

Corporate Plan

2025–26 to 2028–29

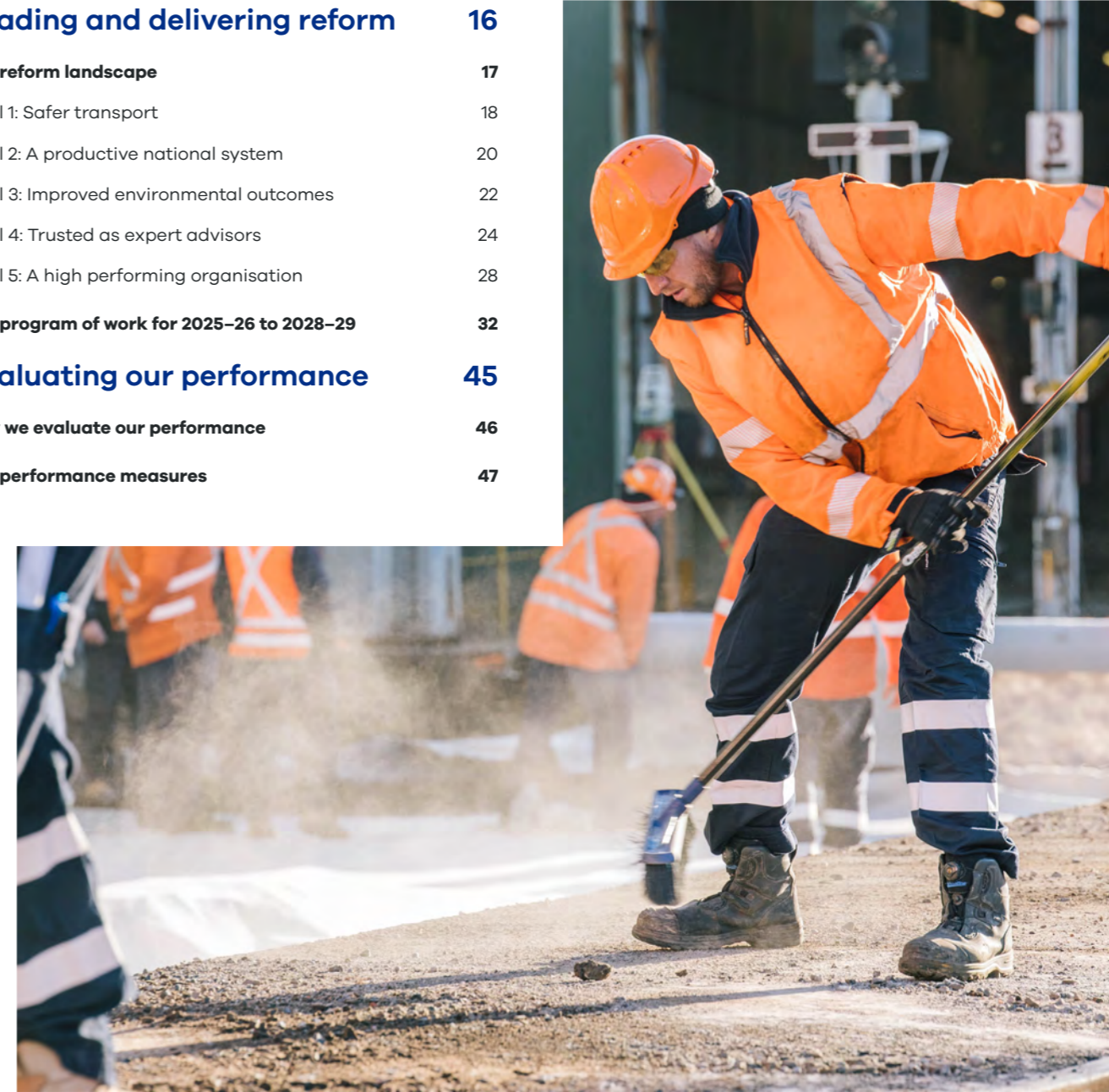




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The NTC acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of Country throughout Australia and acknowledge their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to the people, the cultures and the Elders past, present and emerging.



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Statement of preparation

I am pleased to present the 2025 NTC Corporate Plan for the four reporting periods from 2025–26 to 2028–29.



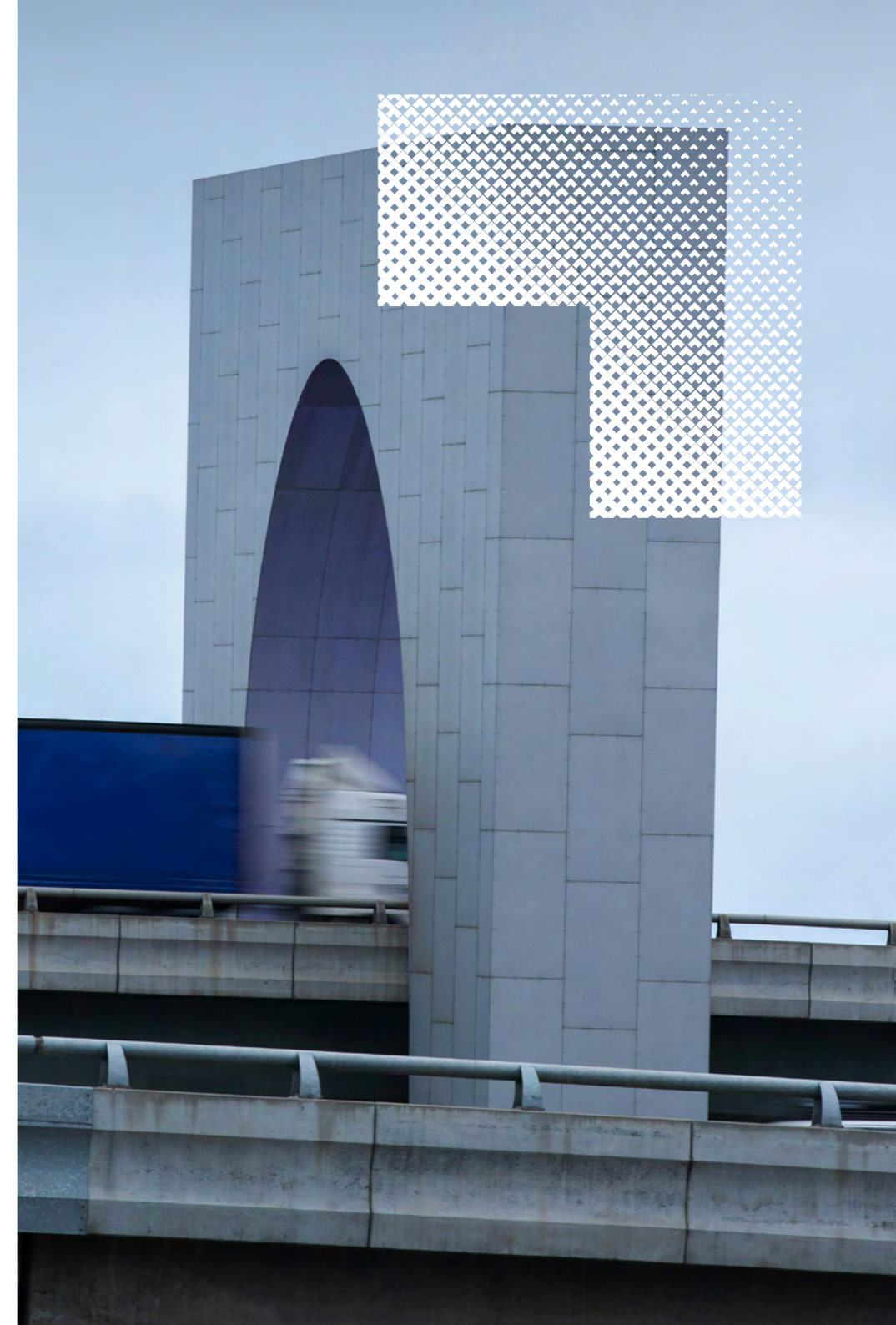
This plan is prepared in accordance with paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and in accordance with the Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014.

This corporate plan sets out the NTC's program of work for the next four years and how the NTC will collaborate with governments and stakeholders to deliver the reform priorities of Australian infrastructure and transport ministers.

This is a significant program of work which will deliver both short and long-term benefits for Australia. I am excited to see this program unfold and have confidence that the NTC is well placed to achieve those outcomes.



Carolyn Walsh
Chair of the National Transport Commission



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Foreword

While it is a truism to say that transport is a technology business, ultimately transport is all about people. Whether getting to work or school or being able to buy groceries that sit at the end of complex supply chains, or even having a career in one of the many opportunities that the transport sector offers, transport only exists to serve people.



At the NTC, this means we always need to think about the ultimate impacts of our work: on the safety of road and rail users; on the costs to those running businesses; and on the impact on future Australians of carbon emissions. And to do that we need to be good at listening.

