Priorities and actions for the freight system

Moving Freight outlines a number of strategies and actions that will help to achieve the six objectives outlined in the Transport Coordination and Delivery Plan (TCDP) and to support the goals of a safe and secure, efficient and reliable and integrated freight system (refer **Figure 12**).

Figure 12: Aligning TCDP objectives to Moving Freight

Priority one: expand the use of rail freight

North Coast Line, Western and South Western rail systems

The rail system supports a significant portion of general freight movement between south-east Queensland and the northern and south-western Queensland markets. The existing capacity and performance of the North Coast Line, Western and South Western rail systems is increasingly affecting the reliability and timeliness of rail freight between these markets. This is adversely influencing existing and potential freight customer's perceptions and/or preparedness to invest in rail freight growth opportunities.

The North Coast Line is a vital north-south route supporting general rail freight movement throughout Queensland. There are however, a number of issues confronting the line, which impact on its reliability and ability to support future freight growth. These include ongoing maintenance requirements, inability to operate longer train lengths, limited path availability, potential flood risks and relative priorities of multiple line managers.

The Western and South Western rail systems are an important freight route between the Darling Downs, South West Region and the Port of Brisbane, which predominately supports the movement of exports from the agricultural and mining sectors. The single-line tunnel crossing of the Great Dividing Range is the biggest constraint to growth in freight flows to the Port of Brisbane. The rail system is also limited by poor alignment, low axle capacity and restrictive structures. Identifying the needs of industry will be critical to enhancing existing rail corridor capacity and maximising the Queensland Government's investment in additional passing loops and lowering of tunnel floors on the Toowoomba Range.

The North Coast Line, Western and South Western rail systems are similarly impacted by metropolitan and long distance regional passenger rail demands, with passenger and freight trains sharing parts of the same rail corridors and network passenger services prioritised over freight.

Competing passenger rail demand is a critical issue for freight movement, particularly in the metropolitan area. The metropolitan network provides access to key intermodal rail terminals and the Port of Brisbane is the nexus of the majority of rail freight services to and from northern and western Queensland and interstate. Currently, passenger rail demands often limit existing rail freight services to off-peak commuter time periods with increasing passenger services likely to limit freight growth opportunities.

While there is an obligation on rail network managers to ensure delayed passenger services run on time, further consideration needs to be afforded to, and balanced with, matters such as obligations in relation to allocated train paths, timetabling demands, network operations and service provisioning. Segregating passenger and freight rail networks is a further option for mitigating these respective service conflicts.

Mount Isa rail corridor

The Mount Isa rail corridor is a vital link connecting mining, agricultural and broader regional activity in Queensland's north-west to the Port of Townsville as well as key population centres along the Queensland coastline. The corridor predominantly supports mining exports (such as concentrates and refined metals), mining inputs (such as acid, sulphur, fuel and cement), intermodal and some livestock movements.

Currently, the line is subject to a number of constraints that impact on its ability to support and grow existing freight tasks. This includes short passing loop lengths, limited passing opportunities, access to the Port of Townsville, inefficient rail and terminal operations, challenging geology (black soil plains) and complex hydrology (linked drainage systems and flood plains).

The further extraction of significant mineral deposits in the northern Galilee Basin (for example coal) could place increasing demand on the rail corridor to support industry development and economic growth. This will necessitate long-term corridor planning and investment in response to quantifiable demands, and greater supply chain coordination to support the efficiency and capacity of the line.

To support the development of the rail corridor, the Queensland Government has formed the North Queensland Resources Supply Chain Steering Committee to inform the coordination of future infrastructure investment and operations. The Queensland Government is also willing to consider contestability options for the corridor, as outlined by the Queensland Commission of Audit,[19] to enhance supply chain integration.

Rail terminals

The performance of rail freight services is dependent on the availability and efficiency of freight terminals. Existing terminals in key population centres such as Brisbane, Rockhampton, Mackay, Townsville and Cairns are generally duplicated, constrained by adjacent land-uses, and support single-user operations. Ideally, these terminals could be redeveloped and consolidated in a more complementary and coordinated manner consistent with rail system and industry needs. This includes greater consideration of multi-user operations, industry relationships, land-use requirements, and options to facilitate economies of scale. It is also important that potential terminal locations in regional areas are similarly developed.

Growth in rail freight demand is expected to have implications for existing freight terminal capacity in south-east Queensland. While future freight terminal locations have been identified at Bromelton and Ebenezer, further consideration needs to be given to future terminal capacity on the northside of Brisbane. Additional capacity in this location has the potential to support North Coast Line rail freight services, existing and future industry development and rail connectivity to the Port of Brisbane. Ultimately, the development of future freight terminals in south-east Queensland is likely to be influenced by the available capacity and potential of the Acacia Ridge Rail Terminal site as well as commercial interests.

Acacia Ridge Rail Terminal

The Acacia Ridge Rail Terminal is the state's largest freight terminal and handles the majority of inter-state freight and a large volume of intra-state freight. The terminal is also surrounded by rail related and dependent industry, and has the potential to increase its capacity and efficiency through redevelopment. In the short-term, the redevelopment of this site would provide significant benefits including:

- improved terminal freight handling arrangements and efficiencies
- better internal terminal linkages
- enhanced provisioning for truck queuing and stabling
- enhanced suitability for a broader range of rail freight tasks (shuttle services)
- better integration of surrounding industrial land uses within proximity of, and dependent on, the terminal.

