

PRESS ARTICLE

Title:	“Bigger trucks boost efficiency”
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Bigger trucks should be used more widely on key freight routes in NSW, Victoria and in Tasmania to boost efficiency and reduce fuel use and pollution, a new land freight strategy has proposed.

It also urges ministers to examine the use of road charges, making better use of existing infrastructure and fairer, more sustainable financing arrangements.

The recommendations are contained in the latest national land freight update released by Transport Minister Anthony Albanese on Friday. It will be considered by state and federal ministers

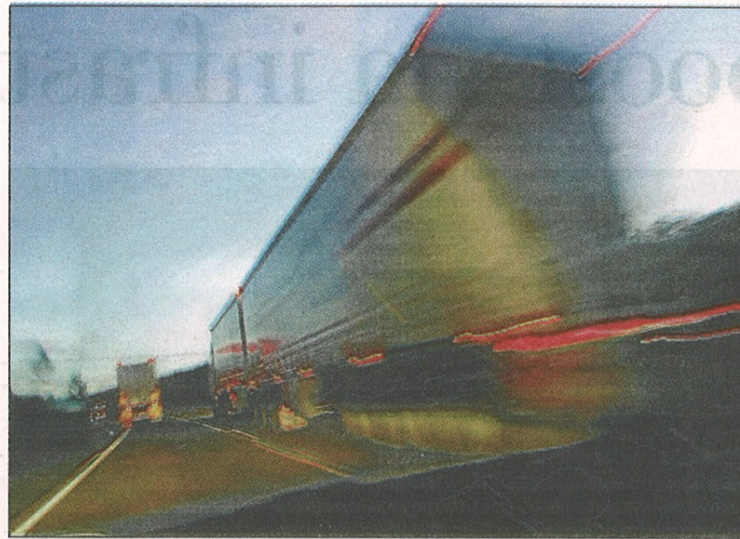
The report recommends greater use of B-Triple and B-Double trucks in NSW and Victoria on key freight routes such as the Hume Highway as well as major economic routes in Tasmania for a charge.

Australian Trucking Association chief executive Stuart St Clair said the move would not only boost productivity but improve road safety and reduce environmental impacts.

“It takes 42 semi-trailers to deliver a thousand tonnes of freight but only 20 B-Triples,” Mr St Clair said.

“If we take the example of moving a thousand tonnes of freight again by using B-Triples you would emit 32 per cent less carbon dioxide than the 42 semi-trailers you would otherwise need,” he added.

Michael Kilgariff, managing director of the Australian Logistics Council, which represents freight transporters, said the national strat-



A Council of Australian Governments road reform plan has proposed road charges for heavy vehicles and work has started on options. Photo: JUSTIN MCMANUS

egy would bring a more co-ordinated approach to maximising performance and safety.

The update developed by the National Transport Commission and Infrastructure Australia is a response to a discussion paper released by Mr Albanese in February 2011, which attracted more than 70 submissions.

The update says many submissions criticised efforts at transport reform in Australia as being “too slow” but identified urgently needed projects.

Apart from the B-Double and B-Triple trials, it suggests new transport corridors linking the ports of Esper-

ance, Port Hedland, Geraldton/Oakajee and Fremantle in Western Australia.

It also says South Australia needs better mining-port transport links.

In Queensland it suggests improved rail access from growing areas to the Port of Brisbane.

In launching the report, Mr Albanese said the freight network was the “lifeblood” of the economy, but added that it was struggling to cope with existing demand, let alone a doubling in freight volumes by 2030.

Mr Albanese said the Federal State and Territory governments had a unique opportunity to fix “the regula-

Getting moving

Priority projects

- **NSW and Victoria** trial high-productivity vehicles on the Hume Highway and on key roads to ports;
- **WA** New transport corridors linking the ports of Esperance, Port Hedland, Geraldton/Oakajee and Fremantle;
- **SA** develop the ports strategy and link to transport;
- **Queensland** considers dedicated interoperable rail freight access from new freight-generating areas to the Port of Brisbane.

SOURCE: INFRASTRUCTURE AUSTRALIA

tory and infrastructure failures which to some extent have held back our miners, manufacturers and farmers and cost the economy tens of billions of dollars in lost export earnings”.

Mr Albanese said road charging options would be examined. He cited a system in Germany where trucks were charged a distance toll through a black box attached to a vehicle.

A Council of Australian Governments road reform plan has proposed road charges for heavy vehicles and in July the body gave the green light for work to start on options.

But the strategy suggests road charges should only be imposed on a “limited number of roads”.

Transurban chief executive Scott Charlton, who runs the country’s largest toll road operator, has called for a national debate on transport charges to manage congestion and fund a huge backlog of road infrastructure.