

# Managing freight and heavy vehicle access for local government Councillor seminar

08 June 2023

# Indigenous acknowledgment

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I would like to respectfully acknowledge the Traditional owners of the land on which we are all meeting, and pay my respect to their Elders, past and present.

As an organisation representing all Victorian councils, on behalf of the MAV I also wish to acknowledge the Traditional owners from across the state.

I would also like to acknowledge and welcome any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people in the online audience today.

# MAV - Context

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- Managing freight and heavy vehicles is an important responsibility for local government
- An efficient supply chain is vital for local businesses and primary producers
- Councils must ensure that roads, bridges and other infrastructure assets are fit to safely carry the loads of heavy vehicles without causing undue damage
- Noise, vibration and air pollution can be important factors for communities, particularly in sensitive settings, times or locations
- All of us rely on efficient freight for our daily goods and services

## MAV - Context (ctd)

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- We know that rate caps are putting enormous strain on councils ability to serve their communities
- This year, the rate cap is one quarter of inflation rate
- In road and other construction and maintenance works, we know that costs are going up at the same time as contractors are becoming harder to engage
- Councils manage 87% of the road network and spend around 10% of budget on road maintenance
- We know that freight volumes are increasing and that many communities are still dealing with flood recovery
- Advocacy on these topics is one of our top priorities

# “Delivering the goods” (2018) is current State freight policy

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## Five priorities

- Manage existing and proposed freight corridors and places in conjunction with urban form changes
- Reduce the impact of congestion on supply chain costs and communities
- Better use of our rail freight assets
- Plan for Victoria’s future port capacity
- Stay ahead of the technology curve

## Four key objectives:

- Reducing the cost of doing business
- Improving the efficiency of moving freight while minimising adverse impacts
- Better connecting Victorian businesses with their local, interstate and export markets
- Providing sufficient future capacity

## Current State Government priorities

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- Interstate freight terminals (WIFT and BIFT)
- Air quality in inner West
- Decarbonisation
- Port rail shuttle

# Victorian council officer freight survey 2020

## Most important council freight issues

- Supporting local industry including primary producers
- Heavy vehicle impacts on roads and bridges
- Available funding to maintain and upgrade important freight connections

**84% of councils consider freight issues are growing** – this is even more so outside metro areas.

## Council desired support to better manage freight issues

- Better data on heavy vehicles using our roads (82%)
- Improved asset information for key roads and bridges (64%)
- Support with managing heavy vehicle permits (50%)

# First and last km engagements 2021

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## **Main first and last kilometre access *issues* include:**

- Road network conditions, infrastructure and geometry
- Poor transport integration with land use, either as result of poor planning or changes to land use or transport over time

## **Key *barriers* encountered when working with stakeholders:**

- Lack of knowledge about heavy vehicle regulations and requirements
- Resourcing of appropriately skilled and available people
- Understanding of key stakeholders and their roles and responsibilities

## **Collaborative relationships add value and support improved access**

- Improved knowledge and understanding between key stakeholders enables more informed advice and decision making

## ***Priorities* for improving first and last kilometre access include:**

- Shared understanding and improved collaboration
- Better data, information and systems



# First and last km engagements 2021

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## Good first and last kilometre access means:

- A fit-for-purpose road network
- Any restrictions on network access are soundly evidence based, carefully targeted and regularly reviewed
- Clear and accessible advice on any network restrictions, including permit requirements, is readily available to all key stakeholders
- Trained and adequately resourced people are available to assess any permits in a timely and informed manner
- Effective communication and engagement with key stakeholders inform and clarify changes to network use and management

The outcomes sought from good first and last kilometre access are that safety is ensured and that undesirable impacts of freight, such as infrastructure damage or degraded amenity, are minimised.