In the longer term, opportunity exists for a terminal at Bromelton and/or Ebenezer, once the potential capacity at Acacia Ridge is exhausted. In particular, the Bromelton site is a State Development Area linked to the existing interstate rail line and the future Inland Rail alignment, with the potential to support a range of domestic and international freight tasks.

In regional Queensland, growth in mining inputs and agricultural exports provides an opportunity for further rail terminal development, and hence support a potential mode shift for these tasks from road to rail. In particular, growing demand for mining inputs to the Bowen and Galilee basins provides the opportunity to develop rail terminal handling capability between the ports of Mackay and Gladstone and areas such as Emerald and Alpha. This opportunity has the ability to deliver a range of freight system benefits such as:

- getting freight on rail
- enhancing rail investment
- providing a direct connection to sea freight markets
- increasing rail competition (by attracting new rail operators)
- developing regional distribution facilities
- reducing heavy vehicles on the road network.

However, further investigation is necessary to determine potential terminal locations that complement the logistics requirements of these types of tasks.

Rail access

Increasing mining exports and potential growth in agricultural production in western communities is placing demands on the rail system to support diverse and competing freight tasks. Typically, the certainty and high volume associated with coal has led to the long-term contracting of rail capacity. This is often perceived at the expense of agricultural commodities and general freight, which are less likely to commit to long-term access agreements due to risks associated with seasonal variation and/or demand fluctuations.

To provide certainty of rail access to the agricultural sector and the general freight requirements of regional communities, rail access is preserved by state legislation for non-coal rail traffic across the rail network. The use and/or potential reallocation of these train paths will therefore need to be considered in relation to agricultural and regional community rail freight needs.

Rail is expected to continue to have a key role in supporting the agricultural sector, particularly in relation to the transportation of livestock and grain. To support the intent of the Queensland Government's Agriculture Strategy to double the value of food production by 2040, it is important to work with the agricultural sector to identify potential rail haulage opportunities. This includes assessing the merits and level of support for proposed inland storage facilities and associated rail haulage demands.

The existing Government Transport Service Contracts provide certainty until 2015 for livestock and general rail freight services. These contracts were designed to provide equitable access to freight services and facilitate regional development and employment. However, the basis for these contracts beyond 2015 require further monitoring and review to ensure they respond to industry and community needs, deliver value for money, and reflect emerging rail developments.

Grain train

Port of Brisbane rail shuttle service

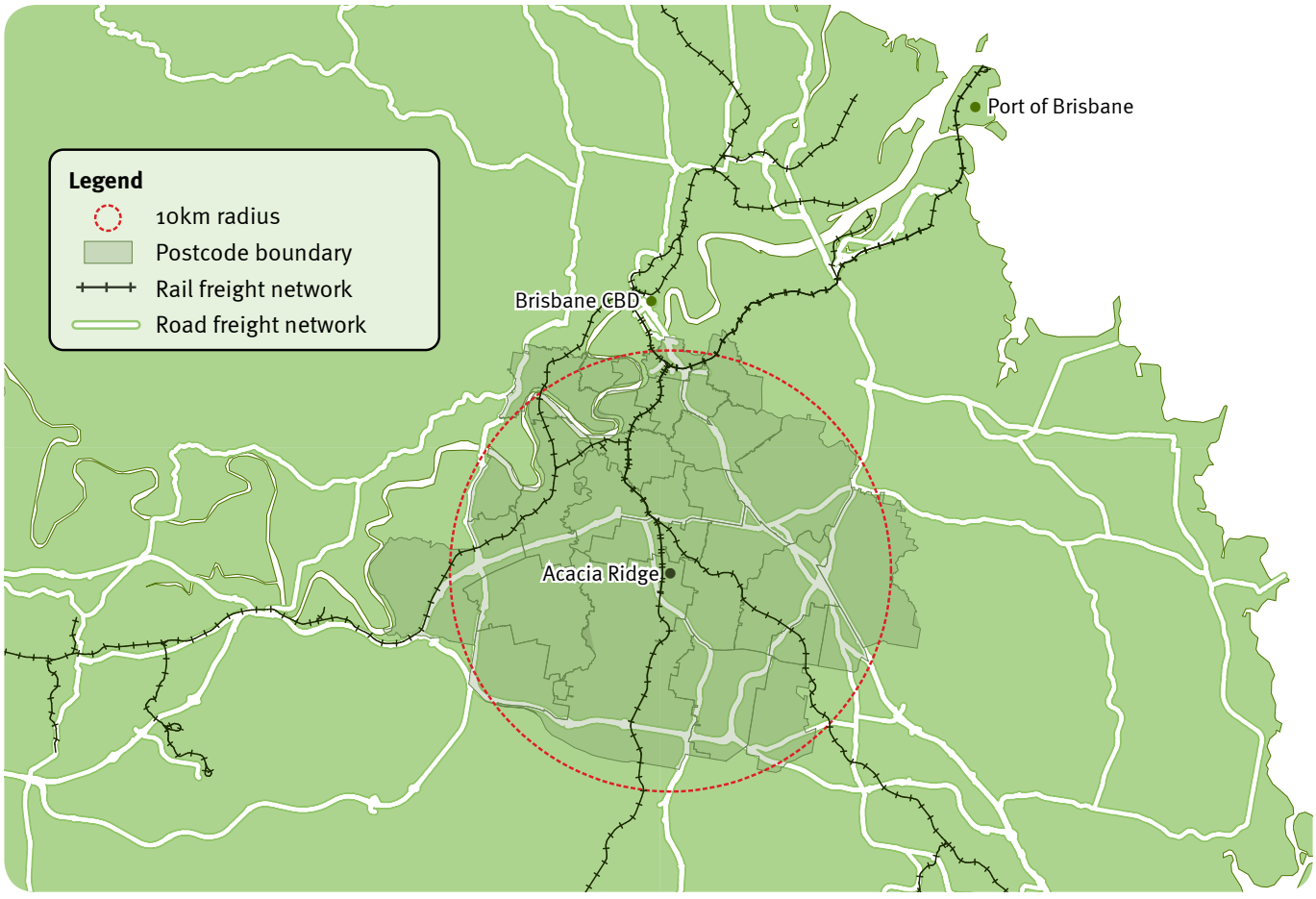
The *Port of Brisbane Import/Export Logistics Chain Study (2013)* indicates that container throughput for the Port of Brisbane is anticipated to grow significantly and with its near 94% share of the state task this presents considerable opportunities for rail.[20] For example, currently over 20% of Port of Brisbane container imports (full) have a destination within 10km of the Acacia Ridge Rail Terminal (refer **Map 8**).[21]

