**REMOTE AREAS CONSULTATIVE GROUP**

**COMMUNIQUE**

**MEETING OF 10 JUNE 2021**

The Remote Areas Consultative Group (RACG) consists of government and industry representatives from the Northern Territory, Queensland, Western Australia and South Australia.

A full list of member organisations is provided as an attachment to this Communiqué.

The purpose of the RACG is to act as an advisory body to provide a remote areas perspective on proposed and existing transport reforms.

Chairing and Secretarial responsibilities for the RACG are managed by member jurisdictions on a two-year rotation of hosting duties. It was transferred from the Department for Infrastructure and Transport South Australia to Main Roads Western Australia for the 2021-2022 rotation. Western Australia acknowledges the administration of the RACG by South Australia over the past two years.

* **Economic Stimulus**

Members noted the anecdotal observations from various jurisdictions of the range of road works and infrastructure projects currently underway as a result of economic stimulus.  It was also noted that while the investment is very welcome, more funding is required, especially on road improvements for freight routes in remote areas.

* **COVID-19**

Members commented that this is still an issue affecting industry, for example driver testing and border control (biodiversity) processes

* **NHVR Road Train Notice**

Industry peak bodies in jurisdictions operating under the National Heavy Vehicle National Law (NHVR) welcomed the availability of the Road Train Notice.

* **HVNL Review**

Members noted the progress of the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) Review.

* **Shortage of Truck Drivers**

Members discussed the ongoing issue of the shortage of truck drivers, deliberated regarding driver training and experience, noted the recent implementation of WA’s truck driver training scheme, and agreed to raise the profile of the driver competency issue at a national level.

* **Emissions standards and the national truck fleet**

Members discussed the anticipated impacts of the next emissions standard, and noted the success of Government incentives in renewal of the truck fleet.

* **Truck driver rest areas and facilities**

Members noted the ongoing government funding of Road Train Assembly Areas (RTAAs) and rest bays, and expressed the need for further funding to address the requirements identified by industry.

* **Remote Areas Cross Border Access Working Group**

Members agreed that WA will progress preparation of a proposal about general heavy vehicle operations in remote areas for the Austroads Freight Task Force, circulate it to members out of session, and report back at the next RACG meeting.

**ATTACHMENT 1**

|  | **Organisation** |
| --- | --- |
| **Chair** | Main Roads Western Australia  |
| **Secretariat** | Main Roads Western Australia |
| **Western Australia** | Main Roads Western Australia  |
|  | Livestock and Rural Transport Association of WA |
|  | Western Roads Federation |
| **South Australia** | Department for Infrastructure and Transport (SA) |
|  | Department for Infrastructure and Transport (SA)  |
|  | Livestock and Rural Transporters Association of SA  |
|  | South Australian Road Transport Association  |
| **Queensland** | Department of Transport & Main Roads (QLD) |
|  | Queensland Trucking Association |
|  | Livestock and Rural Transporters Association of QLD |
| **Northern Territory** | Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (NT) |
|  | Northern Territory Road Transport Association  |
|  | Northern Territory Road Transport Association |
| **National Bodies** | National Transport Commission (NTC) |
|  | National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) |
|  | National Road Transport Association |
|  | Australian Road Research Board (ARRB) |
|  | Truck Industry Council |
| **Observers** | Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications (Cwth) |
|  | Transport for New South Wales |

**ATTACHMENT 2**

Under the Terms of Reference, the Group is hosted by each jurisdiction for a period of two years. The agreed hosting sequence appears on the table below:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Host Jurisdiction** | **Round 1** | **Round 2** | **Round 3** |
| Western Australia | 2004 - 2006 | 2012 - 2014 | 2021 - 2022 |
| Queensland | 2006 - 2008 | 2014 - 2016 | 2023 - 2024 |
| Northern Territory | 2008 - 2010 | 2016 - 2018 | 2025 - 2026 |
| South Australia | 2010 - 2012 | 2019 - 2020 | 2027 - 2028 |