# Freight and heavy vehicle legislation overview

- As well as Council local laws, there are a range of relevant State and Federal legislation and regulations that must be considered as part of the authorising environment
- At a National level, the **National Transport Commission** leads national land transport reform. The **Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL)** regulates the use of heavy vehicles with a gross vehicle mass (GVM) of more than 4.5 tonnes
- In Victoria, the Transport Integration Act (TIA) sets out the overarching objectives and framework for managing the transport system. The Road Management Act and its associated regulations establishes a coordinated management system for public roads, both state and local
- For councils, the Local Government Act informs how councils can make decisions, consult with the public and have power over roads

# Freight and heavy vehicle policy overview

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## **Victorian Council freight plans**

- A quarter of councils, generally regional, are part of a regional freight plan
- Around 30% consider freight as part of their overall transport plan
- Around 40% don't have any sort of freight plan

***National freight and supply chain strategy*** (and associated action plan)  
2019 is the relevant national strategic framework

***Nation urban freight planning principles*** 2021 were recently agreed and provide guidance for planning decision makers to appropriately consider freight needs

# National Urban Freight Planning Principles (2021)

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1. Understand the value, needs and characteristics of freight movement and incorporate in strategic and statutory transport and land use planning
2. Safeguard the resilience of all major freight handling facilities and freight corridors within and between neighbouring jurisdictions, including local government areas
3. Identify and plan areas for new freight facilities and freight-intensive land uses
4. Plan for efficient freight movements and complementary land uses around freight facilities and precincts, including intermodal terminals
5. Promote building and precinct design and usage that take into account freight needs
6. Realise the importance of rest and refuelling facilities
7. Respond to changes in freight movements, including smaller scale freight movement and emerging technologies

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# GREEN TRIANGLE REGION FREIGHT ACTION PLAN

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CR KAREN STEPHENS  
GLENELG SHIRE COUNCIL



## Where it began ...

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- The Victorian and South Australian Government's united with local councils and industry in 2008 to launch the Green Triangle Freight Action Plan – the first bipartisan agreement of its kind.
- This document provided a strategic plan for future infrastructure projects and reforms to support growing timber trade and burgeoning industries such as mineral sands and agriculture.
- It identified the Green Triangle as one of Australia's most diverse regions with a broad economic base which required an integrated freight network, feeding exports to the Port of Portland.



## The Action Plan Update

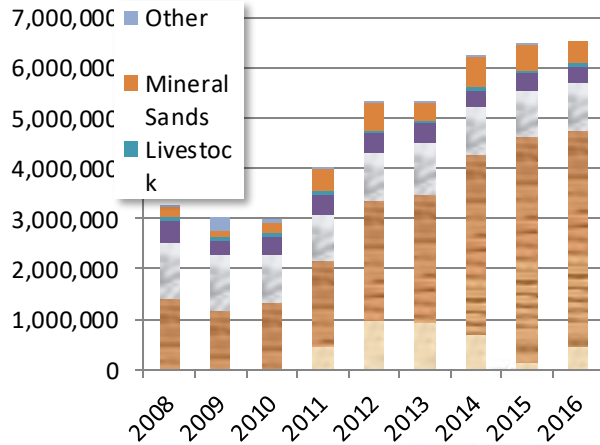
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The Plan was updated in 2016 following 18 months of industry research which focused on three key areas:

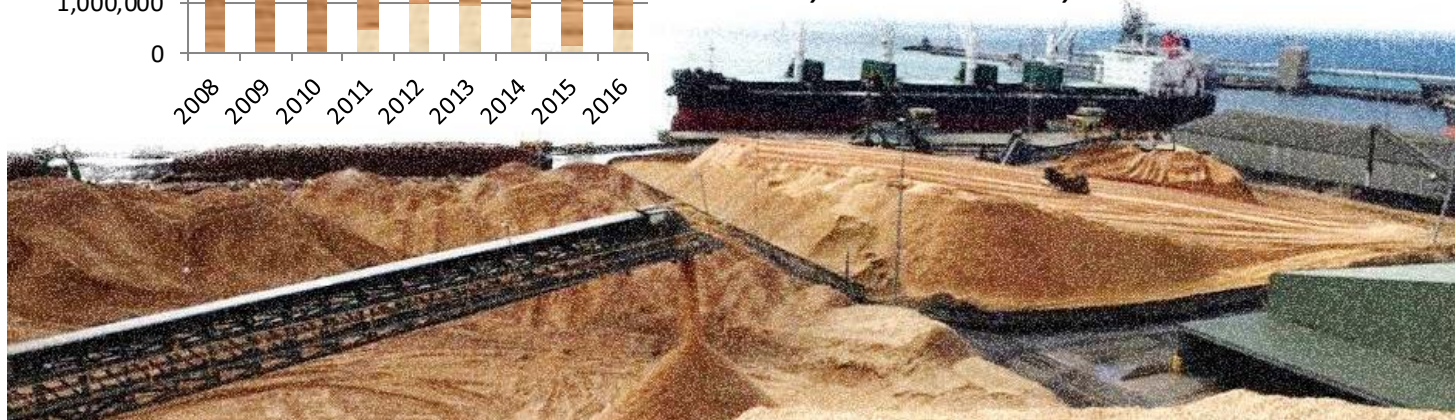
- Timber flow across the Green Triangle, focusing on key freight roads leading to the Port of Portland.
- The region's strong economic base, identifying local job creation and growth opportunities.
- Road infrastructure condition.