The existing freight handling facilities at Acacia Ridge could support a rail shuttle service to and from the Port of Brisbane, should it be priced competitively with trucking. It is anticipated that this type of rail shuttle service would deliver a range of freight system benefits in terms of:

- minimising truck queuing and waiting times
- congestion
- road demand
- vehicle maintenance and running costs
- managing potential driver fatigue.

The department is also exploring the ability of rail to support container movements through the port to other locations across the state. Other potential locations include the northside of Brisbane, Bromelton and Toowoomba which would also support demand for containerised agricultural exports from south-west Queensland.

Map 8: Import container destinations near Acacia Ridge



Priority one actions

Actions	1–2yrs	3–5yrs	6–10yrs
Identify with industry rail freight and broader supply chain requirements to inform rail planning and development for the North Coast Line, including the need for longer trains and supporting rail freight terminal.	✓		
Identify with industry rail freight needs for the Western and South Western rail systems to inform future rail capacity and performance investment requirements to support mining and agricultural sectors.	✓		
Identify freight requirements to inform long-term planning and development of the Mount Isa rail corridor, including contestability options to enhance supply chain integration.		✓	
Review and clarify the intent of rail passenger priority and its impacts on freight.	✓		
Undertake a pre-feasibility study for a new rail freight terminal on the northside of Brisbane.		✓	
Undertake a pre-feasibility study with industry to inform the redevelopment of the Acacia Ridge Rail Terminal.	✓	✓	
Assess opportunities to segregate the passenger and freight network in the metropolitan network.			✓

Actions	1–2yrs	3–5yrs	6–10yrs
Preserve train paths on regional rail lines for non-coal rail services in response to agricultural and broader community freight demands.	✓	✓	✓
Work with the agricultural sector and rail service providers to develop options to enhance the efficiency of rail haulage for agricultural products, particularly grain and livestock.	✓		
Review rail Transport Service Contracts supporting regional freight and livestock to ensure they align with industry and community needs and deliver value for money.	✓	✓	
Work with industry to establish a rail shuttle to support a greater portion of container movements between Acacia Ridge and the Port of Brisbane.		✓	
Identify with industry opportunities for rail to support container movements between the Toowoomba/Bromelton/ northside of Brisbane and the Port of Brisbane.			✓
Identify suitable Inland Rail terminal sites that promote regional port throughput and development.	✓	✓	

Cattle train

Priority two: increase road freight network access

First and last mile

There are instances where local government roads generally provide a critical link between places for freight such as commercial and industrial sites, and the state's strategic freight network. However, access to these roads for higher productivity vehicles is often resisted by local government due to concerns such as:

- lower levels of road network structure capabilities
- limited communication and awareness of the performance benefits offered by these types of vehicles
- concerns about higher risk exposure to the local network without the ability to recover maintenance costs.

These concerns typically lead to 'first and last mile' access issues, which impact on industry's ability to achieve more efficient and productive freight movement. Therefore, working with local government to support and enhance the connection between local, state and national road networks will be critical to delivering a more seamless national approach to freight. This includes supporting local network assessments, communicating emerging access issues and sharing assessment knowledge and information.

Higher productivity vehicles

Over the years, Queensland has become a national leader in facilitating high productivity freight vehicle access across the road network.

The level of access afforded to these types of vehicles has resulted in a range of benefits, such as:

- lower transport costs for the user (which supports industry productivity and economic development)
- minimising adverse transport impacts on the environment, community amenity and congestion
- minimising transport demand (for example, reduction in the number of heavy vehicle movements)
- enhancing transport safety (through safer vehicle designs)
- maximising the utilisation of the existing transport infrastructure.

To support the application of high productivity vehicles, Queensland is actively assessing the state's road network to support freight growth and liaising with road network owners to improve heavy vehicle access.

Since 2010, approximately 728km of strategic roads for Performance Based Standards (PBS) Level 2B access in south-east Queensland and the broader Townsville area have been approved. A further 2,360km of roads are currently under consideration.

To meet industry's growing needs and the desire for greater freight productivity and efficiency, the department is committed to identifying and assessing strategically significant road freight routes across the network. The increasing cost of assessing routes, combined with specific industry access requests are impacting on the timeliness of related route assessments for potential access for these vehicles.

