

## NEWELL HIGHWAY TASK FORCE

**Minutes of the meeting held in Parkes at the RMS Regional Office on Tuesday 12 August 2014**

Meeting Commenced at 10:03am

Peter Dearden welcomed the Newell Highway Task Force Committee members to the Roads and Maritime Services Regional Office.

### **1. Welcome, Attendees, Apologies**

#### **Attendees:**

The Chair Ken Keith welcomed the following attendees:

Cr Ken Keith	Parkes Shire Council
Anna Wyllie	Parkes Shire Council
Cr Tony Lord	Bland Shire Council
Jeff Stien	Bland Shire Council
Jock Smith	Dubbo City Council
John Morris	NATRoads
Ray Graham	Forbes Shire Council
Peter Dearden	RMS Western Region
Bruce Bates	RMS Western Region
Jacquie Anderson	RMS Western Region

#### **Apologies:**

Cr Conrad Bolton	Narrabri Shire Council
Cr Robyn Faber	Narrabri Shire Council
Katrina Dwyer	Parkes Shire Council
Cr Jenny Clarke	Narrandera Shire Council
Frank Dyson	Narrandera Shire Council
Cr Kevin Morris	Narrandera Shire Council
Cr Ruth McCrae	Jerilderie Shire Council
Cr David Tamlyn	Jerilderie Shire Council
Craig Moffitt	Jerilderie Shire Council
Cr Lyn Griffiths	Dubbo City Council
Lindsay Tanner	RMS South West
Susie Mackay	RMS Western Region
Graham Blight	NRMA
Ron Collins	NRMA
Cr Ron Penny	Forbes Shire Council
Cr Dennis Todd	Warrumbungle Shire Council
Cr Peter Shinton	Warrumbungle Shire Council
Kevin Tighe	Warrumbungle Shire Council
Richard Baxter	Gunnedah Shire Council
Cr Katrina Humphries	Moree Plains Shire Council
Cr Sue Price	Moree Plains Shire Council

Ian Dinham                      Moree Plains Shire Council  
Rob Howse                      NatRoad

## **2. Confirmation of the minutes of the previous meeting held at Narrabri in the RFS Office on Tuesday 13 May 2014**

### **Resolution**

That the Minutes of the Newell Highway Task Force meeting held at Narrabri in the RFS office on Tuesday 13 May 2014 which were distributed to members of the Task Force be confirmed.

**Moved: Cr Tony Lord                      Seconded: Jock Smith**  
**All in favour**  
**Carried**

## **3. Matters Arising from Minutes**

Nil

## **4. Business Arising**

Nil

## **5. Correspondence**

### **Inwards:**

- Newell Highway Corridor Strategy – Natroad
- Newell Highway Corridor Strategy – Warrumbungle Shire Council
- Newell Highway Corridor Strategy – Parkes Shire Council
- Newell Highway Corridor Strategy – Bland Shire Council