We will continue our focus on improving our stakeholder engagement, and have already seen the value of early engagement on the forward work program set out in this Corporate Plan. Our engagement at all levels of industry—including more CEO and senior representative meetings, as well as industry forums and round tables—will continue to help us gauge the program priorities for peak bodies, operators and unions. Building these relationships opens the way for frank discussions on progress against our work program and any roadblocks standing in the way of delivering it.

Our work program across the next four years will see us engage with an even broader set of stakeholders as we deliver amendments to the Australian Road Rules setting new standards for child restraints in vehicles, and new standards for the health assessment for heavy vehicle drivers' fitness to drive.

The automated vehicle (AVs) program will prioritise the expected introduction of automated heavy vehicles and ride share services ahead of AVs for personal use,

and the need to update the Australian Road Rules to reflect greater automation. It will keep Australia on track to have the right legislative and regulatory arrangements in place so we don't miss out on the potential AV opportunities of safer, more productive transport that has fewer emissions, and that could ultimately provide greater access to transport for many Australians with limited options.

As members of the Australian Government's working group on decarbonising transport, the NTC will continue to deliver insights on the policy challenges of a shift to net zero emissions. A key pillar of this will be our annual research report on carbon dioxide emissions intensity for all light vehicles on our roads.

We are also supporting decarbonisation through further updates to the Heavy Vehicle National Law which will enable the adoption of new, more productive and efficient heavy vehicles. We will be working with industry and Australian governments to identify and progress further improvements and updates to the law to ensure it supports a rapidly evolving heavy vehicle sector.

Through our National Rail Action Plan (NRAP) we are delivering some of the biggest changes in rail since electrification and responding to priorities identified by all Australian governments. This includes



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establishing new mandatory standards for rail and creating agreements across a broad group of stakeholders on the rollout of interoperable signalling and communications technologies, driven by significant investments in new rail infrastructure.

Critical initiatives also include aligning the many rules that vary from network to network and harmonising rolling stock approvals. These rules and approvals currently make rail freight and passenger services both more expensive and inconsistent. For train drivers and other rail workers, harmonising differences will make driving trains less complex as rules won't always change from network to network or across state borders.

To support this important work in rail, we will also be implementing the recommendations of the review of Rail Safety National Law, which Ministers endorsed in 2024.

Historically, transport has lacked workforce diversity. This needs to change if rail is to attract the 70,000 new workers it will need over the next 10 years. We are working to make skills more portable for rail and setting a path to tackle the rail sector's need for technology workers to operate transformative new rail technologies.

Along with our skills recognition work through NRAP, we continue to grow the National Women in Transport initiative, highlighting the successful career paths of women leaders across the transport sector and promoting the real benefits of choosing a job in transport.

The Corporate Plan 2025-2029 sets out an expanded work program for the NTC that needs the right people with the right technical skills and expertise to deliver it. We have grown our workforce to enable this and have attracted new talent to deliver the changes in laws, regulations, policy, codes and guidelines that transport needs for the future. Our lawyers, economists, transport technology and policy experts, engagement professionals and corporate support share a commitment to transport reform and bring the heft needed to deliver it. Our people are the NTC and over the next four years we will continue to make the NTC a great place to work.

We can't do our work in isolation—our government partners, community, industry and union stakeholders are critical to delivering our program of work. I look forward to continuing to work with you over the next four years to create a safer, more productive and sustainable transport sector.

Michael Hopkins
Chief Executive Officer and Commissioner



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About the National Transport Commission

Our vision

The NTC advances social, economic, and environmental outcomes for all Australians through an efficient and integrated national land transport system.



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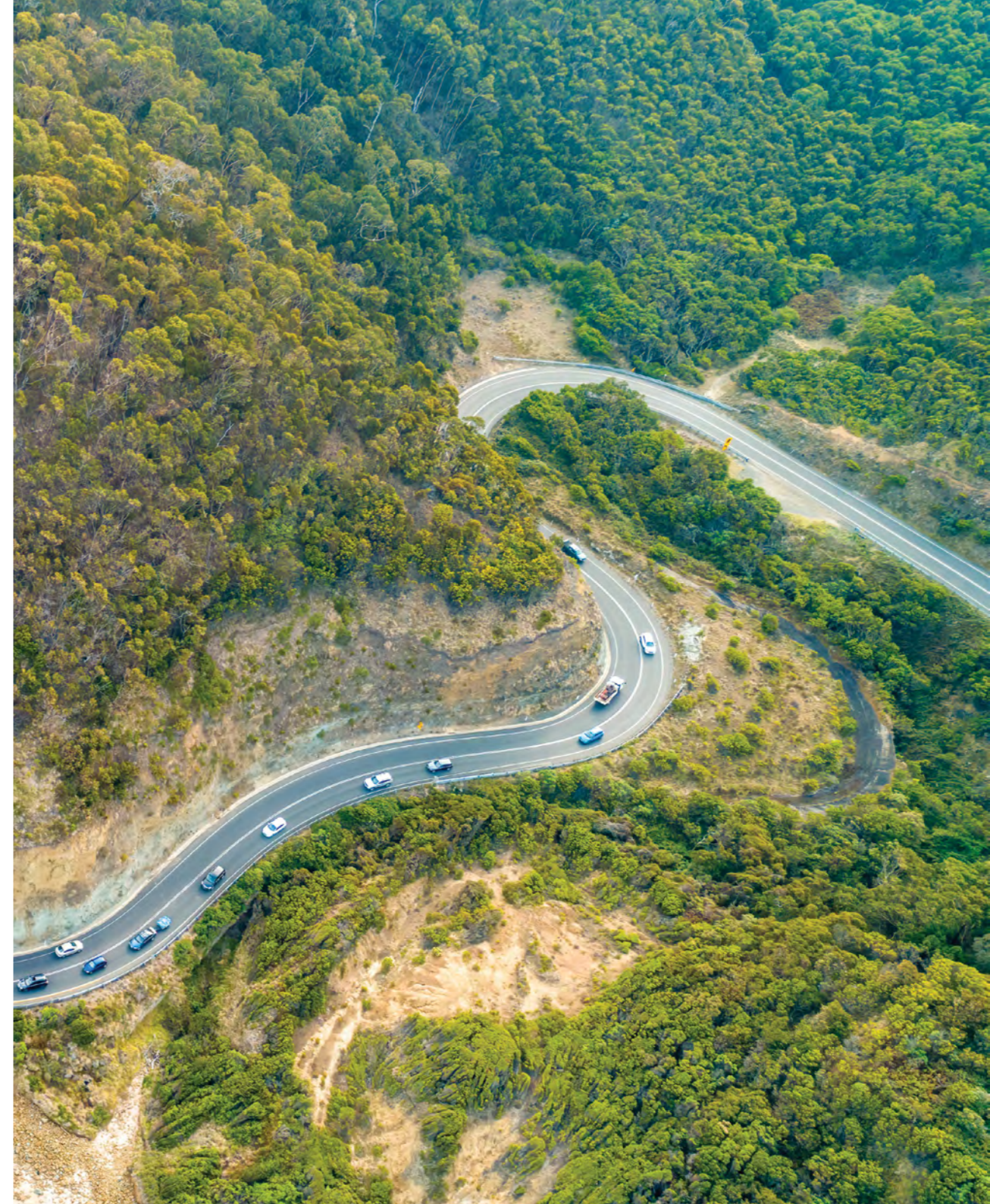
Who we are

Our purpose

We lead national land transport reform

The NTC leads national land transport reform in support of Australian governments to:

- improve safety, productivity, environmental outcomes and regulatory efficiency, and enable future transport technologies
- promote an integrated and nationally consistent land transport system
- help achieve the strategic objectives of Australia's infrastructure and transport ministers.



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Our strategic goals

The NTC has five strategic goals shaped around the priorities set out by Australia’s transport ministers and the *Inter-Governmental Agreement for Regulatory and Operational Reform in Road, Rail and Intermodal Transport*. These goals respond to our purpose and describe what we have been asked to achieve, and what we will focus on to deliver those outcomes:

‘Our reform landscape’ outlines how these goals relate to our wider environment and how the NTC is delivering on them.



Goal 1:
Safer transport

We progress a transport system that enables the safe movement of goods and people across Australia

The NTC will work towards this goal by focusing on:

- Reduction in road and rail fatalities, injuries, and other impacts from the transport system that are harmful to health and wellbeing
- Safe access to transport for all Australians
- Regulatory frameworks that promote a safe transport system



Goal 2:
A productive national system

We advance a seamless national transport system that is productive, resilient and sustainable now and in the future

The NTC will work towards this goal by focusing on:

- Interoperable transport system that enables the easy movement of people and goods across Australia and promotes a more competitive and resilient supply chain
- Future-ready transport workforce
- Regulatory frameworks that support competition and innovation



Goal 3:
Improved environmental outcomes

We help the transport system deliver better environmental outcomes

The NTC will work towards this goal by focusing on:

- Transport decarbonisation
- Prevention of environmental pollution and damage from transport
- Regulatory frameworks that promote environmentally sustainable outcomes



Goal 4:
Trusted as expert advisors

We are respected and trusted as expert advisors who act in the best interests of Australia

The NTC will work towards this goal by focusing on:

- High-quality advice based on robust and transparent policy practices
- Meaningful engagement and partnerships with a broad range of stakeholders
- Expertise in policy and regulatory reform and Australia’s transport system



Goal 5:
A high performing organisation

We are a high performing organisation with a culture of continuous improvement

The NTC will work towards this goal by focusing on:

- Excellence in public governance, performance and accountability
- A great place to work where all staff feel connected, engaged and valued
- Efficient and resilient systems and practices that support staff to deliver their work well

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Our role and functions

The NTC is a national land transport agency leading reform of Australia’s road, rail and intermodal transport systems. The NTC is accountable to all Australian governments with a focus on achieving truly national outcomes.