To accelerate the application and route assessment process, the department is pursuing a process for applicants to undertake their own assessment of routes and any associated works to inform access decisions. The benefits of an industry driven route self-assessment approach are that it enables industry to influence the assessment process, choose their own PBS route assessor and potentially enable industry to achieve early economic and productivity advantages.

PBS level 2B vehicle

OSOM movements

Demand by industry for OSOM movements across the state road network is increasing due to the resources sector, and in particular LNG. In 2012–13 22,555 OSOM and special purposes vehicle permits were issued, an increase of 23% from the previous financial year.[22] In this timeframe the department also processed and issued 1083 performance-based vehicle and non-standard freight vehicle permits and 522 multi-combination vehicle permits.[23]

The timeliness of access assessments for OSOM movements as well as high productivity freight vehicles can have a significant effect on broader industry operations and productivity. With the quantum of OSOM movements alone increasing annually, a more efficient permit system is necessary to satisfy this demand.

To support the timing of OSOM and other high productivity vehicle movements, the department is improving its heavy vehicle access systems and processes. This includes the development of automated systems, streamlining assessment processes, amending work flow requirements and communicating pre-approved routes for defined vehicles. To better facilitate OSOM demands across the state, the department is also seeking to identify a strategic trunk network for OSOM movement. This will require understanding emerging load requirements, assessing the capability of routes (geometrically and structurally) and mapping the network.

Heavy vehicle options for agriculture

The department has developed a range of heavy vehicle policies and access schemes, which deliver productivity and efficiency benefits for the agricultural sector. The driver for these policies and schemes, which are expected to continue, has arisen through a collegiate and responsive approach to addressing emerging sectoral needs. Key examples include:

- high productivity vehicle access (that is Higher Mass Limits), to the state-controlled road network
- advanced fatigue management guidelines for livestock transport operators
- oversize overmass permits associated with the movement of harvest equipment
- agricultural vehicle guideline for excess dimension agricultural vehicles
- grain harvest management scheme.

Developing broader heavy vehicle access options for the sector, including agricultural vehicles such as harvesters and other farm related equipment, will be critical to sectoral growth and competitiveness. It will also be fundamental to getting produce to market and facilitating the government's aim of doubling the value of food production by 2040.

Cotton loading, Dalby

Road access to ports

Queensland ports represent key places for freight with total freight throughput valued at $92 billion in 2011–12. While rail is an important role in transporting the majority of bulk exports, road has a critical role in facilitating the balance including niche mining and agricultural exports and general cargo imports and exports predominantly via containers.

As indicated, the majority of the state's container trade passes through the Port of Brisbane. Currently, about 94% of total container movements to and from the Port of Brisbane are moved by road.[24] The significant growth forecast in container trade for the port is anticipated to place further pressure on the existing road freight network. With the majority of container imports having a destination in south-east Queensland, it is expected that road will continue to fulfil a major role in supporting this type of freight task, particularly with the inability of rail to provide a door-to-door service.

Similarly, key regional ports such as Townsville, Mackay and Gladstone have an important role facilitating increasing mining inputs (such as diesel, plant and machinery). In addition, the Port of Townsville also has role in exporting niche ores and concentrates, particularly from the North East Minerals Province. Generally, the size of these tasks and/or commodity characteristics is highly suited to road. With growth in mining activities anticipated to continue in the future, increasing road demands will heighten the need for more productive freight solutions.

To support future freight growth to and from ports, the department is continuing to work with industry and local government to identify higher productivity heavy vehicle access requirements and options between key industrial precincts and regions. This includes identifying strategic routes and facilitating adequate investment to support heavy vehicle access.

Priority two actions

Actions	1–2yrs	3–5yrs	6–10yrs
Work with local government and industry to identify and resolve first and last mile road access issues.	✓		
Develop a planned PBS Level 2B route assessment programme for strategically significant road freight routes across Queensland.	✓	✓	
Develop policy and guidelines for industry to undertake route assessments and associated works to inform road network owner access decisions for PBS Class B vehicles.	✓		
Develop and implement improved heavy vehicle access systems and processes for OSOM and high productivity vehicle movements.	✓		
Identify a strategic trunk network to support the movement of OSOM loads.	✓		
Develop options to extend permitted heavy vehicle access to existing road networks for the agricultural sector.		✓	
Work with industry to identify access requirements to support higher productivity heavy vehicle access to key places for freight such as ports and major industrial precincts and regions.		✓	

Priority three: facilitate greater freight infrastructure investment

The Queensland Government is committed to investing in affordable transport infrastructure where opportunities to maintain, or make better use of, existing infrastructure have been exhausted. However, the increasing demand for funding is exceeding the financial resources available to state as well as federal, and local governments. Clearly improved mechanisms are necessary to inform the relative contribution and responsibility of industry beneficiaries and broader stakeholders to support future freight infrastructure provision.

While industry and freight customers invest in the broader freight system, their capacity and preparedness to contribute to network infrastructure investment is generally influenced by factors such as:

- conflicting business priorities
- commercial benefits/attraction for investment
- capacity to assimilate increased costs associated with increased charges without impacting on their commercial viability and competitiveness
- confidence in regulatory environment.

Despite this, there are instances where industry has indicated to government a willingness to contribute to infrastructure investment and development, where commercial benefits can be realised.

