



The Hon Michael McCormack MP

Deputy Prime Minister
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development
Leader of The Nationals
Federal Member for Riverina

The Hon Scott Buchholz MP

Assistant Minister for Roads and Transport
Federal Member for Wright

MEDIA RELEASE

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DELIVERING A MORE SEAMLESS NATIONAL FREIGHT SYSTEM

The Liberals and Nationals today announced details of a vision for improving the efficiency of freight transport networks throughout Australia.

Deputy Prime Minister, Nationals' Leader and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development Michael McCormack said the Government commissioned the industry-led *Inquiry into National Freight and Supply Chain Priorities* in March 2017 to help better position Australia to meet its future freight productivity challenges.

"Freight volumes are expected to double and the nature of the freight task is changing, yet there is more to do to continue to grow freight productivity," Mr McCormack said.

"That's why this week's Budget has a rolling \$100 billion infrastructure plan – something I call the 'age of infrastructure'.

"The Liberals and Nationals Government, together with industry and the state, territory and local governments, is working on developing a National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy to make sure we can meet that growing task and keep freight moving efficiently.

"A 20-year vision is needed for coordinating investment, regulation, and planning across all modes – road, rail, air and maritime – to drive real improvements to Australia's freight productivity.

"We are improving our road freight network through a number of investments under the Government's \$100 billion infrastructure plan, such as the \$4.5 billion *Roads of Strategic Importance* initiative.

"That means more jobs. That means safer roads. And that means a stronger economy."

Mr McCormack confirmed a Budget commitment of \$8.5 million would be used to settle the design of a National Freight Data Hub, which will help business and governments plan and make better operational and investment decisions.

"Industry has called for better freight data and we are delivering. We know better data makes better decisions and that means jobs and opportunities can flow, especially in the regions," Mr McCormack said.

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The iMOVE Cooperative Research Centre report, published today, analyses the freight data needs of industry and government and suggests how improving ways of collecting relevant data could improve freight sector planning and operations.

Assistant Minister for Roads and Transport Scott Buchholz said *Delivering on Freight*, also published today, showcases the Liberal and Nationals Government's significant and action-oriented commitments.

"Our commitment to the National Action Plan includes investing to remove pinch points in key freight corridors, improving heavy vehicle access to local roads and improving the availability and ways we can share freight data," Mr Buchholz said.

Mr Buchholz also said the Liberal and Nationals' Government is also contributing \$8 million for the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator to streamline the approval process for road access by heavy vehicles.

"The investment complements the Liberal and Nationals Government's agreement with State and Territory Ministers to implement 12 recommendations from the review of Oversize Overmass vehicle access arrangements, making it easier to do business without compromising safety.

Mr Buchholz said the NHVR is seeking agreement from councils and road managers on the new draft National Class 1 Agricultural Vehicle and Combination Notice, which will harmonise state-based notices into a single national notice and update standards.

"This is just another sensible reform to make life easier for farmers, enabling them to move the majority of their equipment between farms and ensuring they can do business more efficiently," Mr Buchholz said.

In May 2018, the COAG Infrastructure and Transport Ministerial Council committed to developing a 20-year National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy which will form the basis of an integrated approach to improving the connectivity of all freight modes and supply chains.

Implementation of the Strategy by industry and all three tiers of Government from 2019 will enhance the competitiveness of all Australia's regions in domestic and global markets and help us achieve truly liveable, efficient and affordable cities and regional centres.

For more information on the National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy and details of the Federal Liberal and Nationals Government's contributions to the Strategy and National Action Plan visit: <https://infrastructure.gov.au/transport/freight/national-strategy.aspx>.

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