National Freight Data Hub: Discussion Paper #1 LGNSW Submission

Respondent details

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Why your organisation is interested in the National Freight Data Hub	As LGNSW is the peak body representing local councils in NSW, heavy vehicle access and the funding to help support the projected increase in the freight task is a very important issue to our members. A key objective of councils is to ensure the well-being of their local communities through the management of their road infrastructure assets. Increased freight access raises concerns about safety, reduction in road asset lifespans (and the lack of funding to upgrade and maintain these assets), as well as concerns about the amenity impacts on local communities. Having access to freight movement data is vital from a planning perspective as it will help ensure funding is directed to the right areas of the network needed to help develop complete end-to-end freight routes.

Question 1

a) Of the following, what are the most important purposes of the Hub?

Purpose	Importance rank (High/Medium/Low)
Support operational decisions	High
Improve investment decisions	High
Performance measurement and benchmarking	Medium

b) What other purposes should the Hub have?

Enforcement of unauthorised fleet movement across the network should also be a consideration. This does not have to be punitive in the first instance, but following one or more warnings, penalties could then apply. Restricted access vehicles are known to "run hot" on the local road network. Not only does this increase the risk to the safety of other road users, it also results in damage to road infrastructure and related assets. For example, a B-Double causes up to 20,000 times more damage to roads per kilometre travelled than the average light vehicle.[i] It is important that councils and other roads authorities have access to data and information to understand

where restricted access vehicles have been travelling on their networks. Access decisions cannot be properly managed without appropriate enforcement of unapproved restricted vehicle movements.

Question 2

a) For each purpose, what are the most critical things to include in the Hub?

(List all elements and data sources that you see as important)

Purpose	Data element	Current/new data sources
Support operational decisions	Freight location tracking	Intelligent Access Program – Currently limited to national and state roads. Mandatory Location Tracking – Needs to be introduced to understand where the freight access pinch points on the network are, particularly on first and last mile routes.
Improve investment decisions	Freight location tracking	Freight access improvement programs like the NSW Government's Fixing Country Roads are currently very ad hoc. Currently, councils will apply for sections of the road network in their LGA that might meet the criteria for funding. However, such piecemeal expenditure is unlikely to result in the development of complete freight corridors across multiple LGAs. Better data will help to ensure the development of more comprehensive freight routes through even more targeted expenditure. The principal reason for this is that the lack of freight movement data across the entire road network makes targeted and prioritised funding challenging. The freight industry already generates the data necessary for roads authorities, but this telemetry is currently reserved for internal industry operational purposes. Making this (deidentified) data available to road authorities will help councils state and federal governments make better-informed investment decisions.
Performance measurement and benchmarking	Freight location tracking	Councils cannot currently measure the performance of the freight network in their LGAs, as the first and last mile freight network usage data is not available for analysis. This data can be sourced from vehicle telemetry or through other measurement tools, but councils

		are not all equipped with these tools or have the resources to purchase them. Programs designed to assist councils in deploying these tools would provide highly valuable data that could be used to benchmark performance of local road networks.
Other purposes	Access decision making	The freight industry is placing enormous pressure on councils to improve the access decision making process. The industry is also calling for increased pre-approved routes. Councils will be in a better position to make these decisions if/when they have access industry freight tracking data provided either voluntarily by the industry or made mandatory by either state or federal governments. Local government is not concerned with commercial data such as the type of freight being conveyed or how much is being charged for each movement – councils want to know where and when freight is accessing the local road network. Local government is committed to the importance of moving freight on local roads but needs all the available information to help improve the access decision making process. This will help give councils the confidence that decisions are being properly aligned with their wider responsibilities as road authorities under the Heavy Vehicle National Law when making access decisions so that they don't compromise road safety, road assets and community amenity.

b) Are there other critical data elements that should be included in the Hub?

If the data can be delivered in real-time, even greater benefits can be realised for network managers. This in turn will deliver greater benefits for the industry and community as freight corridors can be properly upgraded with targeted funding while councils will also be able to better plan communities around freight movements. The data also needs to be made available in a way that meets pre-determined standards so that it is interoperable with other government data collection mechanisms.

Data about the various types of vehicle dimensions and mass as per the NHVR's Heavy Vehicle Classification system will also help with local government access decision making. It will allow councils to enter vehicle information by codes into tools like the NHVR Portal to enable councils to

quickly determine the performance envelope of a vehicle and its suitability for different parts of the local road network.

It would enable the development of a system like the highly praised access system implemented by State Growth Tasmania.

Question 3

a) What are the barriers to sharing data? (Please provide examples in the table below)

b) How could these barriers be overcome?

c) What are the benefits of greater data sharing?

Barrier to sharing	How to address?	Potential benefit?
Apparent industry reluctance to share location data on the basis that it is commercially sensitive.	Make the reporting of restricted access vehicle telemetry mandatory as a prerequisite to improved freight access. The data can be deidentified so that it only represents the general pattern of restricted access vehicle network usage. Additional appropriate data security measures need to be implemented to give the industry the assurance it needs to feel confident sharing their data.	Improved access for freight industry, more timely access decisions by road authorities, better targeting of investments in the road network.

Question 4

a) What products are required? (Please provide examples in the table below)

b) What is the best way for Hub products to be made available?

c) How frequently should data be updated?

Product	Method of reporting	Frequency
Network hotspot maps	Visual heatmaps	Monthly
Accident blackspots	Visual heatmaps	Monthly
Forecasting	Charts and tables/dashboard	Quarterly

[i] https://theconversation.com/trucks-are-destroying-our-roads-and-not-picking-up-the-repair-cost-79670