To better support opportunities for industry to provide voluntary contributions for network enhancements, the department recognises the need for clear policy and/or guidelines. Such a policy potentially offers a range of benefits including:

- increasing overall investment in the freight network
- providing greater prioritisation of freight projects
- providing a basis for aligning the priorities of stakeholders
- accelerating investment opportunities that deliver productivity gains and economic advantages
- ensuring investment decisions reflect a 'fit for purpose' standard.

To facilitate broader investment in the freight network, the Queensland Government is willing to consider alternate road, rail and waterway investment opportunities that deliver greater industry supply chain productivity and efficiency returns. For road, this includes contributing to the direction of nationally led road pricing and governance initiatives such as the national Heavy Vehicle Charging and Investment Reform project.

From a rail freight perspective, this will involve assessing unsolicited project proposals, rail contestability and commercialisation arrangements that enhance corridor performance and freight system capacity to develop new freight markets. In regard to waterways, the department will work with industry in relation to investment proposals that promote freight movement opportunities that minimise network congestion, demand and environmental impacts.

The department is also interested in encouraging collaborative industry freight investment decisions with respect to provisions of the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010*. Currently, opportunities exist for freight operators to exploit greater freight benefits through the use of common user freight terminals, trains and road services. Such arrangements have the ability to increase the productivity, availability and reliability of freight services as well as the overall capacity of the freight system.

Bridge replacement works at Branch Creek, Moura

The Queensland Government has identified a number of transport investment priorities that it is pursuing, which provide freight benefits. Key areas of focus currently underway include:

- Bruce Highway Action Plan
- Warrego Highway Upgrade Strategy
- development of the Toowoomba Range second road crossing business case
- additional rail passing loops and tunnel floor lowering on the West Moreton Rail System across the Toowoomba Range
- Beerburrum to Nambour rail duplication on the North Coast Line.

Other investment priorities for the government are major transport routes for agricultural products and roads supporting resource communities. Existing highways recognised as critical to supporting regional communities and the mining and agricultural sectors include:

- Flinders/Barkly highways
- Capricorn Highway
- Peak Downs/Gregory highways.

To ensure future investment in these highways is adequately coordinated and informed, upgrade strategies will need to be developed to support freight reliability, connectivity and safety.

To better inform collaborative stakeholder freight investment, it is important that the department identifies a list of multi-modal freight supply chain investment opportunities across the state. This list will be responsive to satisfying emerging freight demands and supply chains, and inform transport infrastructure planning and programming activities. It will enable the identification of freight investment priorities subject to broader stakeholder funding contributions, including future submissions to the Australian Government under the Nation Building Program.

To inform the list of freight investment opportunities, the department is also developing a Heavy Vehicle Action Plan that will identify road infrastructure needs to improve heavy vehicle access and better support OSOM movements. The plan will inform opportunities to enhance the development and productivity of supply chains, particularly for the mining and agricultural sectors. It will also inform specific industry opportunities for investment as well as existing state programming of road investment and maintenance priorities.

Priority three actions

Actions	1–2yrs	3–5yrs	6–10yrs
Develop policy that supports and facilitates voluntary industry investment in the development of the freight network.	✓	✓	
Identify rail contestability opportunities that enhance rail freight operations and performance.	✓	✓	
Facilitate opportunities for collaborative industry investment in common user freight terminals, trains and road services with respect to *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* provisions.		✓	
Develop upgrade strategies for the Flinders/Barkly highways, Capricorn Highway and Peak Downs/Gregory highways to support freight reliability, connectivity and safety for agricultural and mining communities.	✓		
Develop a list of multi-modal freight investment opportunities across the state to inform broader stakeholder funding contributions.	✓		
Develop a heavy vehicle action plan that identifies specific road infrastructure needs to improve vehicle access and better support OSOM movements, particularly for the mining and agricultural sectors.	✓		

Priority four: support future freight growth

To effectively support increasing population and international trade demands further emphasis must also be placed on improving the freight system's ability to support freight growth, facilitate industry development and deliver positive economic outcomes.

Freight planning

Future freight planning therefore needs to deliver improved performance levels to support the growing task. This includes improving the system availability, reliability, accessibility and cost associated with system use. Key considerations in future transport planning activities for improving freight system performance include:

- integrating freight modes
- identifying and enhancing connections to/from freight generators, activity centres and nodes
- minimising and/or segregating freight and passenger conflicts (where practical)
- minimising freight impacts on the community including amenity, safety, environment and wellbeing
- reflecting national, state, regional and local freight movement requirements
- protecting the freight network from inconsistent land-use and development
- preserving new corridors to support freight growth
- coordinating with existing and future land uses.

With freight volumes expected to grow in the future, it is important that planning activities strongly focuses on future freight needs. In particular, key corridors where increasing emphasis is required include:

- North Coast Line and Bruce Highway - supporting population growth demands along the Queensland coastline.
- Warrego and Cunningham highways, Western and South Western rail systems - linking agricultural and the Clarence-Moreton and Surat Basin mining regions in southern Queensland to the Port of Brisbane.
- Coal rail systems to the ports of Brisbane, Gladstone, Hay Point and Abbot Point.
- Mount Isa rail corridor and Flinders Highway - connecting north west agricultural and mining regions to the Port of Townsville and processing centres.
- Peak Downs Highway linking Central Queensland agricultural and Bowen Basin mining regions to the port and/or industrial centres in Mackay.
- Capricorn Highway and Central Rail Line linking agricultural areas and the Bowen Basin in central Queensland to the Port of Gladstone and processing centres.
- Inter-regional road and rail connections in urban centres, particularly to ports and industrial precincts.