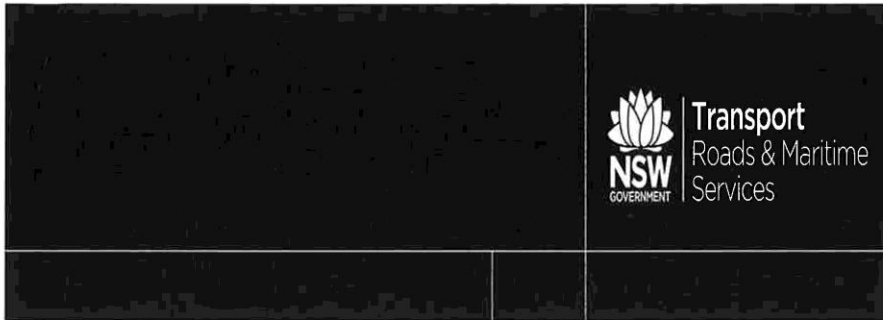
### **Outwards:**

- Emails from the Secretary to the Newell Highway Task Force committee members including:
  - National Farmers Federation Agricultural Infrastructure and Logistics Forum
  - Federal Government Budget
  - Draft Newell Highway Corridor Strategy media release
  - Newell Highway Corridor Strategy – Newell Highway Task Force Committee
  - Newell Highway Corridor Strategy – Natroad
  - Newell Highway Corridor Strategy – Warrumbungle Shire Council
  - Newell Highway Corridor Strategy – Newell Highway Promotions Committee
  - 1956 photo of the Newell Highway courtesy of Peter Bailey
  - NSW Government Rebuilding NSW
  - Driver Reviver Presentation
  - Newell Highway Task Force Narrabri media release
  - Road Freight Flows
  - Communicating the Imperative for Action A report to the Council of Australian Governments
  - Love & Culture on the Newell Highway



6. **RMS Update**

Peter Dearden provided the following Roads & Maritime Services update:



## Roads and Maritime Services Newell Highway Projects 2014/15

### Progress Report to the Newell Highway Task Force

12-Aug-14

#### Works and Behavioural Projects

Maintenance program	Comments
Pilliga Widening	Under construction
Castlereagh Highway junction rehabilitation	Under construction
Reconstruction north of Marsden	Not yet commenced
Reconstruction and flood improvements north of Gilgandra	Not yet commenced
Heavy Duty Pavement Trial north of Narrabri	Not yet commenced
Reconstruction north of Tomingley	Not yet commenced
Reconstruction near Gurley	Not yet commenced
<b>Total</b>	
Overtaking lanes	Comments
Weddin/Forbes boundary overtaking lanes - 2	Continuing
Overtaking Lane North of Parkes	Not yet commenced
2 x Overtaking Lanes – Weddin/Forbes	Not yet commenced
2 x Overtaking Lanes – Gowang Creek	Not yet commenced
Final seals on completed works	Not yet commenced

Roads and Maritime Services' Newell Highway Projects 2013/14  
Progress Report to the Newell Highway Task Force  
13 May 2014

Total		
Electoral commitments		Comments
State Government	Troy Junction/Boothenba Road, Dubbo	\$3M capped contribution to Dubbo City Council
	Stage 2 Moree Bypass	Tenders invited and closed December 2013
Federal Government	Stage 2 Moree Bypass	Tenders invited and closed December 2013
Total		
Safety works		Comments
Pilliga in conjunction with maintenance program		Under construction *
Total		
Cycleways		Comments
Active transport program (to be advised)		
Total		
Development works		Comments
Parkes, Western ring-road		Concept stage
Total		
Behavioural Projects		Comments
Behavioural program (to be advised)		
Total		
Grand Total		

### Land Use Planning and Development Assessment

Local Government Area	Development	Comment
Berrigan	Proposed intermodal transport hub	Pre DA
Narrandera	Gillenbah Service Centre redevelopment	Upgrade of access works completed.
Narrandera	Redevelopment of Service Centre	Pre DA
Forbes	Bunnings & Spotlight	Works completed. Stores opened 2014
Parkes	Masters	Highway frontage. No direct highway access. Consent issued. Works have not commenced
Parkes	Hospital	Highway frontage. Access via Southern Ring Road intersection, under constructed. Works to commence on hospital in 14/15.

Roads and Maritime Services' Newell Highway Projects 2013/14  
Progress Report to the Newell Highway Task Force  
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Parkes	Planning Proposal	Rezone land south of Industrial Estate to Welcome rail crossing from rural to industrial. New access to Newell Highway proposed. Under assessment.
Narromine	Tomingley Gold Mine	Grade separated private haul road, underpass. Works completed.
Dubbo	Dubbo Zirconia Project	Under assessment.
Narrabri	Santos Coal Seam Gas Pilot Programmes	Intersection upgrade of Old Mill Road and Newell Highway completed.
Narrabri	Extensions to Auscott Cotton Gin and industrial subdivision	Access Intersection improvements. Works have not commenced
Moree	Ski Lakes	Under assessment
Moree	Moree Gateway Business Park	Minor realignment, intersection improvements (Blueberry Rd/Newell Highway) and two new intersections. Consent issued. Works underway.