While Australia’s land transport system is national, it is managed and regulated by different governments, agencies and regulators. The legacy of a federation of states means different rules and practices were developed over time without a national focus.

The NTC’s role is to reform these complex arrangements to promote better national outcomes and ensure Australia’s transport systems work together.

The NTC does this by harmonising and improving laws, regulations and policies so the transport system works well for the people who use it, the freight that travels on it and the governments who manage and regulate it.

As a reform organisation, most of the NTC’s work contributes to shared and long-term objectives across the wider transport system and is implemented by others. While we develop and maintain laws, we don’t implement or administer them. The NTC’s focus is on getting the legislative, policy, and regulatory settings in place to deliver national benefits and prepare us for the future.

The NTC can only do this by always working closely with others. We deliver reform by working with the Commonwealth, states and territories, in consultation with a range of industry stakeholders and the broader community, to negotiate solutions for all Australians.

The NTC’s forward work program is agreed annually through the Infrastructure and Transport Ministers’ Meeting (ITMM). We deliver our program of work through a combination of formal regulatory and policy processes, and collaboration with others across the wider transport system:

- Coordination, facilitation and partnerships
- Regulatory reform, instruments, and frameworks
- Regulatory guidance
- Research, reporting and evaluation



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Coordination, facilitation and partnerships

The NTC works across the land transport system to bring the right people together and enable them to achieve better outcomes for the system as a whole.

In many cases solutions to policy problems are found by establishing common ground between our partners and helping align their efforts.

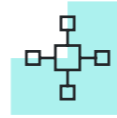
The NTC supports the Commonwealth, states, territories, and national regulators to implement policies and ensure these are aligned with other relevant work.

We also provide strategic advice on emerging issues and opportunities. When needed, we help progress policy recommendations through other decision-making bodies.

The NTC partners with other transport or government bodies, drawing on their expertise or role in the transport system to maximise opportunities to achieve national outcomes.

We work closely with a range of other transport bodies and have signed memorandums of understanding with our key partners the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator (ONRSR), the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) and Austroads.

The NTC also plays an active role in national strategies, working groups and steering committees.



Regulatory reform, instruments, and frameworks

The NTC designs and develops nationally consistent regulatory and operational arrangements and frameworks and is responsible for developing, maintaining and negotiating model and national law.

The NTC has a large ongoing program of work to maintain a suite of national laws, model laws and other instruments. This includes:

- Heavy Vehicle National Law – applied law that is hosted by Queensland
- Rail Safety National Law – applied law that is hosted by South Australia
- Australian Road Rules (model law)
- Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road or Rail (model law) and the Australian Code for the Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road and Rail.
- Heavy Vehicle Charges Regulations (model law)
- Australian (Light) Vehicle Standards Rules (model law)
- Australian Defence Force Road Transport Exemption Framework.

The focus of this work is to ensure these instruments remain contemporary and consistent with the policy intent. We also capitalise on any improvement opportunities that could offer broader value. We do this through a mix of regular amendment packages provided to ITMM, and larger more systemic reviews to identify where significant change is needed.

The NTC is also responsible for providing advice to governments on heavy vehicle charges (guided by the pricing principles agreed by Australia’s transport ministers).



Regulatory guidance

The NTC develops and maintains guidance material to complement the transport regulatory framework. This work helps support a range of transport system stakeholders.

Guidance material maintained by the NTC includes:

- Load Restraint Guide for light vehicles (Performance Standards for the Safe Carriage of Loads on Roads)
- Guidelines for Trials of Automated Vehicles in Australia – with Austroads
- Assessing Fitness to Drive for Commercial and Private Vehicle Drivers – with Austroads
- National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers.

In addition to publishing this guidance material, the NTC provides ongoing advice, clarification and information to all stakeholders to assist in understanding the policy intent of approved reforms.



Research, reporting and evaluation

The NTC provides regular analysis and reporting, including assessments of reform implementation.

The NTC is responsible for monitoring the implementation of agreed reforms and is expanding its role to deliver more comprehensive evaluations on the impact of existing reforms. Evaluations will assess whether the reforms fully achieved the expected benefits and identify additional actions that may be required.

The NTC’s regular reform monitoring and scheduled evaluations support ministers to determine the need for further action or reforms.

The NTC also undertakes research, as directed by ITMM, to support model and national law reform and broader strategic transport policy.

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Our governance and legislation

The NTC has around 55 staff who are policy, legal, engagement and economics specialists. The NTC is led by a Commission of six commissioners, including the Chief Executive Officer, with a head office in Melbourne and staff located across Australia. The NTC does not have any subsidiaries.

The NTC is accountable to Australian transport ministers through the Infrastructure and Transport Ministers' Meeting (ITMM). Made up of Commonwealth, state and territory ministers responsible for transport and infrastructure, ITMM also includes local government representation. We work closely with the ministers' advisory body, the Infrastructure and Transport Senior Officials' Committee (ITSOC). The committee includes the heads of Commonwealth, state and territory agencies as well as other transport bodies.

The *National Transport Commission Act 2003* (NTC Act) and the *Inter-Governmental Agreement for Regulatory and Operational Reform in Road, Rail and Intermodal Transport* (IGA) establish the NTC and define its role. Transport ministers determine the NTC's program of work, set out in this plan. This plan also describes how the NTC is responding to recommendations arising from the 2021 review of the NTC (a statutory review held every six years). A *Statement of Expectations and Performance-based framework* for the NTC provides us with further direction and guidance.



Our values

Care

- Passion to make the world a better place
- Committed to deliver the best possible outcomes
- Empathy and respect for all

Commitment

- Accountable for everything we do
- Dedicated to pursuing and delivering meaningful work
- Own our work from start to finish

Curiosity

- Embrace and seek innovation
- Listen to learn and be open-minded
- Show initiative and ask why at every turn

Collaboration

- Work together to achieve a common goal
- Embrace diversity and different perspectives
- Pitch in to support our peers

Courage

- Seek challenge and challenge others
- Resilience through adversity
- Foster a positive risk culture

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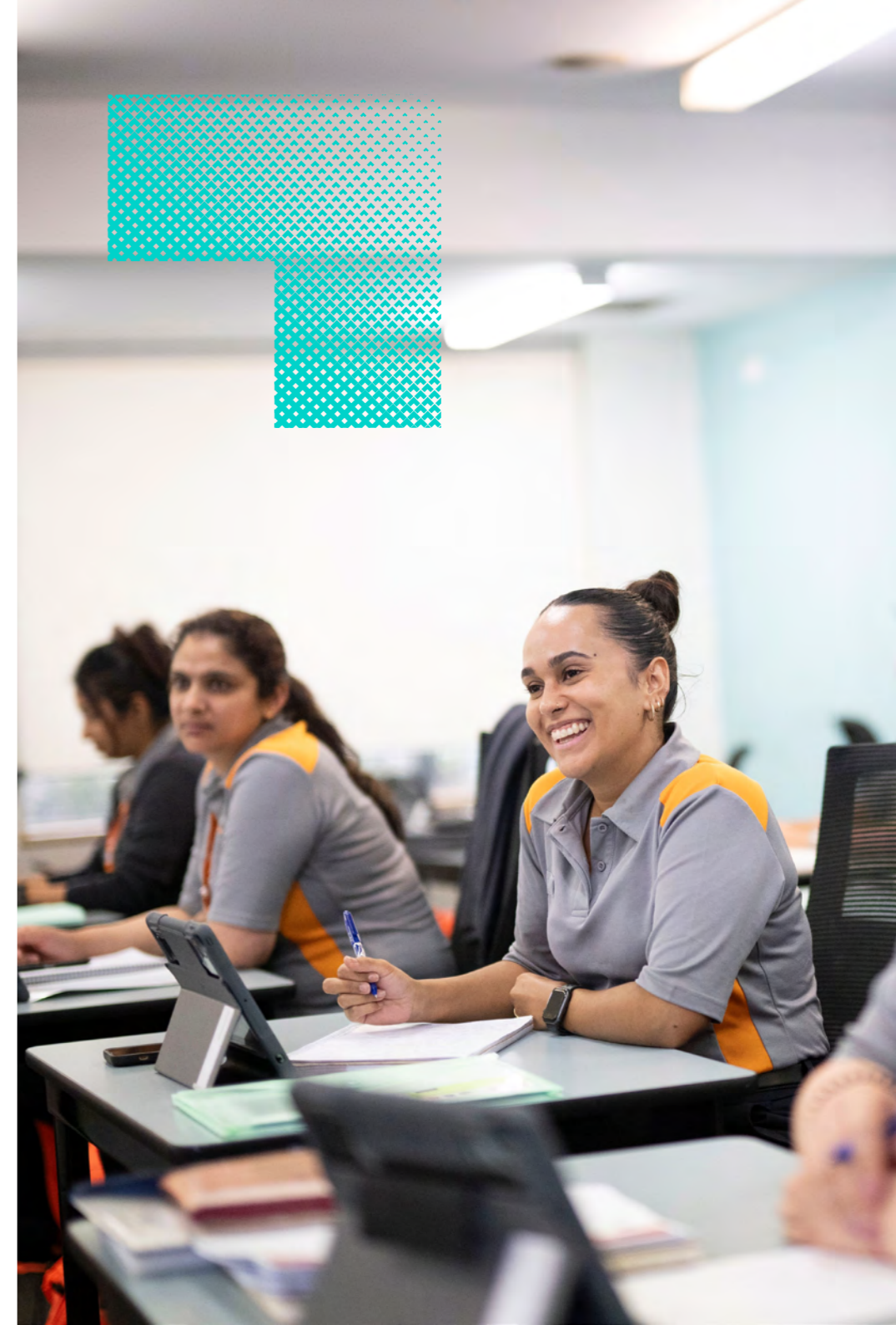
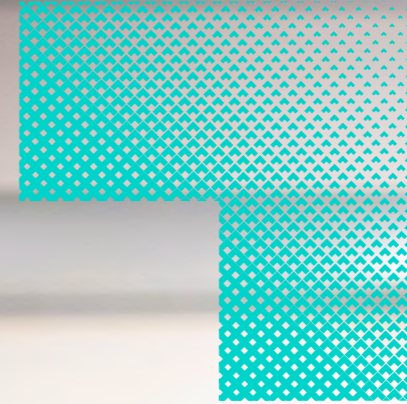
Our risk management and oversight