Bruce Highway Upgrade, Cooroy to Curra

The development of coal reserves in the Galilee Basin will require the greater focus on new and existing transport corridors. While new dedicated rail corridors have been identified to support mining outputs, further planning and assessment of road and rail corridor opportunities associated with mining input tasks will be necessary. Road and rail corridors with the potential to support mining inputs to this basin include the Gregory Developmental Road, Peak Downs, Gregory and Capricorn highways; and the Central, North Coast and Blackwater rail lines.

Inland Rail

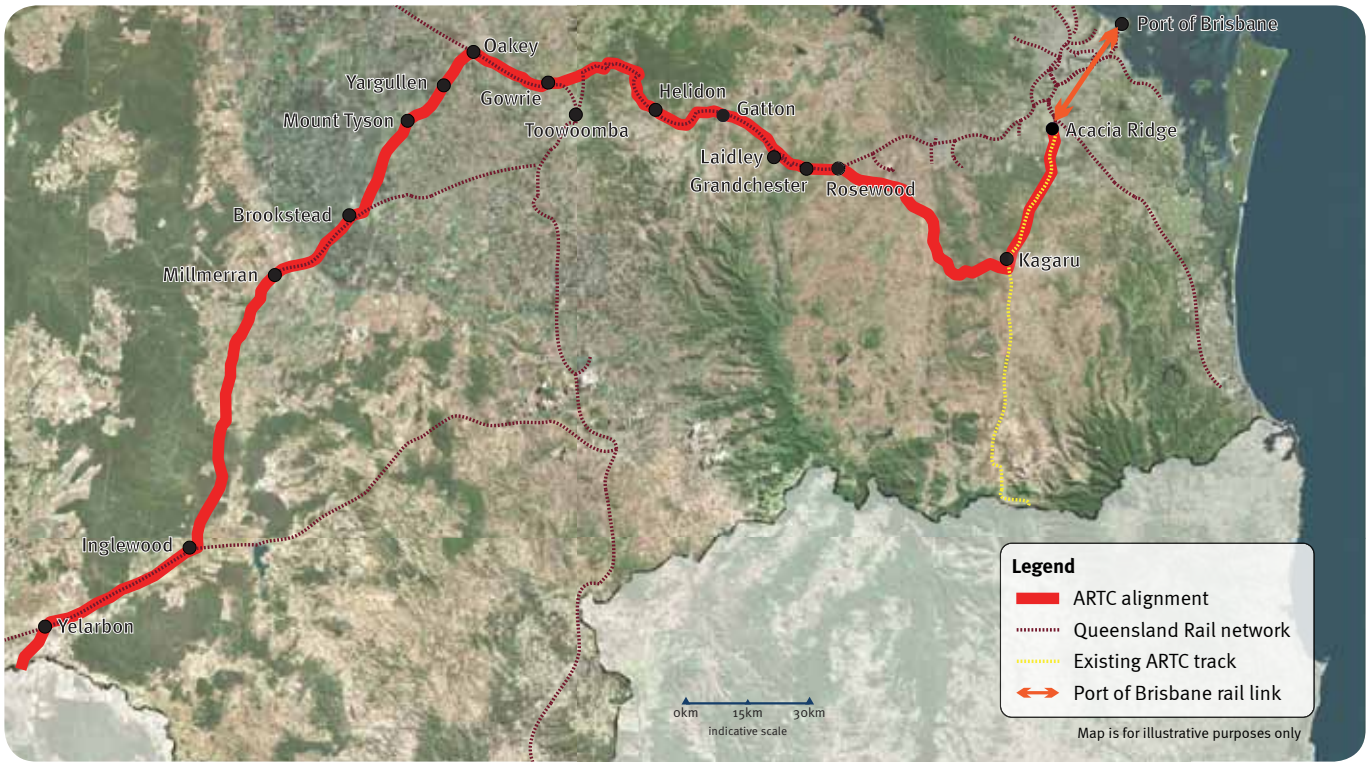
Future freight growth between Queensland and southern states will also drive increasing focus on planning for interstate connections, including a future inland railway between Melbourne and Brisbane (refer **Map 9**). The Queensland Government acknowledges the benefits of an inland railway, that also potentially connects to the Port of Brisbane, would deliver in supporting the future national freight task as well as providing a long term rail solution for exports via the West Moreton Rail System. It also recognises the concept of an inland railway as a national development project and will work with the Australian Government to progress this initiative and maximise associated benefits to the state.

The department is also willing to work with industry in the planning of unsolicited privately funded transport corridors. This includes the Port of Brisbane's proposal for a new rail freight link between the port and the interstate rail corridor. Such proposals will be assessed in relation to economic and transport system benefits and their relative impacts on the community.

The major flood events that occurred across the state in 2011 and 2013 have further emphasised the importance of planning a freight system that is reasonably resistant to, and can recover from adverse weather. Understanding the potential flood impacts across the network will inform future freight system development to ensure ongoing functionality during such events.

There are parts of Queensland's freight network that are regularly affected by annual flooding, particularly northern sections of the North Coast Line and Bruce Highway, limiting its ability to support critical freight movement. With future freight demand also likely to increase along Queensland's coastline longer-term potential exists for coastal shipping as an option to enhance network resilience and broader system capacity.

