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FREIGHT AND LOGISTICS COUNCIL OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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Mr R Waldock  
Director General of Transport  
Department of Transport  
140 William Street  
Perth WA 6000

Dear Reece

**'As-of-Right' Vehicles**

As you requested, the Council has been considering the issue of 'as-of-right' vehicles and their potential impact on the community. The focus of discussion has been on road activities associated with Fremantle Port and we have found a number of examples of port traffic using roads that some would consider unsuitable.

Related Government responses will become clearer when we have a defined freight network for Perth and surrounds. We are hopeful that the forthcoming Metropolitan Freight Strategy will move us in that direction. (The point has previously been made to you that the results of the Council's considerable efforts in the land use planning area will be significantly diminished without that network being in place.)

By definition, 'as-of-right' vehicles cannot be restricted to a freight network. However, if there is a defined network, its use by all road transport can be strongly encouraged.

Generic policy response to 'as-of-right' activity off the network is difficult. One option would be to make the category more restrictive to exclude the likes of container trucks. Another would be to traffic-calm problem streets to the point where it is operationally difficult for heavy vehicles to use them. Each of these options, however, would significantly disadvantage domestic freight activities that do need access to the full road system, be they involved in servicing shopping centres, construction sites or collecting household rubbish.

Our enquiries as to how other States deal with the issue bears out this observation. We have been unable to find any instance of broad-based Government policy addressing 'as-of-right' vehicle activity. The common approach appears to be one of dealing with the issue on a case-by-case basis, be it at State or Local Government level.

Signage is put up by road authorities restricting certain vehicle types on particular roads. Specific calming measures, such as height restrictions, are established by local authorities. These and other approaches are similarly followed in Western Australia.

On the basis of this discussion, our advice is that 'as-of-right' vehicles should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis with local solutions being the preferred approach. Moreover, the

trigger for such action should be community reaction from the immediate area and not some broader perceived concern about truck activity. That can be dealt with by more general policy measures, which as you know, are being considered presently.

The general issue of community reaction is pertinent. Our enquiries of agencies to whom concern is normally expressed shows no particular increase in complaints about heavy vehicles. It may well be that tolerance to trucks is growing. That is not reason to slow the development of policy to contain related impacts, but it certainly supports the position that local solutions to 'as-of-right' vehicles should not occur until triggered by community concerns in the immediate area. There is an argument that premature reaction at any level of Government may merely raise an issue that was previously not there.

We hope that this advice is of some assistance and we look forward to the completion of the Metropolitan Freight Strategy as an important step in putting some policy parameters around this discussion.

Yours sincerely



Dr Fred Affleck  
Chairman

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