The NTC has an established risk management framework that provides a structured, ongoing process for the Commission, leadership team and staff to identify, assess, respond to and report on risks that could prevent the NTC from achieving its organisational objectives.

Risks are managed at the project, program and enterprise levels. Project and program risks are actively managed through our project management software and governance processes. Enterprise risks are compiled in an enterprise risk register, which the Risk, Audit and Governance Committee reviews at each meeting before reporting to the Commission. The committee assures the Commission that there are risk mitigation plans in place for all significant enterprise risks and that all other risks are being appropriately managed. Twice a year the committee also reassesses all risks in the register, including their controls and mitigation strategies, and reports back to the Commission.

The NTC's core values call for a positive risk culture – one that promotes an open and proactive approach to managing risk and considers threats and opportunities through a culture of transparency. In promoting a positive risk culture, the NTC is helping to ensure risks are appropriately identified, assessed, communicated and managed across all levels of the organisation.

Risk management training is provided to all staff on their induction, and discussions on risk and opportunity are an integral part of our governance and management meetings. The NTC has always incorporated 'lessons learned' into project closure processes and is looking to build on this further to ensure the organisation shares and learns from both successes and failures.



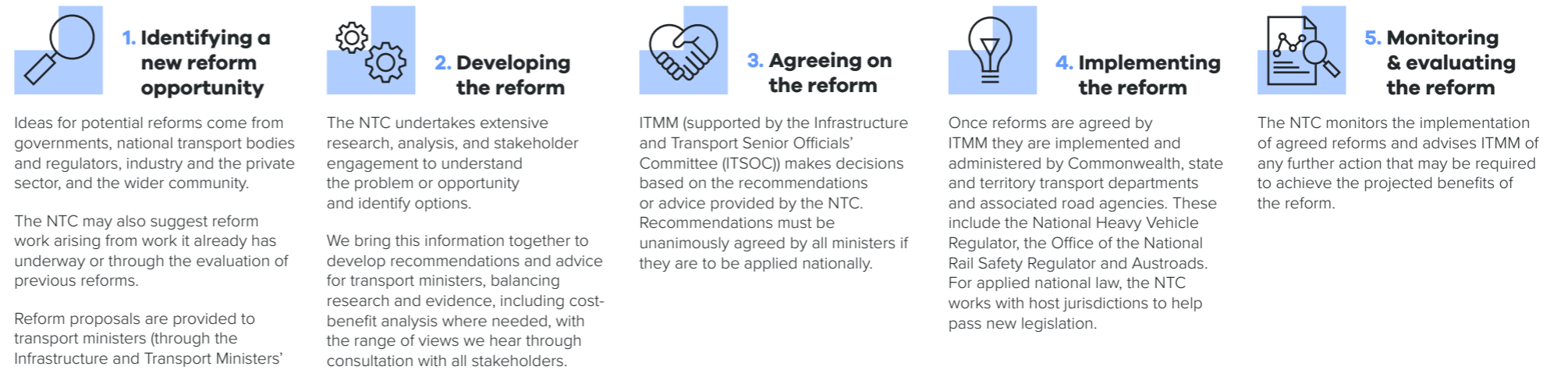
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How we deliver reform

The NTC works on challenges transport ministers ask us to. We help identify, explore, develop, and evaluate solutions to those challenges.

The reform process

In most cases, our reform work progresses through five stages, from the initial idea through to implementation and evaluation of the impact:



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Who we work with and how

Collaboration is at the core of NTC’s work. We can only deliver meaningful reform by engaging across transport system stakeholders. We engage broadly to identify, plan and co-create solutions that meet stakeholders’ needs.

Our engagement commitment

The NTC is committed to a set of engagement principles:

- We engage early and often and communicate at every stage.
- We tailor engagement to suit our stakeholders.
- We know why we are engaging and are transparent about the scope, process and outcomes.
- We take the time to understand our stakeholders, their values and their points of view.
- We are inclusive and seek a diversity of views.
- We listen at every stage and reflect and capture learnings.
- We are genuine, honest, respectful and transparent in how we engage.

Our transport system is becoming more interconnected and complex. It means working in partnership with others – both within and outside the traditional transport sphere – is increasingly the most effective way to achieve national objectives.

Within this environment, the NTC engages widely and acts as a facilitator across the system to deliver more through partnerships and collaboration. Our stakeholders include:



Infrastructure and transport ministers and senior officials



The Australian community



Industry, unions, workers and academia



National transport bodies and regulators



State, territory and Commonwealth governments and bodies



International partners



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Infrastructure and transport ministers and senior officials

The Infrastructure and Transport Ministers' Meeting (ITMM) sets the strategic direction and national transport agenda. The meeting is advised and assisted by the Infrastructure and Transport Senior Officials' Committee (ITSOC).

The NTC, alongside ITSOC, acts as an expert adviser to ITMM to support the delivery of the ministers' reform priorities and work plan. ITMM approves our work program and reform proposals by consensus.



The Australian community

The community is our biggest stakeholder as our reforms affect most Australians.

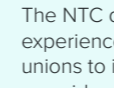
Good transport connections have direct benefits to people, businesses, the environment, and the overall economy. For example, good transport allows businesses to maintain their operations and keeps supply chains moving. It also allows individuals to connect with jobs, medical, educational and recreational facilities. With good transport links, our cities, regions and communities thrive.

We are focused on making it easier for the community to understand our role, engage with us and have a say on our work.



Industry, unions, workers and academia

Industry, the private sector, unions and academia are important partners as they are experts in their field, drivers of reform (for example as developers and users of new technology) and as regulated parties impacted by our reforms.



National transport bodies and regulators

National transport bodies and regulators have a significant role in Australia's transport system.

The NTC maintains robust, effective and collaborative working relationships with our partner transport entities to achieve transport ministers' objectives:

- **Austroads** – systems and research to harmonise practice and improve guidance for road transport managers
- **National Heavy Vehicle Regulator** – regulatory oversight of heavy vehicle safety and productivity in Australia
- **Office of National Rail Industry Coordination** – coordination of a national approach to building capability in the rail manufacturing sector
- **Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator** – regulatory oversight of rail safety in Australia
- **National Transport Research Organisation (formerly Australian Road Research Board)** – independent transport knowledge and research
- **Rail Industry Safety and Standards Board** – development of Australia's standards, codes of practice, guidelines and rules for the rail sector
- **Transport Certification Australia** – assurance in the use of telematics and related intelligent technologies.



State, territory and Commonwealth governments and bodies

Australian governments are invested in the NTC's work as they are responsible for implementing reforms.

Australian governments reach agreement on the NTC's work and reforms through ITSOC and ITMM. The NTC works closely with transport agencies and research bodies, police and work health and safety agencies to ensure our proposals are practical, supported and represent the best possible national solution.

The NTC develops policy recommendations and legislation in close collaboration with the Office of Impact Analysis and the Australasian Parliamentary Counsel's Committee.