## The timber freight task in the Green Triangle region has grown significantly since 2009...with the Port of Portland now the largest hardwood chip port in the world



*Forestry is the main export commodity from the Port of Portland, accounting for 4.5 million tonnes of the 6.5 million tonnes of product traded through the port today. Conservative estimates suggest there is potential for 700 per cent growth in the Green Triangle timber industry over the next 8 years.*

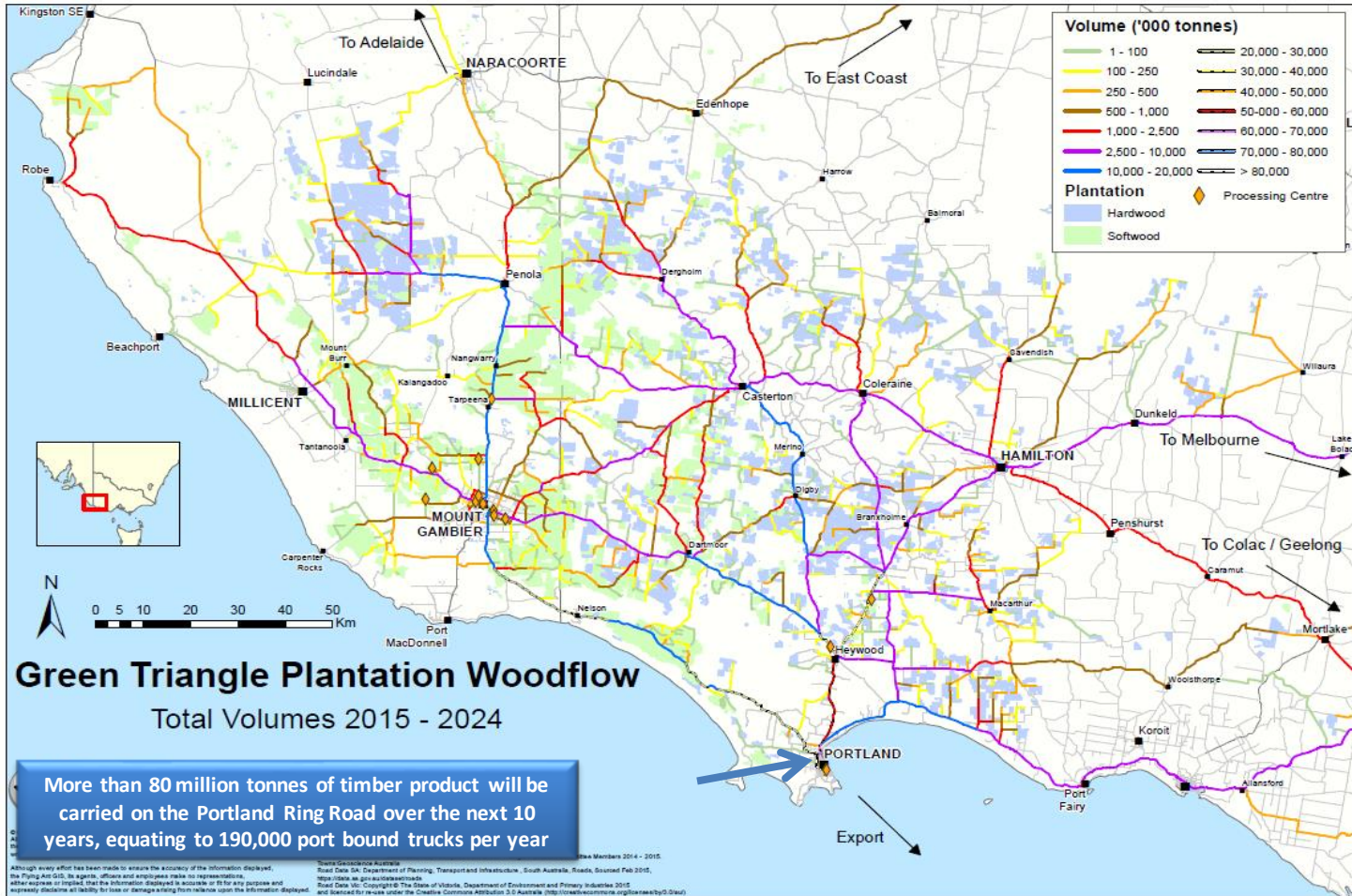




## New data shows economic activity and new jobs generated by growth in the timber industry is significant, and one of the major drivers of the Green Triangle economy ....

- The Green Triangle timber sector generates in excess of 18,000 full-time jobs.
