current legislative reform activities.

It was also clarified that the proposed change to vehicle width limits (2.5-2.55 metres) has not yet been approved and the decision will be communicated when finalised.

In addition, there was a discussion on the use of telematics as a way of allowing greater heavy vehicle network access, including the types and uses by different jurisdictions. It was acknowledged that work in this area is important and will be progressed as part of the overall reform program.

A report outlining progress on the non-legislative reforms was circulated to industry members following the meeting and has also been published on the DITRDCA website.

The National Transport Commission (NTC) provided their regular update on their HVNL legislative reform program. The Steering Committee noted that activities are progressing consistent with the milestones in the implementation plan and remain on track to meet the specified timeframes. Work is continuing to ensure that public consultation on the Consultation Regulation Impact Statement (C-RIS) commences on the 2 October 2023 target date. NTC also confirmed that work on mass and dimension changes (consistent with the HVNL reform package recommendations) will be included in the C-RIS and the proposals for consultation will include options that take account of the expected Euro VI changes.

The Committee acknowledged the ongoing consultation program the NTC is undertaking and the importance of ensuring industry remains engaged in the development of the legislative reforms.

The Steering Committee noted the work on implementing the non-legislative reforms is continuing. A representative from Victoria attended part of the meeting and gave a status report on the economic appraisal work they are coordinating (reform 2.7). The methodology that has been developed to undertake assessments of identified routes on the National Road Transport Network (to be considered for as-of-right access) is being trialled on the Hume Highway and will be peer reviewed by Austroads.

The Steering Committee also agreed the intent of the Annual National Regulatory Forum (reform 4.4) had been met and the reform could be closed. The reform required the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) to hold an inaugural forum in late 2023 (and on an ongoing annual basis) for industry to engage with enforcement agencies to ensure greater consistency in enforcement. The Steering Committee noted the NHVR convenes an Industry Reference Group with relevant agencies where strategies for ensuring enforcement is more consistent are discussed. This group already meets at least twice per year and on this basis the Steering Committee was satisfied the reform measure had been appropriately addressed.

The next meeting of the Steering Committee will be on 16 October 2023.