



MEDIA RELEASE

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Lonsdale Consortium submission underscores need for long-term Port of Melbourne access strategy

A Victorian Government submission by new Port of Melbourne owner the Lonsdale Consortium has exposed flaws in planning for future growth and the port's capacity to handle an anticipated increase in the volume of freight expected to be moved in and out of the Port of Melbourne.

More concerning, according to the Victorian Transport Association, representing the freight industry, is that if road and rail access issues are not suitably addressed, the Port of Melbourne will lose business to ports in other states, impacting the Victorian economy and threatening jobs.

"The VTA has long-held the view that road and rail access to the Port has been neglected, and this submission confirms that if meaningful and significant changes aren't made now that caters to future freight movement increases via road and rail, Victoria will lose business to other states," said VTA CEO Peter Anderson.

"We need all of the infrastructure flagged in the submission, such as rail access to the new Webb Dock terminal, strengthening of bridges for longer and more efficient High Productivity Freight Vehicles, a freeway between CityLink and the Western Ring Road, and even East-West Link.

"And while we may not be able to afford it now, we at least need a sensible, long-term blueprint that prioritises future construction so that we aren't wasting money on piecemeal solutions that are based on election cycles instead of the genuine needs of the economy," he said.

Mr Anderson said recommendations in the submission for the government to encourage more truck movements at night made complete sense.

"The best way to free up traffic during the day for commuters is to create policy settings and incentives for road and rail operators to access the 24-hour Port of Melbourne at night," he said.

"This would also create amenity improvements for residents and efficiencies for operators, leading to productivity improvements for operators.

"Instead of banning trucks from port access roads and increasing tolls disproportionately, why not reduce tolls for trucks at night and actually encourage them to use the road? This is the sort of creative thinking that has been lacking to date, and we welcome discussion the submission will inevitably create that will lead to greater productivity and efficiency at the Port of Melbourne," he said.

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