- About 154 local businesses rely on the forestry industry.
- Almost 2.5 million Green Metric Tonnes of softwood logs are processed locally at 15 mills across various locations.

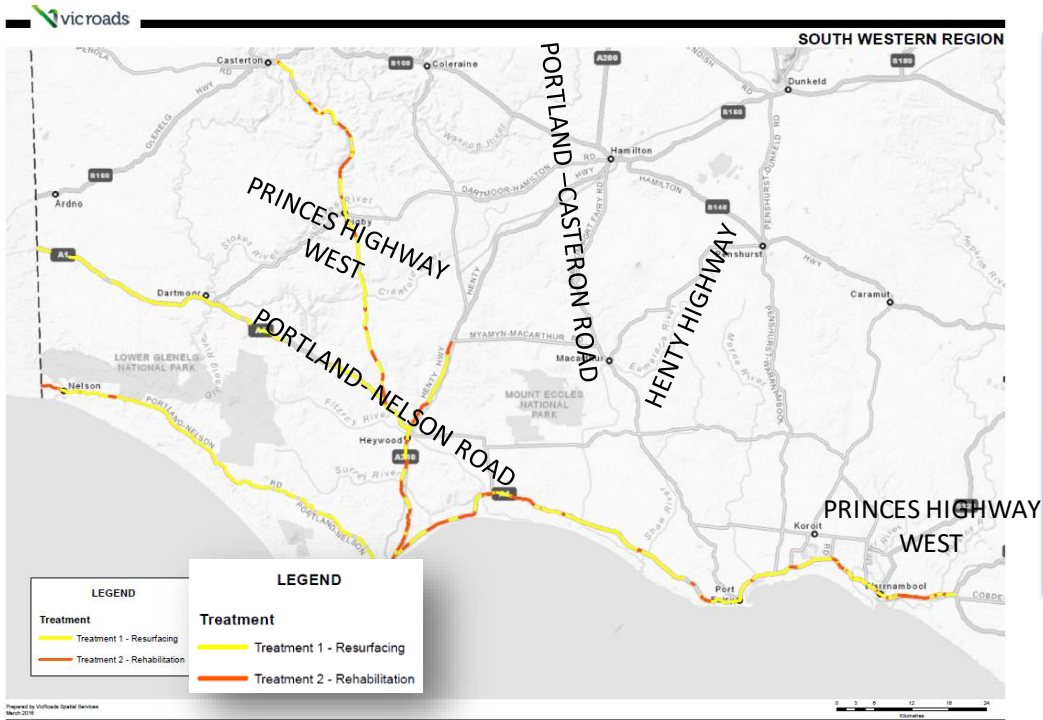




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## Updated timber flow information shows the freight task in 2016 is particularly concentrated on four key corridors



- Key Corridors:**
- Princes Highway West (SA Border to Heywood)
  - Henty Highway (Hamilton to Portland)
  - Portland Ring Road
  - Portland-Nelson Road
  - Portland-Casterton Road
- A total of 355km of key arterial road.