Roads and Maritime Services' Newell Highway Projects 2013/14  
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- The Draft Newell Highway Corridor Strategy submission period has closed.
- The State budget allocated \$2.0m for the heavy vehicle route at Parkes and high tech traffic studies are being undertaken.
- Lines of business – Infrastructure Development and Steve Warrell is working at the Wagga Wagga RMS office and will cover both Southern and Western regions.
- The wide centre line treatment is expected to be applied on new works following analysis of a motor vehicle incident on the F6.
- South Australia are introducing wide centreline treatment on the Dukes Highway:





## Wide Centreline Treatment Strategy

For the period 2006-2010, 90% of fatalities, excluding pedestrian and cyclist related, were the result of vehicles crossing onto the wrong side of the road and running off the road or hitting an oncoming vehicle. To reduce the risk of this type of crash, the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure (DPTI) is installing new centreline treatments along the full length of Highway between Taillem Bend and the South Australian/Victorian Border aimed at addressing fatigue and inattention related crashes. The strategy includes the introduction of a new style of centreline marking, initially at identified high cross centreline crash risk locations.

### Key Project Dates and Stages

**Stage 1** of the project consists of the installation of new wide centrelines, covering up to 39 kilometres of the Dukes Highway as indicated below:

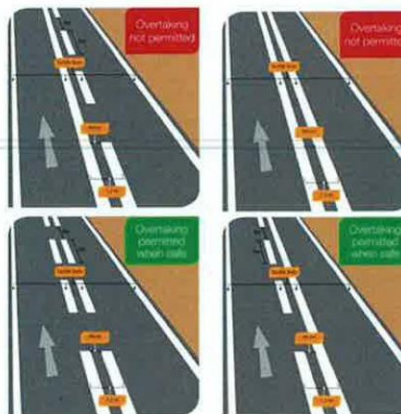
- Taillem Bend - Coomandook (21km)
- Coomandook - Bordertown (4.4km)
- Bordertown - SA/Vic border (13km)

Stage 1 works commenced in January 2012 and was completed late 2012.

**Stage 2** of the project consists of the installation of up to an additional 52km of wide centrelines between Yumali & Culbarra and also Tintinara & Bordertown.

- Yumali - Culbarra (23km)
- Tintinara - Bordertown (29km)

Stage 2 works started in November 2012 and is expected to be completed by mid 2013.



### What will the new wide centreline treatment look and feel like?

- There will be two parallel painted centrelines which will separate oncoming traffic by 1.2 metres.
- They will look wider than normal centrelines.
- The lines will have a raised audio tactile surface which generates a vibration and rumbling sound.

### What are the benefits of the treatment?

- The audio tactile lines will alert drivers if they are drifting towards the wrong side of the road.
- The 1.2 metre separation between lanes will allow drivers time to correct and return to their lane before entering the path of oncoming traffic.
- If drivers fail to correct their direction of travel when crossing the first line, the second centreline will provide a further warning that they have left their lane.

### Will overtaking be permitted?

- The road rules for overtaking do not change with the introduction of the wider centrelines.
- The wider centrelines will include both continuous (no overtaking) and broken (overtaking permitted) lines

### When will this happen?

- Stage 1 was completed at the end of 2012.
- Stage 2 started in November 2012 and is due for completion by mid 2013

**Wide Centreline Treatment:** example of how the wide centreline treatment will look where overtaking is permitted.



Source: RTA NSW Newell Highway Road Centreline Trial



All enquiries: 1300 626 097  
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Government of South Australia  
Department of Planning,  
Transport and Infrastructure