International partners

The NTC works with the United Nations and international counterparts and organisations to ensure Australia's transport regulation aligns with international practices, systems and approaches, particularly in enabling new technologies and ensuring a safe transport system.



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Leading and delivering reform

This section outlines the NTC’s operating context:

- **Our reform landscape sets out what we are aiming to achieve (our goals) and the environment we work in, and how we are delivering our goals within that context.**
- **Our program of work for 2025–26 to 2028–29 provides more detail on the specific pieces of work the NTC will be undertaking over the next four years.**



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Our reform landscape

Transport ministers (through the Infrastructure and Transport Ministers' Meeting) have outlined five key priorities for the national transport bodies that report to them:

- Improving interoperability of rail systems and streamlining approval processes for national transport infrastructure projects
- Decarbonisation of infrastructure and transport
- Heavy vehicle productivity
- Road safety
- Market capacity constraints affecting the construction industry.

These priorities align with those of the *Inter-Governmental Agreement for Regulatory and Operational Reform in Road, Rail and Intermodal Transport*: to improve safety, productivity, environmental outcomes and regulatory efficiency.

These priorities are reflected in the NTC's five strategic goals, which set out how we will deliver on our purpose. This section outlines the challenges, opportunities, and key risks for each of our goals, and how the NTC is responding to these through our program of work and our capability – the skills, expertise, and organisational capability that enable us to deliver our program of work.

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Goal 1: **Safer transport**

We progress a transport system that enables the safe movement of goods and people across Australia.



Transport plays a critical role in connecting people and businesses, promoting economic growth, and improving quality of life. However, the transport system also poses safety risks in the form of accidents and health hazards such as air and noise pollution. Safe access to transport is essential for enabling people to fully participate in society and access the opportunities and services they need.

Safer transport is a priority for all Australian governments. The National Road Safety Strategy sets out targets to reduce the annual number of fatalities by at least 50 per cent and serious injuries by at least 30 per cent by 2030. Meeting these targets will require a broad range of solutions, including new technology, a focus on human behaviour and fitness to drive (mental and physical health), and a foundation of laws, standards, and guidelines that are human-centric and effective.

The development and uptake of new technology will be a significant factor in improving safety and wellbeing. More automated vehicles are expected to improve road safety in a number of ways, including reducing human error and reacting faster to unexpected events on the road. Safety outcomes will also be achieved through newer vehicles. New technology is a feature in other vehicle types and how people access and use transport. There is increasing consumer demand for alternative or more flexible transport options such as e-scooters and Mobility-as-a-Service schemes.

The NTC will work towards a safer transport system by focusing on the following:

- Reduction in road and rail fatalities, injuries, and other impacts from the transport system that are harmful to health and wellbeing
- Safe access to transport for all Australians
- Regulatory frameworks that promote a safe transport system



Focus area: Reduction in road and rail fatalities, injuries, and other impacts from the transport system that are harmful to health and wellbeing

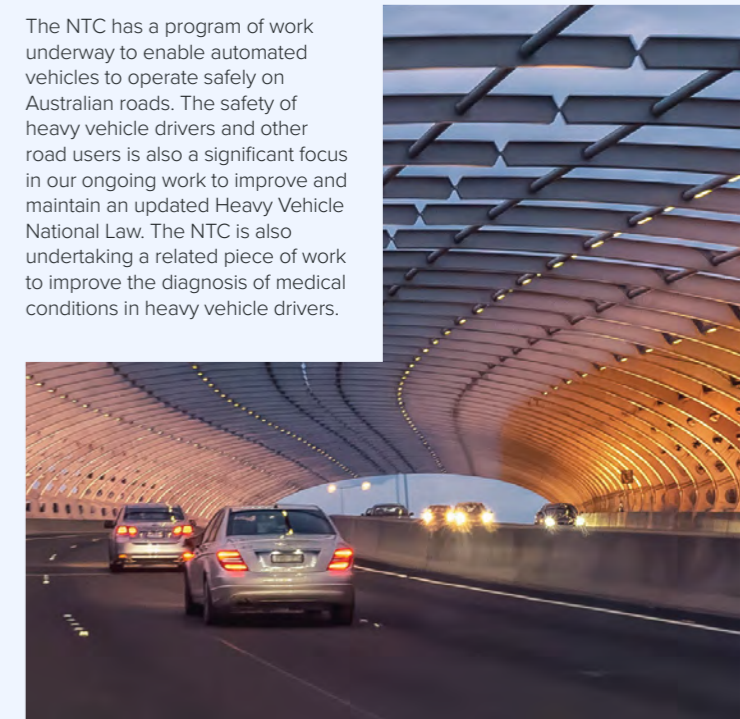
The NTC's work focuses on promoting the safe movement of people, freight and services while managing the challenges and opportunities posed by evolving technology. Our work will also be guided by [the National Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030](#).

The NTC has a program of work planned to review and maintain safety-focused legislation, standards, and guidelines for road and rail, including:

- The Australian Code for the safe transport of dangerous goods over land (and related guidelines and model laws)
- The Australian Light Vehicle Standards Rules which regulate in-service vehicle standards for light vehicles such as for vehicle emissions and car safety standards.
- The Rail Safety National Law (RSNL) which aims for a seamless and coordinated national approach to rail safety regulation in Australia.
- The load restraint guidelines for light vehicles
- Assessing Fitness to Drive (AFTD) standards (a joint NTC and Austroads publication) which contains nationally agreed medical standards for granting a driver's license.
- The National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers which is used by accredited health professionals to carry out health assessments of rail safety workers.

Significant safety outcomes will be delivered by our larger reform programs. The NTC is leading major reform in the rail sector to improve interoperability. An interoperable network will deliver safety benefits through improved management of train interactions with other trains, track workers, and level crossings. Harmonisation of network rules will minimise the risk of confusion between different systems which has proven to be a contributing factor to safety incidents.


The NTC has a program of work underway to enable automated vehicles to operate safely on Australian roads. The safety of heavy vehicle drivers and other road users is also a significant focus in our ongoing work to improve and maintain an updated Heavy Vehicle National Law. The NTC is also undertaking a related piece of work to improve the diagnosis of medical conditions in heavy vehicle drivers.



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The NTC’s work addresses some of the secondary impacts from the transport system on health and wellbeing. Our program of work on the safe transportation of dangerous goods minimises the risk of accidents, such as spills, leaks, or explosions, that can cause injury or death. Safe transportation practices also help ensure that emergency responders are prepared and equipped to respond to any accidents involving dangerous goods. The NTC is undertaking a comprehensive review of the land transport of dangerous goods code to improve alignment with the United Nations agreement and make requirements easier to understand.


Exhaust pipe pollutants are linked to health impacts including causing respiratory illnesses and cancer, and impairing decision-making and cognitive functioning. The NTC will be helping to address this through our work on vehicle standards (which includes engine break noise limits and exhaust noise), facilitating zero and low emission heavy vehicles, more comprehensive reporting on CO₂ emissions from light vehicles and our focus on transport decarbonisation.

 **Focus area: Safe access to transport for all Australians**

Safe access to transport is the ability of individuals to safely and easily access various modes of transportation, including improving mobility for vulnerable groups. The NTC’s regulatory reform work contributes to improving safe access to transport, both in enabling new and innovative transport options, and in supporting vulnerable groups.

The NTC reviews the model Australian Road Rules every two years. These rules are relevant to transport accessibility as they contain the basic road rules for all road users including those using motorised mobility devices (for example powered wheelchairs) and personal mobility devices (for example electric scooters). The NTC is also reviewing requirements for child restraints in vehicles which will improve the safety of our most vulnerable road users.

The commercial deployment of automated vehicles is expected to improve mobility for vulnerable groups who may have difficulty driving themselves. Ensuring these benefits are realised will be a consideration for the NTC as it develops the regulatory framework to enable the safe use of automated vehicles in Australia.

 **Focus area: Regulatory frameworks that promote a safe transport system**

Australia’s regulatory framework plays a critical role in creating a safe transport system. The NTC’s work in developing and maintaining laws, standards, and guidelines supports safety across Australia’s transport system. Our focus on national consistency and clarity makes it easier for people to behave in a safe way and access safer transport options.

Where possible, the NTC takes a ‘technology-neutral’ approach when reviewing and developing regulatory instruments to enable the roll-out of new technology that offers safety benefits. A big focus for us is in ensuring old and new technologies are interoperable and able to safely fit together.

In addition to maintaining safety-specific laws and other regulatory instruments, the NTC applies a safety lens when reviewing other instruments or developing new regulatory frameworks, such as the reform to enable automated vehicles at all levels of automation and implementing the findings from the targeted review of the Rail Safety National Law.