## The deterioration of the road network in the Green Triangle region is increasing operating costs for the timber industry ...

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- Transport operators have indicated that **vehicle fleet** repair and maintenance costs have doubled, rising from 5 per cent to 10 per cent.
- Many heavy vehicles are being fitted out to Road Train standards, specifications required for unmade roads in central Australia.
- The average gain by improving road roughness within 100 km of the Port of Portland represents a 6.3 per cent reduction in cost per tonne - reducing the average cost per tonne to \$5.48.

# Evidence-based

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- The Green Triangle Freight Action Plan committee has always used an 'evidence based' methodology in determining the needs across our freight network – whether that be roads, bridges and safety concerns.

## **\$\$ SECURED TO DATE:**

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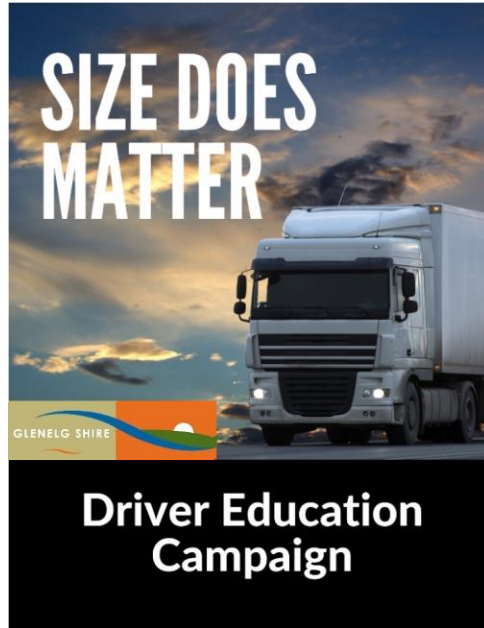
**\$180 MILLION IN FEDERAL & STATE FUNDING FOR  
MAIN ARTERIAL ROAD NETWORK**

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**TOTAL OF \$350MIL IN PROJECTS ACROSS  
THE GREEN TRIANGLE REGION FUNDED –  
PENOLA BYPASS**

# Other projects currently underway

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- OSOM Loads – Bridgewater road
- Princes Highway Corridor Strategy – 11 bridge upgrades
- Heavy Vehicle Road Reforms
- Green Triangle A-Double Project --- permit assessments
- NHVR – Strategic Local Government Asset Assessment Project
- Bridge Structures being assessed
- NHVR – Size Does Matter Campaign
- Maroona to Portland Rail Line Business Case securing \$2.2mi Federal funds partnering with ARTC
- Regional Grain Study

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# THANK YOU

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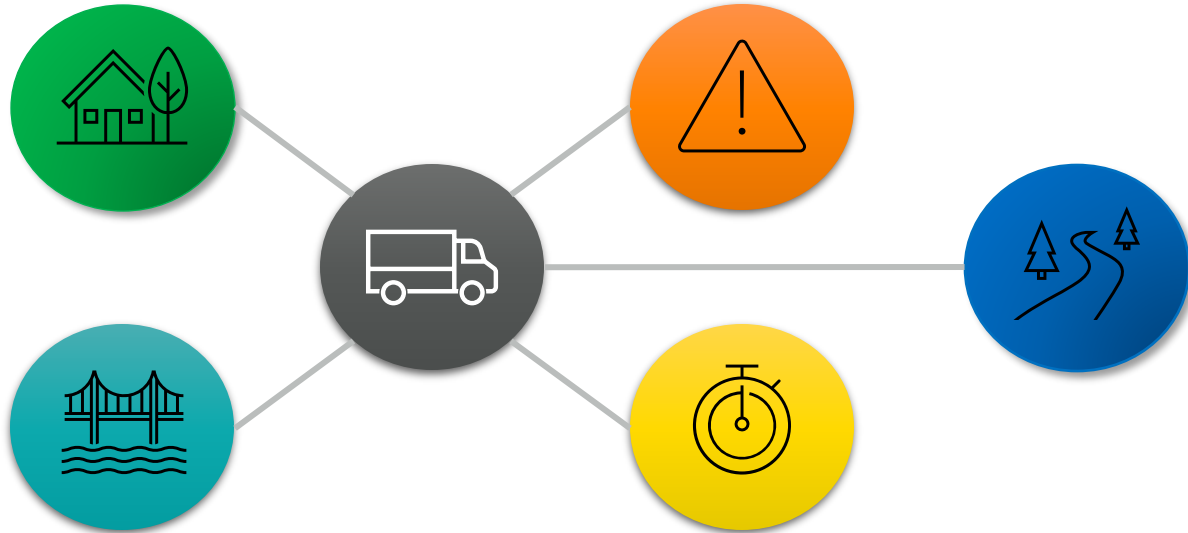
Naracoorte Lucindale Council  
*Better by Nature*