Footer content

## Infrastructure Links

- Current SA Infrastructure Plan
- Discussion Paper
- Infrastructure Projects
- Rail Revitalisation
- Adelaide Riverbank Precinct
- Adelaide Oval
- The Parks Community Centre
- The New Royal Adelaide Hospital
- Cycling and Pedestrian Projects
- Regional Mining and Infrastructure Planning Project
- Stations Upgrade Program
- O-Bahn Upgrade Program
- Glenside Campus Redevelopment
- Health & Biomedical Research Precinct
- Road Projects
- South Road Superway
- Southern Expressway
- South Road Upgrade (Torrens Road to River Torrens)
- North-South Corridor
- Northern Connector
- South Road Planning Study
- Road Management Plans
- McLaren Vale Overpass
- Darlington Transport Study
- Adelaide - Melbourne Road Corridor
- Main North Road Realignment via Anama Lane
- Main North Road and Redbanks Road Roundabout
- Main North Road, Tiver Road and Gordon Road Intersection Upgrade
- Happy Valley Drive and Taylors Road Intersection Upgrade
- Gawler East Local Link Road
- The Britannia Intersection Upgrade
- Main South Road draft RMP
- North East Road and Sudholz Road Safety Improvements
  
- Public Transport Projects
- Rail Revitalisation
- Goodwood Junction
- Seaford Rail Extension
- Gawler Rail Revitalisation

[http://www.infrastructure.sa.gov.au/content/adelaide\\_to\\_melbourne\\_road\\_corridor/du...](http://www.infrastructure.sa.gov.au/content/adelaide_to_melbourne_road_corridor/du...) 13/08/2014

## 7. Newell Highway Promotions Committee Update

The Newell Highway Promotions Committee is currently working on a new brochure.

The Drive Visitor Economy is extremely important to the LGA's and regional towns and cities on the Newell Highway Corridor and the following figures are from Destination NSW LGA Profiles that indicates the four year annual average overnight spend:

<b>LGA</b>	<b>Four Year Annual Average Overnight Visitor Spend</b>
Berrigan	\$45 million
Narrandera	\$17 million
Bland	\$18 million
Weddin	\$5 million
Forbes	\$24 million
Parkes	\$41 million
Narromine	\$7 million
Dubbo	\$135 million
Gilgandra	\$11 million
Warrumbungle	\$38 million
Narrabri	\$31 million
Moree Plains	\$48 million

Destination NSW Travel to Regional NSW, indicates that 88% of the visitors that travel to regional NSW do so by private or company motor vehicles (Drive Visitor Economy), followed by air transport (6.3%) and 'railway' (2.4%).

## 8. General Business

- The Chair thanked Peter Dearden for his commitment, leadership and contribution to the Newell Highway Task Force and wished him all the best in his retirement.
- The Transport Industry also thanked Peter for his commitment, leadership and contribution to the Newell Highway Task Force and wished him all the best in his retirement.
- The Newell Highway Task Force Committee also congratulated Ken Keith for his Order of Australia (OAM).
- GrainCorp are in the process of rolling out their Project Regeneration that will see a number of grain silos being closed. This will see more trucks on the roads and will also put more pressure on the National, State and Local feeder road networks. Intersection treatments for both acceleration and deceleration may need to be carried out. This may also lead to more B-Doubles and Road Trains accessing GrainCorps primary sites and LGA's should monitor the affects that this may have on their road networks.





GrainCorp

# Project Regeneration



## Creating a more efficient and reliable network for all customers

**In 2014, GrainCorp begins a \$200 million transformation of its storage and logistics network. Representing the single largest capital investment in rail loading capability in the company's history, Project Regeneration will deliver a more efficient and reliable network for all customers, unlocking lower transport rates and higher grain prices for growers across the network.**

## Project Regeneration is focused on investment and transformation in four key areas:

1. Re-shaping the country network
2. Localised cluster operations
3. End-to-end export logistics
4. Rail loading improvements

### 1. Re-shaping the country network

We are re-shaping our network to around 180 sites to simplify our operations and reduce operating costs. This consolidation will allow us to concentrate our investment at sites where it will have the broadest benefit. It will reduce complexity, operating costs and enable greater focus on local operations and service.