Map 9: Indicative Inland Rail alignment



Corridor preservation and land use planning

Preserving future freight alignments will be critical to facilitating freight movement to and from growing markets and promoting broader economic development opportunities. The Queensland Government is proactively preserving, or seeking to preserve, a number of future transport corridors, many of which provide future capacity to ports. Key examples include:

- Gowrie to Grandchester and Southern Freight Rail corridors – linking south-western Queensland to the Port of Brisbane
- Townsville Eastern Access Rail Corridor – linking the North West Queensland Minerals Province to the Port of Townsville
- Mackay Ring Road – linking to Port of Mackay to Bowen Basin and Bruce Highway
- Townsville Ring Road Stage 4 – linking to Port of Townsville and Bruce Highway
- Walkerston Road Bypass – linking to Bowen Basin
- Rockhampton Ring Road (Yeppen North and Yeppen South).

Efforts in the past to accommodate population growth and residential demand has led to planning decisions that are now creating conflicts for the existing network. This manifests in the form of residential encroachment on freight routes and precincts limiting freight operations and future growth. Protecting existing and future freight corridors and precincts from urban encroachment and broader commuter impacts will be essential to realising the potential of the freight system.

To mitigate future network and residential conflicts, existing and future transport corridors and nodes are proactively preserved via the *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*. Through this Act, the state has set out the requirements (the state's interests) for local planning schemes and development assessments. It also initiates assessments of development applications, which may impact on state interests.

To facilitate the future growth of freight movement, increasing attention will be necessary to ensure adequate protection of the following types of places for freight:

- trading ports
- airports
- intermodal rail terminals
- industrial precincts
- State Development Areas.

Land-use planning activities are critical to maintaining the existing freight network as well as identifying future industrial land opportunities with effective road, rail and port links. To date, these types of activities have assisted the alignment of future industrial land with road, rail and port links. Key examples include the identification of State Development Areas at Gladstone, Townsville, Abbot Point and Bromelton due to the strategic significance to supporting future domestic and international trade.

Priority four actions

Actions	1–2yrs	3–5yrs	6–10yrs
Ensure transport planning reflects future freight requirements.	✓	✓	✓
Work with the Australian Government to develop an inland railway that maximises the benefits to Queensland.	✓	✓	✓
Identify system integration requirements to support the viability of coastal shipping.		✓	
Map flood immunity of the freight network to inform freight system development and resilience requirements.	✓		
Identify and preserve future corridors and places for freight growth.	✓	✓	✓

Priority five: better freight policy and information

Policy and regulation

The continuous movement of freight across jurisdictional boundaries highlights the need for better coordinated government freight policy and regulation supported by greater collaboration with stakeholders.

Various inter-governmental mechanisms such as Council of Australian Governments, Standing Council on Transport and Infrastructure, and Transport and Infrastructure Senior Officials Committee, have been used to streamline national freight policy and regulation.

The Queensland Government is committed to supporting existing inter-government mechanisms as well as working with broader advisory groups, such as Infrastructure Australia and the National Transport Commission, to deliver a better coordinated national freight environment. Key initiatives for Queensland in relation to the development of national freight policy and direction include the National Land Freight Strategy (NLFS) and the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR).

The NLFS provides direction for issues surrounding the best use of infrastructure, integration of freight and land-use planning, capacity for growth and responsiveness of infrastructure to growth in freight demand. It also provides clear direction for state-based freight strategies.

The NHVR, hosted in Queensland, is Australia's first national regulator for all vehicles in excess of 4.5 tonnes gross vehicle mass. It provides a single point of contact providing centralised services and information to heavy vehicle owners, operators, drivers, and transport agencies across the nation. A critical area of focus for the NHVR is the administration of one set of laws for heavy vehicles under the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL). This will require the harmonisation of existing heavy vehicle legislation operating across all states and territories. The HVNL will reduce differing compliance and legislative requirements on heavy vehicle operators across jurisdictions.

Other important national initiatives the department is actively supporting include:

- the introduction of electronic work diaries to manage the risk of driver fatigue. Electronic work diaries provide operators with accurate driver information, enabling them to better monitor fatigue levels and regulated work and rest hours.
- broader national in-vehicle telematics strategy that provides greater safety opportunities for the road freight sector. This includes better compliance monitoring of vehicle operations (for example, speed and fatigue) and promoting the safer use of vulnerable infrastructure by matching vehicles with roads and bridges.

Freight information

Freight information and data is a critical input to the managing and monitoring the performance of the freight system. This includes maintaining the system to a 'fit for purpose' standard and building new infrastructure. While governments have broad access to information about elements of the system they lack detailed information about the level, nature and timing of freight demand across all modes to accurately inform specific system and corridor needs. This type of information is generally available to, and held by, industry as a result of commercial negotiations with freight customers.

There have been instances where industry has shared freight data and information for the benefit of freight system decision making. However, industry's willingness to share information has generally been limited due to intellectual property and commercial-in-confidence issues. Therefore, developing a renewed focus on collating freight information and data cooperatively with industry that respects intellectual property and commerciality issues is necessary to ensure the right freight priorities are identified and addressed. This will need to be complemented by the development of systems processes and models that facilitate data collection, analysis and system decision making.