# What are truck curfews, and why do we need them?

Truck curfews let trucks know when they can use certain roads, so we can find a balance between the needs to the local community and local truck operators.



# What's the policy?



## No Truck Signs – Road Rule 104

According to the Road Management Act 2004, the ability to set a curfew lies with the Department of Transport where the **“the State road authority may prohibit or restrict the use of a roadway by any motor vehicle of, or over, a certain size or weight”**.



## Load Limit Signs – Road Rule 103

No truck signs covered under 104 should not be confused for **Load Limit Signs** referenced under Road Rule 103. These signs are used solely for the purpose of protecting road infrastructure (bridges and pavements).

\*may also be titled 'Bridge Load Limit'.

# What's the difference?

## No Truck Signs

- 1 Major Traffic Control Device
- 2 Exemptions apply
- 3 May specify mass or length limit
- 4 May restrict access by time of day

## Load Limit Signs

- 1 Not deemed Major Traffic Control Device
- 2 No Exemptions
- 3 May specify Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) or individual axle masses
- 4 24/7 restriction

# Behind the policy

	Exemptions			
	Buses	Destination within curfew area	Authorised Escort	Written exemption
<b>No Truck Signs</b> Provides road managers with the ability to limit all heavy vehicle movements on a specific route where safety and amenity concerns exist.	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Load Limit Signs</b> Allows road managers to protect infrastructure (structures and pavement) where overloading would cause catastrophic failure.	✗	✗	✗	✗

# Alternative options

## Uplift and infrastructure improvement

Where concerns exist due to aging or outdated infrastructure treatments, uplift should be considered first.

Uplift and infrastructure improvements on designated freight routes to incentivise use.

## Incentivising alternative routes

## Traffic furniture

Infrastructure treatments that disincentivise access such as; speed bumps, chicanes, raised platforms and roundabouts.

Where appropriate, significant infrastructure treatments like widening footpaths and narrowing street lanes may be appropriate. Typically these types of treatments are introduced to address land use changes.

## Infrastructure and road adjustments

# DoT's position



DTP's preferred approach is to disincentivise access through traffic calming.



Council must explore all appropriate alternative options prior to submitting a request to DTP.



Council submissions to DTP must include a thorough assessment of the route and the alternative options explored.



Final decision lies with the local DTP regional director.



## Managing heavy vehicle access (NHVR) overview

The National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) was established in 2013 as a statutory authority to administer the [Heavy Vehicle National Law \(HVNL\)](#) – which applies in all Australia's states and territories (except the Northern Territory and Western Australia)

In the six states and territories where the HVNL applies, there are more than:

- 91,700 registered prime movers
- 814,000 registered heavy vehicles
- 230,500 registered operators
- 475 road managers.

They have a range of resources and assistance to support councils as road managers, including training materials.

# Gazettal & mapping of local roads Vs pre-approval & permit


- Gazetting your local road does not mean that an LGA locks in their local road(s) to that status until a gazette notice is updated.
- NHVR gazette notices point directly to bespoke HV maps, which can be quickly amended to include, rectify or remove local roads.
- If a road is required for access by a specific HV that's underpinned by a NHVR gazette notice, and the road is appropriate and safe for the vehicle, an LGA simply lets the NHVR know via one of their **Route Update Request Forms**, of the change.