**90%**

The core 180 sites already receive **90% of all delivered grain**



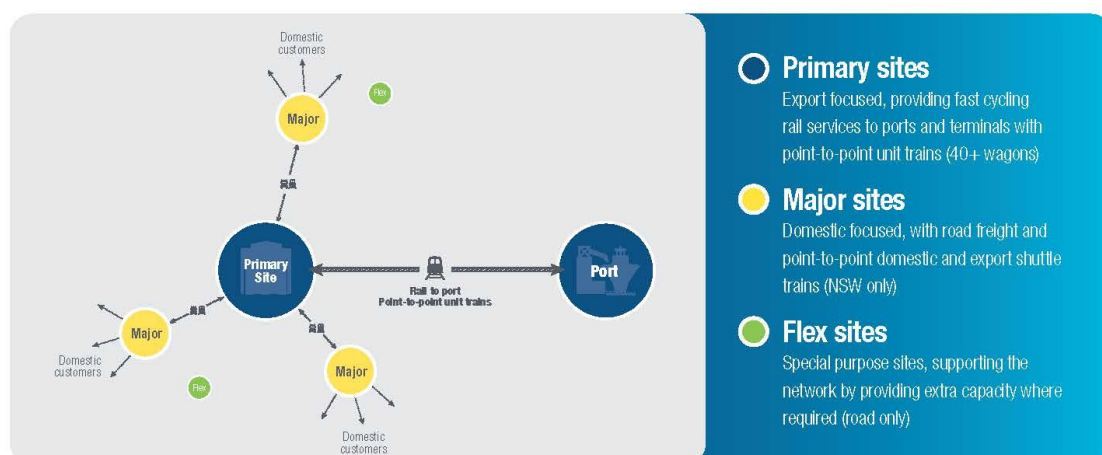
**Labour and mobile equipment concentrated to areas of peak demand**

**20 million tonnes**  
storage capacity

remains double our average intake – meaning plenty of room for your grain, including 8 million tonnes of permanent silo and shed storage

### 2. Localised cluster operations

Around 180 sites will be grouped into 34 geographical clusters, reducing management duplication and giving greater local autonomy. Export and domestic grain can be purchased from all sites but will be executed from the most suitable site.

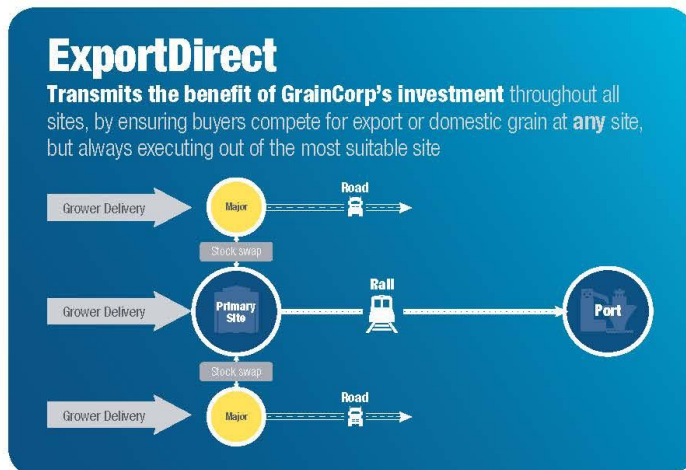




### 3. End-to-end export logistics

GrainCorp will offer bundled transport and handling of export grain under a simplified operating model known as ExportDirect. ExportDirect further simplifies the export logistics task by allowing GrainCorp to move grain from the most cost-effective site. Importantly this model:

- a) Maximises the volume of export rail from upgraded primary sites
- b) Allows the benefit of investment in Primary sites to be transmitted across all sites by allowing GrainCorp to offer competitive transport rates across the network.