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Goal 2: **A productive national system**

We advance a seamless national transport system that is productive, resilient and sustainable now and in the future

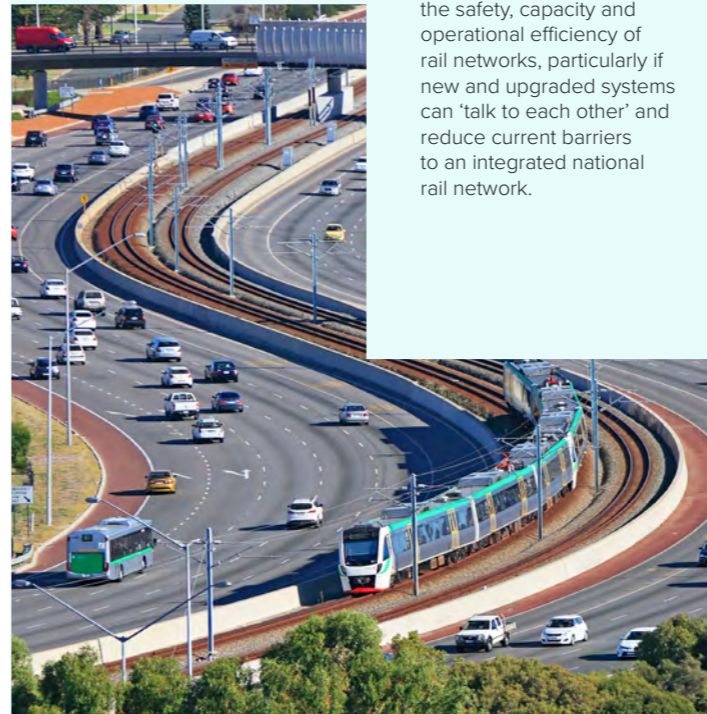


Australia's transport and logistics sector across road and rail is facing significant change and economic challenges. An interoperable and harmonised transport system is critical to unlocking productivity gains for Australia. As well as making it easier to move people and goods across the country, this leads to a more resilient transport system that is less reliant on bespoke and inconsistent vehicles, technology, practices, and skills.

Australia's federal legacy has left a patchwork of transport laws and regulations across state and territory borders. This challenge is particularly evident in Australia's rail system where legacy issues have resulted in 11 different signalling and control systems across 29 networks. Significant reform is needed to enable it to be competitive and perform as an integrated modern railway network.

This has been recognised at the national level, with rail interoperability being one of eight federation reforms which Australia's National Cabinet has chosen to focus on. Rail is critical to Australia's economy, moving passengers and freight across the country and through key ports. With a \$154 billion pipeline of rail projects underway, rail will drive productivity and support Australia's global competitiveness.

Interoperability and harmonisation of standards and working practices are central to the NTC's 4-year National Rail Action Plan. Current investments in modern signalling and train control systems have the potential to significantly enhance the safety, capacity and operational efficiency of rail networks, particularly if new and upgraded systems can 'talk to each other' and reduce current barriers to an integrated national rail network.



Heavy vehicle productivity is also a high priority for transport ministers, reflecting the importance of this transport sector to Australia's economy. The disruption to freight and supply chains resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic created new challenges and showed the need for regulations that are flexible and able to respond to a dynamic environment.

Technology is changing the face of the transport system and it is critical that Australia's transport system can easily adopt and benefit from new technology that offers productivity gains, such as more automated vehicles, vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-infrastructure technology and new technologies deployed in heavy vehicles.

The transport workforce is facing significant labour and skill shortages. These shortages are expected to get bigger as the transport task grows and evolves with new technologies. Transport has an aging labour workforce, with shortages further compounded by a lack of diversity: women make up only 27% of Australia's transport workforce across rail, road, sea, and air. The adoption of new technology requires a workforce with new skills. The transport sector needs to attract a new generation of workers and more people from a range of backgrounds and with a wide range of skills.

The skills shortage in the rail sector is compounded by a lack of standardisation in rail skills and mutual recognition of the skilled workforce. Training in rail skills is mostly bespoke and often not recognised across networks or borders. New workers don't have a clear picture of what skills and training they need to enter the industry at different levels and how careers in rail can develop.

The NTC will respond to these challenges and opportunities by focusing on:

- Interoperable transport system that enables the easy movement of people and goods across Australia and promotes a more competitive and resilient supply chain
- Future-ready transport workforce
- Develop national approaches to digital skills capability development



Focus area: Interoperable transport system that enables the easy movement of people and goods across Australia and promotes a more competitive and resilient supply chain

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The NTC has a core role in harmonising our regulatory frameworks to create a single national market where possible. We work to make transport laws, regulations and standards simple and consistent across Australia, making the transport system easier to use and understand.

Advancing rail interoperability through the National Rail Action Plan is a program of nationally significant reform and is a large part of the NTC's work program in the next few years. Together with all governments, industry and unions, NTC is leading work to increase the levels of interoperability and harmonisation across Australia's rail system to maximise the benefits from the record investment and reduce variation while preparing for the digitisation and decarbonisation of the sector.

The National Rail Action Plan will continue to progress the following work to improve the interoperability of rail systems:

- Set a policy direction for an interoperable train control and signalling pathway for Australia, prioritising the east coast.
- Advance industry consultation on rail governance reforms to support the development and adoption of nationally harmonised standards on the National Network for Interoperability (NNI)
- Conduct a Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) to implement recommendations identified in the Rail Safety National Law (RSNL) review that strengthen interoperability requirements.
- Progress a pilot for a nationally, streamlined application to registering rolling stock
- Reduce operational variation to increase labour mobility.
- Develop a national approach to building digital skills capability, starting with digital train control technology.

A key component of the national rail reform via NTC's National Rail Action Plan is the development of a national approach to rail standards, technology, rolling stock approvals, network operations and skills development. Advancing the development of the National Rail Standards Framework and associated governance arrangements is central to enabling this national approach and will identify the regulatory tasks, functions and ownership needed to create greater harmonisation and interoperability.

The NTC is delivering this important reform in close collaboration with the Australian Government, state and territory governments, the rail industry, unions and the skills and training sector.

The NTC is continuing work to update and modernise the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) to improve consistency and efficiency in regulating heavy vehicles in Australia.

We will also be supporting governments to invest in building and maintaining productive and safer roads through our program of work on heavy vehicle charges. These charges aim to recover heavy vehicle related expenditure on roads from heavy vehicle operators.

Over the next few years, the NTC will be developing an improved approach for setting heavy vehicle charges, moving from a backward-looking to a forward-looking cost recovery mechanism. This is a more efficient and best-practice approach that will make the charges less volatile for the heavy vehicle industry and provide greater certainty and predictability for both heavy vehicle operators and road managers, enabling them to plan accordingly.

The NTC will also be undertaking work to make the Australian Defence Force Road Transport Exemption Framework more efficient and accessible by transitioning it onto a geospatial web-based tool. This Framework aims to reduce risk and minimise damage to roads and related structures from Australian Defence Force vehicles and equipment on public roads.

Focus area: Future-ready transport workforce

The NTC is working with industry, governments and worker's representatives on a range of initiatives to broaden the labour pool and future proof the workforce.

The NTC is managing the National Women in Transport initiative to showcase, support and increase the number of Australian women working in transport. This is an initiative of Australia's infrastructure and transport ministers and was established by the NTC through a partnership between government and industry. The NTC will collaborate with partners to continue driving this initiative. Our focus will be on maintaining our **speaker bureau** of senior women in transport, and taking action to improve the visibility of women in transport and connect them the networks and resources they need.

The NTC has a significant program of work underway to address the skills and labour shortage in the rail sector. Australia needs to double the number of people working in rail and attract new skills into the sector. To address these challenges, the NTC is undertaking initiatives to increase mutual recognition of rail skills, harmonise operating rules, and develop a national approach to building future digital skills. The NTC's work will make it easier for people to move to where the work is and have their skills

recognised. Reducing operational variation across networks will increase productivity, reduce risks to transport infrastructure delivery and make rail a more competitive freight option. The work supports national rail interoperability by considering the future workforce needs with the adoption of digital signalling and communication systems. The NTC's work also supports industry initiatives that will make rail an industry of choice for women and marginalised communities.

The NTC has recently joined a Champions of Change Rail Group comprised of senior leaders from organisations accounting for over 32,000 employees across the Australian rail industry. The Group is dedicated to developing women leaders at every level, creating inclusive workplace cultures, and enabling more women and girls to pursue careers in the rail sector.

Focus area: Regulatory frameworks that support competition and innovation

The NTC works in close partnership with others to ensure new and existing laws, standards and regulations are aligned across jurisdictions and meet the expectations of industry and stakeholders.

Productivity is a key element in almost all the regulatory instruments we maintain, and always a consideration when developing new frameworks (for example, our work on a technology and data framework for heavy vehicles and how to regulate automated vehicles). The NTC also maintains regulatory instruments that have strong productivity elements, including our program on vehicle standards. Our approach is to develop more streamlined, technology-neutral, and outcome-focused regulation that helps address future challenges and disruptions and supports a more efficient and productive freight sector.