JULY 2012

vicroads

INFORMATION BULLETIN

Local roads approved for B-doubles & Higher Mass Limits trucks



Route update request - Class 1 vehicle

Heavy Vehicle National Law Sections 119 & 142 & MDL Regulation Section 15

Route update request

Please fill in the requested fields below and return to the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator. Note: For information on how to complete this form, refer to instructions on how to complete Route Update Request form

Request type:  Add forward route  Add (amend)/remove conditions  Amend/remove restrictions

Initiated by:  Road manager consent request process  An approach from the road manager

Postal code number:

and/or:

Legacy reference:

Route - provide a turn by turn description of the area or route to be amended/added/removed (please attach a map or Route ID of the area or route)

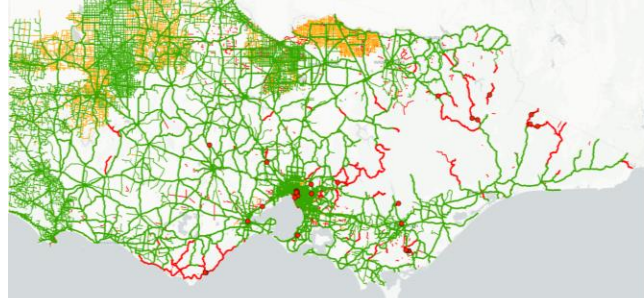
Use additional form to enter list of restricted structures if any

Notice title:

Vehicle type:  Load carrying  Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)  Agricultural

Vehicle description:

Network (if applicable):



Information

vicroads

Victoria's gazetted roads for B-Doubles

This Class 2 and Class 3 (urban operating under Limited Loading Scheme) network shows roads mapped in three categories: Approved (green), Conditionally approved (orange) and Restricted (red)

Height Clearance

Height clearance under overhead structures is represented in orange on this network. Height clearance in metres available for a vehicle to access a structure safely. A 200mm buffer exists for structures with height clearance signs. Structures that are unapproved have been associated with a 200mm safety clearance buffer to give unapproved clearance with a 5.1 metre height clearance will be shown on the map to have a clearance of 4.9 metres. Zoom in to view level to view height clearance numbers. Click on the number to view additional information such as direction and height variables.

Restricted structures (red dots) must not be crossed.

Roads not shown as approved (green) or conditionally approved (orange) require a permit, with the exception of signed detours.

Operators must check the VicRoads website for road closures and road conditions prior to travel to ensure safe passage. It is permitted to travel off route if the road is marked with before signage or if directed by an authorised officer.

Click on a route to show any conditions that may apply.

Click on the black tab below this map to view its data.

To download click here for [Victoria's Open Data](#) updated to Heavy Vehicle roads and structure access and features



# Gazettal/mapping of local roads Vs pre-approval & permit?

- **Leaving a road that's fit for purpose, safe and appropriate OFF a gazetted or pre-approved network and simply consenting to permits, is not the way to go.**
- Limiting road access to operators carrying a consent permit to travel on an appropriate road that's not approved for mapping is frustrating for all parties.
- Onerous for operators, DTP and NHVR, and often a waste of time too for LGA officers, especially if there's no valid reason for a road not to be mapped AND applications are simply “rubber stamped” by council when received.
- Enough checks and balances now exist to provide LGA's with the confidence to limit access to their roads to consent permit holders ONLY for vehicles that have not yet had mapped networks developed and published.
- An important check and balance we all now have – for DTP, councils and the NHVR – is the ground-breaking Freight TAP Tool called F-TAP.

## Further information

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DTP – Manager Land Freight systems – Ian Mond

[Ian.mond@roads.vic.gov.au](mailto:Ian.mond@roads.vic.gov.au)

NHVR – Stakeholder assistance – Simone Reinertsen, NHVR

MAV – Emma Lake [elake@mav.asn.au](mailto:elake@mav.asn.au)

MAV - Geoff Oulton [goulton@mav.asn.au](mailto:goulton@mav.asn.au)

MAV web page – <https://www.mav.asn.au/what-we-do/policy-advocacy/transport-infrastructure/heavy-vehicle-and-freight-management>

# Questions and comments

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