### 4. Rail loading improvements

GrainCorp is committing \$200 million to upgrade rail loading capacity to handle faster cycling point-to-point trains from our 68 Primary sites, including 3 new built-for-purpose sites. These improvements will:

- re-position grain with tripling of loading rates
- accommodate a unit train at a site
- reduce transport costs and improve reliability for customers.

In order to unlock the full potential uplift from our investment, government investment in government owned sidings and rail track will also be necessary.



#### Tripling rail loading rates to over 500 tonnes per hour

Installation or upgrade of single load points with over-rail garner bins, high speed elevators with pre-positioning bins with fumigation and blending capabilities

\$5+  
per tonne



#### Unlocking substantial freight savings for growers and grain buyers alike

Delivered through faster and more reliable train cycle times



#### Potential to return up to 1 million tonnes to rail

Removing up to 25,000 heavy vehicle movements each year, improving road safety and reducing road maintenance, emissions and heavy vehicle noise

## Your questions answered

### When will changes take effect?

Network and operating model changes will largely be in place for the 2014 winter harvest, while capital works associated with rail loading improvements will take place over the next 3 years, subject to planning approvals and government co-investment in government owned rail sidings.

### Why rail?

Modernised rail capability and simplified rail operations will deliver a faster, more efficient and reliable service for export grain. A consolidated and restructured site cluster model will allow for improved resource management. The streamlined rail operating model will support point-to-point trains and improve the cost effectiveness and capacity for export grain.

### How many sites will be closed?

We are moving to a core of around 180 sites. The network has varied in size over the years, depending on the crop size. Last harvest we operated 252 sites. In other years it has been more or less depending on the circumstances in that year. Focusing on the core 180 sites that already receive 90% of all grain allows us to concentrate investment in those parts of the network that really need it.

### Will I have to travel further to deliver grain?

We expect any impact from an individual site closure will be offset by higher prices bid for growers' grain as a result of a more efficient and reliable network following investment. In the final consolidated network, the average distance between our sites will be 30 kilometres.

### Will there be job losses?

It is anticipated that there will be a reduction of around 80 full time roles across the network of both support and operating staff. We will seek to redeploy affected people within GrainCorp and provide assistance in finding new employment, along with full entitlements when this is not possible.

### Will fewer sites increase turnaround times at sites?

One of the benefits of a consolidated network is allowing equipment resources and labour to be focused to areas of peak demand, when it is most needed. Waiting times under a consolidated network should generally be shorter compared to when resources are spread thinly across a less efficient network.

### What will GrainCorp do with closed sites?

GrainCorp is considering its options and may also engage with growers and other interested parties, subject to conditions, to lease or buy closed sites.

**Visit [graincorp.com.au/regeneration](http://graincorp.com.au/regeneration)**

Find further details about Project Regeneration including site locations on our website.







## 9. Review of the Newell Highway Task Force Strategy

The Chair welcomed Bruce Bates to facilitate the review of the Newell Highway Task Force Strategy.

Changes that have occurred since the formation of the Task Force:

- 110 km/hr speed limit
- Overtaking lanes
- Moree Bypass
- Development of West Wyalong and Parkes Bypasses
- Rest Areas – new and upgraded
- Release of Draft Corridor Strategy
- \$30m Safety Program:
  - Intersection improvements
  - Intersection improvements
  - Clear Zones
  - Wide centre line trial

### Developing the vision

- What are the key issues, constraints and drivers for change across the Newell Highway within the next 5,10 and 20 years?
- Paint a picture of the Newell in 2034

The Task Force then workshopped the following draft vision for the Newell Highway:

## **Vision for the Newell Highway**

### **1. Boosting economic productivity by introducing modern higher productive vehicles (B triples and AB Triples) and phasing out older vehicles (Double Road Trains).**

Reasons:

- Near doubling of freight tonnage;
- Better safety;
- Grain – rationalisation of receival points.