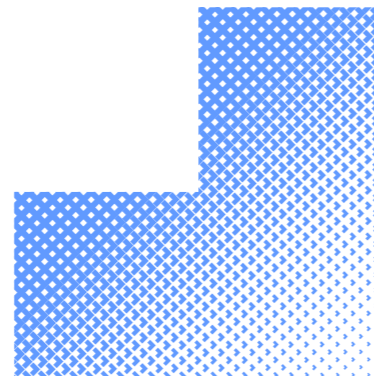
Aligning rail signalling systems on the eastern seaboard, developing a set of critical standards, harmonisation of train components and national skills recognition being delivered through the National Rail Action Plan are firmly focused on lifting the productivity of rail through regulation where it is necessary.

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Goal 3: Improved environmental outcomes

We help the transport system deliver better environmental outcomes



Transport is a major contributor to CO2 emissions and pollution including via NOx, SOx, and diesel particulates, leading to widespread environmental impacts and climate change. In Australia, the transport sector is the third largest greenhouse gas emitter, responsible for around 19 per cent of emissions. Transport is expected to become the largest source of emissions by 2030. The environmental impacts of transport also extend beyond emissions. Transportation of toxic or hazardous chemicals can lead to air, ground, or water pollution, and the transport system also affects the ecosystem around it – for instance, through noise, habitat loss, and fragmentation.

In 2022, Australia’s Infrastructure and Transport Ministers agreed on ‘decarbonisation of infrastructure and transport’ as one of their key focus areas. Transport can be particularly difficult to decarbonise because many abatement technologies are currently commercially unviable or not sufficiently mature for use. Heavy and long-distance vehicles in particular pose a challenge for electric and H2 technology uptake. With a significant decarbonisation task ahead, global and Australian commitments to net-zero present an opportunity to develop a collaborative and consistent approach across national jurisdictions for emissions and pollution reduction in transport.

The NTC is also aligned with the Australian Government’s commitment to achieve net zero in government operations by 2030. We report on our environmental performance and greenhouse gas emissions in our Annual Report, and have appointed a Chief Sustainability Officer role to champion and help shape a culture of sustainability across the organisation.

To respond to these challenges and government priorities, the NTC’s work will focus on the following areas:

- Transport decarbonisation
- Prevention of environmental pollution and damage
- Regulatory frameworks that promote environmentally sustainable outcomes



Focus area: Transport decarbonisation

The Commonwealth and all states and territories have committed to economy-wide net-zero 2050 targets. Some jurisdictions have committed to earlier targets for low and zero emissions with various programs including the increased usage of zero emission (powered by renewable energy) buses over the coming years.

The NTC has been reporting annually on the CO2 emissions intensity of new light vehicles since 2009 to provide a transparent benchmark on how Australia’s car emission performance is tracking. For the first time in 2024, the report was expanded to include data from nearly 17 million light vehicles registered in Australia since 2003 and still on the road today. The comprehensive report gives the most detailed picture of emissions trends in Australia’s light vehicle fleet, to help governments, industry stakeholders and everyday drivers make more informed decisions to support transport decarbonisation.

Much of the NTC’s work supports decarbonisation in a more indirect way. One of these ways is how our work influences the efficiency and environmental sustainability of different transport modes, particularly in the freight sector. Removing impediments to heavy vehicle and rail operators from investing in and using more efficient practices, and facilitating freight to be transported by the most effective mode can reduce emissions by up to 75%.

The NTC’s rail reform work is expected to drive network efficiencies and make rail more productive and sustainable. Further, this work aims to align digital technological innovations, standards, and skills training that will drive rail interoperability and harmonisation initiatives across jurisdictions so that rail operates more seamlessly.

Similarly, other law reform to enable newer (lower-emission) and more innovative vehicles may lead to better environmental outcomes. A new regulatory framework will enable deployment of automated vehicles (AVs), which may positively impact transportation sector emissions through higher efficiency vehicles and transformation of traditional consumer patterns and car ownership models.

The NTC’s work also informs the Government’s Transport and Infrastructure Net Zero Roadmap and approach to decarbonisation. In particular, freight efficiency initiatives to ensure heavy vehicles are less energy intensive per tonne/km, and a recent evaluation of electric buses assessing a potential transition to zero emissions buses across jurisdictions. This evaluation supports jurisdictions to build on practical actions to support the electrification of transport, both for road and rail, and offers a shared national approach for the transition and operation of electric bus fleets.

Future programs of work to support decarbonisation efforts are likely to emerge from the NTC’s participation as a member of the Decarbonisation of Transport Working Group (DTWG) convened under ITMM and chaired by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts. Through this group there are potential opportunities for the NTC to play a greater role in coordinating and monitoring sector-wide efforts to decarbonise transport. The NTC is also represented on other industry and government working groups looking at decarbonisation and environmental sustainability.

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Focus area: Prevention of environmental pollution and damage from transport

Safe transportation of dangerous goods can help reduce the risk of environmental contamination, while protecting natural resources and wildlife. The NTC program of work to maintain and improve how we ensure the safe transport of dangerous goods reduces the likelihood of hazardous materials being released into the environment. It also plays a part in enabling the transportation (and therefore use) of greener solutions such as electric vehicles and hydrogen.

The NTC's work on the transportation of dangerous goods is closely aligned with the United Nations (UN) model which in turn is aligned to the UN's [Sustainable Development Goals](#).



Focus area: Regulatory frameworks that promote environmentally sustainable outcomes

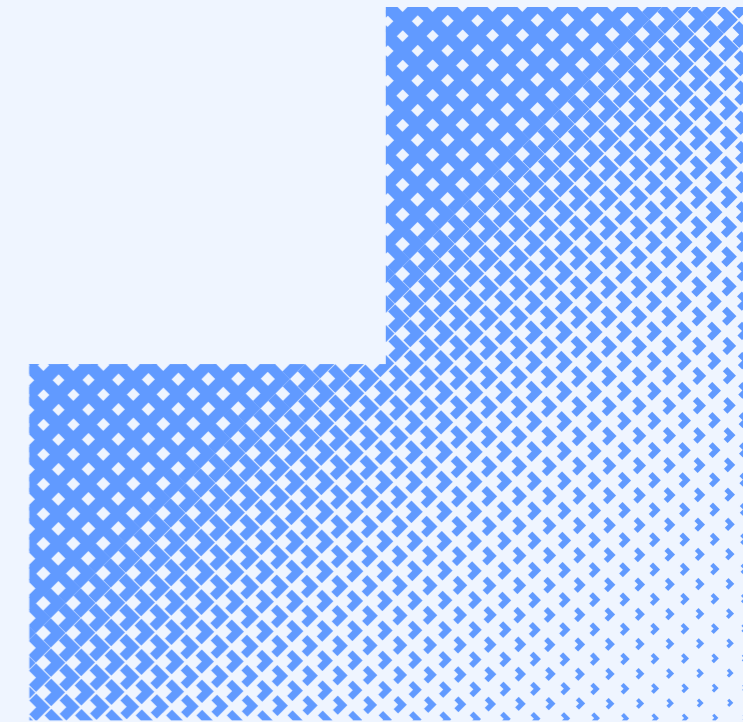
Improving the environmental profile of transport calls for significant societal and economic changes. The right regulatory frameworks need to be in place to enable these shifts to occur. The NTC is responsible for ensuring laws, regulatory instruments, and frameworks are contemporary and fit for purpose. Increasingly, that includes developing or reviewing them with an environmental lens. This environmental lens can be seen across the NTC's program of work, particularly in our work on heavy vehicles, enabling new technology, and the safe transport of dangerous goods.

Australia is phasing in the Australian Design Rule (ADR) 80/04, which requires cleaner Euro-VI standards for new truck sales from November 2024. Newer technologies, including hydrogen and battery-electric trucks are now entering Australia and will be more prevalent in the coming years. Battery electric and hydrogen vehicles are heavier than internal combustion engine vehicles, which presents policy and infrastructure capacity

challenges. In November 2024, new regulations prepared by the NTC allowed increased mass limits for most ADR 80/04 compliant trucks, with further work continuing for some specific vehicle types. The NTC is currently developing policy and regulatory reforms to increase mass limits for these vehicles to minimise any impact on access and productivity.

It is also a priority for the NTC to consider how heavy vehicle mass regulations can be updated to enable access to a broader range of these zero and low emission vehicles. Further, the NTC maintains the Australian Light Vehicle Standards Rules which regulate in-service vehicle standards for light vehicles. These standards cover areas such as light vehicle emissions.

By participating in the Commonwealth's Decarbonisation of Transport Working Group, additional opportunities may arise for the NTC to identify regulatory barriers to transport decarbonisation across jurisdictions, consider a new AV regulatory framework, and explore legislative and policy amendments to enable zero emission trucks and buses.



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Goal 4: Trusted as expert advisors

We are respected and trusted as expert advisors who act in the best interests of Australia



The NTC operates in a complex and dynamic transport environment where responsibility for transport reform is shared across all levels of government, other agencies and regulators.

The NTC's Statement of Expectations from ministers sets the expectation that the commission will "act as an expert adviser to the Infrastructure and Transport Ministers' Meeting on reform development, implementation and evaluation". The NTC is independent of any one government – we are accountable to all Australian governments.

