

FREIGHT AND SUPPLY CHAIN INQUIRY

Submission by Pilbara Ports Authority

Pilbara Ports Authority is a Western Australian Government Trading Enterprise and is governed under the Port Authorities Act 1999 WA (the Act). Pilbara Ports Authority currently operates the ports of Port Hedland, Dampier and Ashburton. Pilbara Ports Authority will also manage proposed ports on the Pilbara coast at Cape Preston, Balla Balla and Anketell. The Pilbara region also hosts five single operator ports which are currently managed by the Department of Transport.

The ports of Dampier and Port Hedland are two of the world's largest bulk export ports, responsible for approximately 75 per cent of the State's and approximately 50 per cent of the world's seaborne iron ore exports.

In the past year 22.2 million tonnes of LNG was shipped through the Port of Dampier, accounting for approximately nine per cent of the world's exports. LNG export operations will commence shortly at the Port Ashburton, increasing exports by 6.7 million tonnes.

Another major commodity exported from the Pilbara is salt, with exports through the ports of Dampier and Port Hedland totalling approximately nine million tonnes per annum, accounting for approximately 75 per cent of Australian salt exports.

In summary, Pilbara Ports Authority:

- Exported 668.6 million tonnes of product throughput in FY16/17.
- Facilitated 18,683 vessel movements in FY16/17.
- Accounted for 4% of Australian Gross Domestic Product in 2014.

Pilbara Ports Authority acknowledges that the National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy will need to explore a number of key integration issues associated with ports, including:

- Identification and protection of transport corridors, including channels,
- Delineation of buffers around ports and adjoining corridors, and
- Identification and protection of industrial land and freight precincts in close proximity to ports.

The Port of Port Hedland is the only port managed by Pilbara Ports Authority where a key freight road extends to the port boundary. The Council of Transport and Infrastructure (2014), National Key Freight Routes Map¹ does not include direct road connection to Port of Ashburton or Port of Dampier.

To meet the demands of the freight task in the Pilbara Region, Pilbara Ports Authority supports improvement of road networks connecting to ports and suggests that corridor planning and road standards be adopted which support the transportation of high wide loads, such as 2,000 + tonne prefabricated modules.

Similarly the National Key Freight Routes Map does not include shipping channels, which are an integral component of the freight network. As indicated above Pilbara Ports Authority facilitated 18,683 vessel movements in FY16/17, all of which transited a channel at some stage of their journey.

Pilbara Ports Authority proposes that that shipping channels are just as integral to the national freight network as land transport corridors and freight precincts and should be subject regulatory protection in the same manner as land transport corridors.

The protection of land transport corridors relies heavily on Local Government Authority areas through which the corridors pass. Greater regulatory intervention is required to protect existing and planned land corridors, which may include and powers for State Planning Authorities to overturn Local Government decisions that are unfavourable to protecting land transport corridors. As a minimum, the expansion of existing corridors and the location of future corridors need to be supported recognised in Town Planning Schemes / Local Planning Schemes.

Port trade differs in the materials and commodities shipped at various port locations. There are varying degrees of risk and exposure from these trades. Pilbara ports primarily export solid and liquid bulk cargos. Buffers to mitigate against wind borne materials such as dust or odour are important to safeguard industrial and port operational areas, freight precincts and transport corridors from sensitive land uses and protect the community.

In order to delineate and establish buffers around ports and adjoining corridors Pilbara Ports Authority believe analysis should be undertaken into risk, safety, environmental and health studies for each port location and adjoining corridors (land and sea) to inform Port Planning and Local and State Government planning decisions.

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ⁱ <http://maps.infrastructure.gov.au/KeyFreightRoute/>