### **2. Safe road for all road users that encourages tourists, visitors and freight between Victoria and Queensland.**

### **3. Intermodal linkages and bottleneck removal.**

### **4. Vision for tourism and the visitor economy**

- Tourism friendly road of choice – ‘Newell Highway Touring Route R66’
- Signage for novice travellers (white on brown)
- Techno friendly – Mobile Phone and WiFi connectivity for the entire length of the Newell Highway

Risks

- Conflict between road users – heavy vehicles vs. tourists
- How do we manage this conflict – exacerbated by volume increase
- How do we limit conflict interaction
- Simple, uncomplicated travel experience – don’t get lost

### **5. Consistency of travel experience between Melbourne and Brisbane (see it as a continuous flow)**

### **6. Environment**

#### **1. HPV access across the Newell Highway**

- Compliant intersections
- Longer acceleration and deceleration lanes
- Major town by-passes (Parkes, Forbes, Coonabarabran, Dubbo, Moree, Narrabri?, Boggabilla, West Wyalong, Narrandera, Jerilderie, Grong Grong)
- Overtaking lanes – length and number – on flat as well as rise:
  - Check strategy for relevance and additional opportunities and customer perception
- Wide Centre line
  - Perception of safety
  - Develop an implementation strategy
- Shoulder width
- Rest areas
- Ask feedback from the Road Freight Industry re Newell Highway Strategy
- Develop B-Quad breakdown area at Dubbo and other major centres
- Develop last mile plans for towns e.g. Forbes etc

#### **2. Safety on the Newell Highway**

Safe road for all road users

- Maintain clear zones – wildlife – 10m curves, 6m straight
- Confirm and clarify speed limiting vehicles

- Wide Centre line
  - Perception of safety
  - Develop an implementation strategy
- Overtaking lanes – length and number – on flat as well as rise:
  - Check strategy for relevance and additional opportunities and customer perception
- Rest stops – enough, attractiveness, vehicle mix, upgrade access, intelligent rest stops, mobile coverage
- Rail crossing – delimitation – Inland Rail may pay
- Signage – know where Rest Areas and Overtaking Lanes are, kilometreage, distance to attractions and service centres
- Managing access
- Clarify age related and experience related competency of RVs
- More point to point technology and checking stations
- Enforcement particularly light vehicles

### 3. Intermodal linkages

- Changes in grain handling e.g. rationalisation of receival sites
  - Containers – farm to port – trend
  - On farm storage
- Land use planning for breakdown, consolidation and modal exchanges in each major town e.g. Parkes
  - Leverage with Inland Rail – cost sharing
- Inland Rail want double-stacked containers – ensure grade separation can cater

### 4. Tourism (Visitor Economy)

- Newell Highway touring route – visitor experience – promotion
- Signage – white on brown signs, advance warning signs, distance consistency
- Family friendly – recreational parks. Animal friendly accommodation etc
- Techno friendly – Mobile Phone and WiFi connectivity for the entire length of the Newell Highway, tourist information
- Compatibility of vehicle mix
- Rest Areas – RV friendly, WiFi, Toilets (Texas travel information [www.txdot.gov/driver.html](http://www.txdot.gov/driver.html))
- Overtaking lanes
- Cross border issues – promotions and consistency
- Business travellers – timeliness, safety, refreshments and availability of fuel

### 5. Consistency

- National Regulations across the Newell
  - Consistent laws for licencing
  - Load limits
- Signage
- Experience
  - Speed e.g. 110 vs. 100
  - Roughness, shoulder widths, centrelines, clearzones, rest areas
- Naming of Route (need more than A39)

Bruce will continue to work on the Vision which will be sent out to Task Force Committee Members and organisations for input and comments.

### 10. Next meeting, date and venue

Tuesday 11 November 2014 in Narrandera

Meeting Closed 1:55pm