System management

Technology has a key role in forming the development, management and use of the freight system. This includes informing demand, optimising network utilisation, enhancing system capacity and monitoring operations.

To support the management and safety of the freight system, the department is pursuing the development of a range of initiatives to monitor heavy vehicle operations. Examples include intelligent access program, in-vehicle technology, on-board mass monitoring, automatic number plate recognition, weigh-in-motion and static and mobile speed cameras. The application of these types of technology will support better use of the freight system. For example, the application of on-board mass technology provides a greater level of certainty to network mangers on overall vehicle mass, increasing the opportunity to afford higher levels of access to freight vehicles.

The department's intent is to also utilise these technologies in both a strategic and tactical context to guide compliance efforts. This will assist in profiling high risk activities and guiding specific activities to enhance the operation of the freight system.

To assist the application of these technologies, the department is developing a framework to inform associated compliance risks, monitoring system development priorities, integration issues and overall direction.

Priority five actions

Actions	1–2yrs	3–5yrs	6–10yrs
Actively contribute to the implementation of the NLFS to ensure alignment with Queensland's freight plans and priorities.	✓		
Continue participating in the NHVR forward program including the introduction of the Heavy Vehicle National Law.	✓		
Develop systems processes and models that facilitate freight data collection, analysis and system decision making.	✓	✓	
Develop a framework that informs the use of innovative technology that enhances the use of the freight system and informs heavy vehicle safety and compliance activities.		✓	

In-vehicle technology

Priority six: engage industry for better and safer freight outcomes

The inter-dependent nature of government and industry roles in relation to the movement of freight emphasises the need for greater collaboration to plan and deliver meaningful freight solutions. While there is increasing acknowledgement by government and industry to work together, further consideration needs to be afforded to:

- improving existing stakeholder communication
- maximising the effectiveness of freight advisory bodies and industry forums
- sharing freight information and data
- exploring broader mechanisms for facilitating stakeholder contact and input.

Working with partners

As previously indicated, the Queensland Government is participating in a number of inter-governmental mechanisms to deliver various national freight initiatives. It is also committed to working with research and development partners, special interest groups and industry associations to better inform freight movement solutions.

As a national leader in heavy vehicle access, the department continuously supports the Austroads freight research program aimed at improving road freight operations and modal integration issues. In particular, it is highly committed to research and development for the Performance Based Standards (PBS) scheme and expanding the network for complying vehicles. This includes reviewing the level 3 and 4 PBS criteria with a view to developing more realistic standards to attract greater industry take up.

The Queensland Government also has strong working relationships with various peak industry groups (such as the RACQ, AgForce, Queensland Farmers Federation, agricultural representative bodies, individual stakeholders and the Local Government Association of Queensland) on freight related issues and regularly engages with these parties.

Freight councils

In Queensland, there are two key freight councils designed to directly advise the government; the Road Freight Industry Council (RFIC), and the Queensland Transport and Logistics Council (QTLC). The RFIC is an advisory body established under ministerial direction to represent the heavy vehicle industry needs. It is designed to support the development of strategic and operational road issues and regulations. It also supports communication and consultation between the Queensland Government and industry on the growing demands of the road freight task.

The QTLC was established in 2008 to support wider contact and collaboration with industry in relation to freight policy, planning, investment and solutions. The QTLC has a strategic multi-modal focus with a broader interest in the development and operation of supply chains, and is therefore the peak advisory body to the government on broader freight and logistics issues and challenges in Queensland.

The Queensland Government recognises the benefits that freight councils provide in informing the freight agenda and is supportive of their existence. However, existing freight councils need to continue to deliver value and meaningful contributions to industry and government. A key challenge for existing councils is to provide coordinated and effective representation of diverse member interests and issues.

To ensure the achievement of specific government priorities, the department will also give consideration to the need to establish industry specific freight advisory bodies where there are multiple competing sectoral interests. For example, this includes the development of an agricultural advisory body to support the implementation of Queensland's Agriculture Strategy.

Safety

With increases in freight activity likely to compound any adverse community perceptions on safety, the department is taking action to enhance the safety of freight movement across the network. For rail this includes conducting regular safety audits of operators, overseeing compliance with rail safety legislation, working with operators to promote opportunities to improve safety management and improving level crossings.

From a road perspective the safe movement of freight is supported by a various existing activities such as facilitating access for safer innovative heavy vehicles, providing safer roads, employing technology to monitor compliance of heavy vehicle operations and managing heavy vehicle driver fatigue. These types of activities will be coordinated through the *Queensland Road Safety Action Plan 2013-2015* by the development of an action plan with stakeholders to improve heavy vehicle safety. This will enable heavy vehicle safety issues to be managed collectively with broader road safety issues.

To address specific heavy freight vehicle driver safety and fatigue concerns, the department is also working with key road safety stakeholders to develop and deliver a program to build and/or upgrade heavy vehicle rest area sites across the state. This involves attracting adequate funding from the Australian Government, industry and/or other sources and engaging with stakeholders to ensure these sites are appropriately located, adequately signed and suited to drivers needs.

Priority six actions

Actions	1–2yrs	3–5yrs	6–10yrs
Contribute to the Austroads freight research program, projects and priorities.	✓	✓	✓
Monitor and review freight councils needs and effectiveness to deliver coordinated industry representation and interests.	✓		
Work with industry and interest groups to develop and implement a prioritised heavy vehicle rest area program.	✓		

Rest area on Carnarvon Highway, Roma