

From Roots to Routes:

An innovative vision of freight for the Northern Rivers NSW

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Production and manufacturing in the Northern Rivers Region is a diverse mix of types and scales, from boutique, local goods production (tea, coffee, construction materials, extracts and so on) to major activities in forestry and the sugar industry. The Region includes fisheries, a diverse mix of fresh fruit, vegetables, nuts, meat, milk and milk goods and beverage manufacturing, all at both a small and larger scale.

Improved interconnectivity between regional, inter-regional and international producers, manufacturers and markets is critical for efficient freight activity in the Northern Rivers. Many different industries rely on these supply chain connections to operate and thrive. The Region needs increased connectivity to raw materials available from outside the Northern Rivers for processing, and more efficient and new ways of reaching domestic and international markets.

The *NSW Northern Rivers Region Freight and Supply Chain Strategy* sets out the appropriate regional development for better access to Brisbane, southern Queensland and northern NSW.

The *Strategy's* vision for the Northern Rivers builds upon the existing road and rail networks already in place. The key proposed network changes are:

- Increased regional connectivity through improved B-Double access to:
 - » the Port of Brisbane, Southern Queensland and Brisbane through the Summerland Way, Clarence Way and modification to the Mt Lindesay Highway;
 - » Tenterfield and the New England Highway through the Bruxner Highway west of Casino and improved access through Lismore.
- The utilisation of the coastal railway and the under-construction Inland Rail corridor to create a rail shuttle to the Port of Brisbane and to Toowoomba/Wellcamp Airport. With new intermodal hubs at Kyogle, Casino and Grafton, provide direct access to rail from within the Region.

The *Strategy* has identified 20 initiatives (see overleaf) that together realise the vision for the freight and supply chain network and needs of the Northern Rivers Region. The initiatives operate at Global, National/State and Regional/Local tiers. A key part of the *Strategy* is **a new framework for regional collaboration** that engages broadly with industry and agency stakeholders, to deliver on the initiatives in this plan and allow for capacity building and resilience within the region for the future.

This *Strategy*, developed at the 'grassroots' through contact with primary producers, local boutique manufacturers, freight companies and local and state government officials, also identifies broad-based industry and agency collaboration as a key initiative to build and maintain resilience in the supply chain. This resilience, and the adaptive pathways that result from this, will be essential in the future context of ever-increasing change due to climate change, digital disruption, demographic change and the emergence of other unknowns.



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FREIGHT AND SUPPLY CHAIN INITIATIVES

1

Investigate alternative methods to reach the Port of Brisbane

2

Develop a concept for the Northern Rivers Rail Shuttle Transport Model

3

Improve presence of Northern Rivers businesses in foreign markets

4

Investigate alternative airports to service air-freight export needs (Toowoomba / Gold Coast)

5

Collaborate to improve use of climate controlled containers for fresh produce into international markets

6

Pursue opportunities for freight hubs that are located outside capital cities

7

Mt Lindesay Hwy / Summerland Way / Clarence Way Freight Road Network Upgrade

8

Upgrade the Bruxner Highway for B-Double access from Casino to Tenterfield / New England Highway

9

Collaborate to improve access to, reliability of, freight in the Region

10

Collaborate with markets and industry to develop a reliable 'packaging return' process

11

Priority initiatives from this Strategy to be further developed by Transport for NSW in the Northern Rivers Regional Future Transport Plan

12

Utilise the state approval framework / tool while at the same time keep local contact between local government and freight services providers

13

Better rest areas in better places

14

Develop a framework to assist Local Government to adapt to changing land use requirements

15

Develop a detailed understanding of the Freight and Supply Chain activity for each precinct in the Northern Rivers

16

Promote the use of the Northern Rivers freight model to make funding applications for individual first mile / last mile initiatives

17

Contribute to the development of a Northern Rivers Regional Food Strategy

18

Increase the transparency and sharing of information between supply and demand in the local food economy

19

Data Sharing within the Region for freight movements to better coordinate smaller scale movements

20

Regional Collaborative Group(s) to implement initiatives in the Strategy

The colours here represent the stakeholder groups which would generally progress the initiative

- Regional (Infrastructure)
- Regional (Non-Infrastructure)
- Transport Companies
- Local Government
- Precinct Implementation