



# Remote Areas Consultative Group Communiqué

The Remote Areas Consultative Group (RACG) consists of the four 'remote' jurisdictions, namely, Northern Territory, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia and is sponsored by the Chief Executives of the respective jurisdictions. The purpose of the RACG is to act as an advisory body to provide a remote areas perspective on proposed and existing road freight reforms.

As part of a two year jurisdictional hosting sequence, Queensland hosted its final RACG meeting in Brisbane on 7 July 2016. Once again the meeting was very successful and well attended by state and territory governments, the National Transport Commission (NTC), National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR), peak bodies associations and industry representatives.

## Summary of key points and meeting outcomes

- **National Remote and Regional Transport Strategy (NRRTS)** – The Northern Territory is implementing, monitoring and reporting against NRRTS in collaboration with jurisdictions.
- **Cross border road train operations and road freight - Project** – This project has identified core issues that limit seamless access for road trains across borders. A gap analysis was undertaken, which will inform the RACG Action Plan for the 2016/18 period.
- **Single and Twin Steer Axle Mass** – Industry recommend axle mass limits be increased on road train routes as some heavy vehicles are exceeding regulatory limits before entering service in those areas.
- **National Transport Commission** – In response to the outcomes of the 2015 independent expert panel review of the NTC, they will continue to transition their focus to high level strategic policy reform work. This includes the review of the Heavy Vehicle National Law investigative and enforcement Powers; the development of a National Land Transport Productivity Framework; production of a 'Who Moves What Where' report and providing strategic analysis to Ministers on the future of regulation through its Land Transport Regulation 2040 work. Other current strategic work includes identifying regulatory barriers relating to the introduction of automated road and rail vehicles in Australia, and developing a fit for purpose regulatory framework.
- **Community of Practice** – The Department of Transport and Main Roads has developed a Community of Practice in collaboration with the NHVR and Queensland Police Service relating to heavy vehicle operations in Queensland.
- **National Heavy Vehicle Regulator** - The NHVR Corporate Plan 2016 was released and the new Access Portal has commenced for operators to apply for permits online. The Road Manager Portal will commence in November 2016. A Program of Work is being developed for harmonisation of notices and notice maintenance for the National B-double Notice, National Higher Mass Limits declaration, National Road Train Notice, PBS Level 2 Notice and the transition of expiring notices and Over Size Over Mass.
- **Austroads Freight Program** – RACG members continue to have an interest in the Austroads Freight Program. The progress of several freight projects were discussed including:
  - Bridge Assessment Processes and Procedures
  - National Strategic Weigh in Motion Network
  - Identification of a closure risk indicator to support life-line routes
  - Re-assessment of Impacts of the Use of High Productivity Vehicles on Australian Highway Pavements
  - Remote and Regional Road Funding in Australia
- As part of the hosting sequence, the Northern Territory will host the RACG for the 2016/2018 period. The next RACG meeting will be scheduled for early 2017.

For further information, contact the RACG Secretariat on [freight@tmr.qld.gov.au](mailto:freight@tmr.qld.gov.au) or telephone (07) 3066 2517.