That independence makes us uniquely placed to provide unbiased advice that genuinely seeks the best outcomes for Australia as a whole, but we also need the confidence of our stakeholders in our ability to deliver that advice. The quality of our work and the practices that underpin it need to be to a very high standard to earn and maintain that trust and respect.

To be successful in this environment we need to be agile, effective engagers who are experts in navigating public policy and engaging industry to deliver reform. We also need to be aware of and responsive to change so we can deliver transport policy that keeps pace with technology, changing expectations and economic realities.

To ensure we meet the standard expected of us, the NTC will focus on our capability for the following areas:

- High-quality advice based on robust and transparent policy practices
- Meaningful engagement and partnerships with a diverse range of stakeholders
- Expertise in regulatory reform and Australia's transport system



Focus area: High-quality advice based on robust and transparent policy practices

Contemporary approach to policy development and evaluation

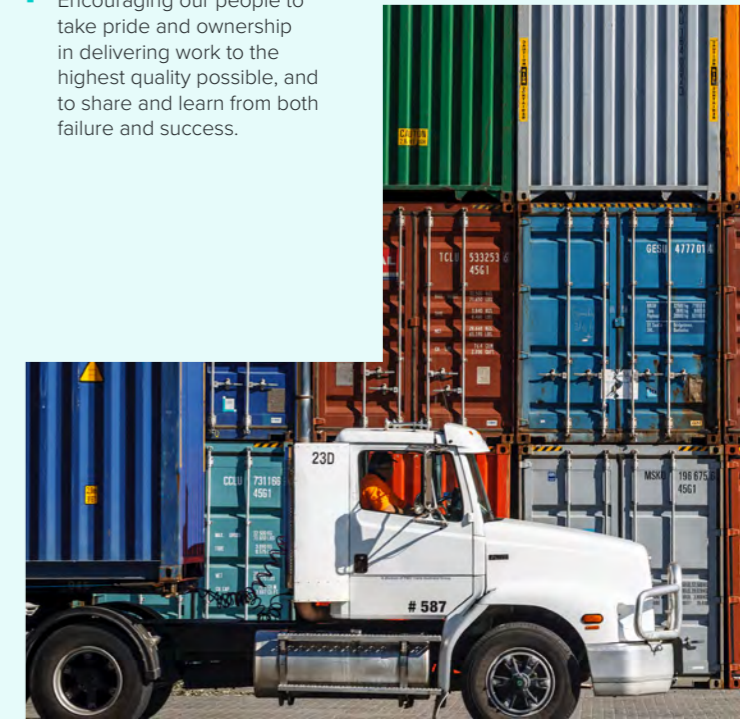
The NTC needs to deliver clear and compelling advice that provides all the information required to make change. The quality of the advice we provide is reliant on the quality of our policy processes – the steps we take to identify the best possible solutions, and how well we communicate that to the

relevant audiences. We need to ensure our policy design and evaluation is contemporary and draws on a range of disciplines to combine research, qualitative and quantitative analysis, and deep critical thinking.

The NTC recently developed a comprehensive evaluation framework and practices to better evaluate the outcomes of national transport reforms, whether economic and safety benefits have been achieved and to what extent. Our ongoing program of evaluation work will enable us to provide advice on the value and impact of transport reforms and further opportunities for improvement. This builds on the NTC's existing work providing independent reform monitoring for transport ministers.

We will continue to enhance our policy approach through:

- Expanding our evaluation capability and capacity, with a focus on economics and data analytics.
- Challenging and testing our reform ideas and proposals in formal peer forums to drive outcomes-thinking.
- Exploring options to make our policy development processes more agile and responsive.
- An ongoing program of in-house discussion forums, guest speakers, and professional development to improve our policy and reform expertise, and how we engage.
- Continuing to refine how co-design principles can be embedded into our policy practices.
- Encouraging our people to take pride and ownership in delivering work to the highest quality possible, and to share and learn from both failure and success.



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Robust quality assurance processes & practices

Key risk: *The NTC needs effective practices in place to ensure its work is consistently high-quality and delivered in an appropriate timeframe.*

The NTC seeks to continuously improve the quality of its advice and the practices that support that. We are embedding robust quality assurance processes and practices to ensure all work is tested and challenged at every stage of development and delivered to a high standard, including:

- Using formal and informal peer review and approval channels.
- Embedding fit-for-purpose program and project management practices, supported by ICT systems that enable us to effectively plan and manage our work.

Transparency as far as possible

As well as robust, our policy processes need to be transparent to ensure decision-makers and stakeholders have confidence in the NTC's advice. The [2021 statutory review of the NTC](#) recommended that the NTC “provide feedback to key stakeholders on how and why their comments were considered and incorporated or rejected, along with greater visibility of NTC recommendations to ITSOC and ITMM, to the extent possible.”

The NTC is committed to providing transparency and feedback to stakeholders on our reform processes as far as possible. We are looking at ways we can provide more feedback to stakeholders summarising what we heard through consultation and how we have used it, including who has made decisions and how. There are also opportunities for the NTC to hold more multilateral meetings that allow different stakeholders to hear directly from each other and gain insight into the range of views being provided to the NTC for consideration.

The NTC is also working with the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts on ways to provide stakeholders with greater visibility of matters being considered by ministers, for example, industry briefings before and after key meetings.

Capturing and sharing insights, information and knowledge to inform future work

Key risk: *The NTC has a lot of specialised knowledge that needs to be maintained and shared to ensure continuity and efficiency in how the NTC delivers reform.*

The small size and more agile deployment of the NTC's workforce makes longer term succession planning and knowledge sharing increasingly critical. The NTC is taking an active approach to documenting and sharing critical knowledge, skills and processes for core NTC work to ensure continuity and reduce the risk of information being lost. This is being further supported with enhanced workforce planning and the associated capability framework, and more collaborative ICT systems.

We are making it easier for people to work across teams and projects by:

- recording and sharing our institutional knowledge
- embedding ICT systems that enable more agile and collaborative work practices
- improving consistency in how we manage and deliver our work across the organisation.

Focus area: Meaningful engagement and partnerships with a broad range of stakeholders

Delivering transport reforms that make a real difference to our transport system requires extensive collaboration. The [2021 statutory review of the NTC](#) emphasised the importance of stakeholder engagement for the NTC and highlighted some areas for the NTC to focus on. These are reflected in the following priorities and key risks.

For more on how we partner and collaborate across the transport sector, see ‘Who we work with and how.’

Demonstrating our engagement principles in all our work

Key risk: *To successfully deliver reform, the NTC needs to effectively engage and be responsive to stakeholders.*

The NTC is committed to engaging the right people, in the right way, and at the right time to deliver workable solutions. That's why we have prioritised engagement as a core capability and established a set of engagement principles to help define how we engage and let stakeholders know the standard they can expect from us.

The NTC's focus on engagement is further reflected in our operating model and organisational structure, capability framework, organisational learning and development, and processes and systems. We embed dedicated engagement specialists within reform teams to reshape how we plan and deliver our work to ensure it is designed with, and for, our stakeholders. We regularly seek feedback from stakeholders on how we've engaged including through a biennial survey.

We seek to tailor our engagement approach for each audience and purpose. In support of this, we aim to be aware of our stakeholders' priorities and wider context to ensure that we foster productive relationships that enable us to navigate issues and situations with sensitivity and understanding.

Accessible communication through a range of formats

Key risk: *To successfully deliver reform, the NTC needs to ensure its engagement approaches are easy to understand and access.*

The NTC recognises the need for a range of consultation products to effectively engage stakeholders and make our work accessible to a wider audience. Our focus is on complementing our formal papers and reports with more targeted materials, including one-page summaries, infographics, videos and digital engagement through our website and social media.

We are improving how we communicate by:

- Developing shorter and more targeted consultation products in a range of formats including videos and one-pagers to complement our formal papers and reports.
- Refreshing the NTC website (based on stakeholder consultation and analytics) to make it easier for people to find and understand the content they need and engage with us.
- Enhancing our use of digital platforms and tools to engage more effectively with stakeholders.

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Co-design principles and collaboration to plan and develop reforms

Key risk: To successfully deliver reform, the NTC needs to undertake more collaborative and early engagement to develop and implement reforms, including engaging early and applying ‘co-design principles’ and a more collaborative approach to problem definition and solutions development with all stakeholders.

The NTC engages with key stakeholders throughout the reform process. Stakeholders also provide oversight, advice and input on specific aspects of the NTC’s work and programs through advisory, reference, and working groups, with group membership drawn from government and industry or the private sector.

Shaped by transport minister’s priorities, our reforms are planned and developed in close consultation with our partners to remove duplication. We also take into account stakeholders’ capacity to engage when developing timeframes, supported by ICT systems which enable the coordination, mapping and tracking of stakeholder engagement. Through our planning we also look for opportunities to improve how work is delivered across the sector, for example, transitioning relevant legislative maintenance tasks or operational policy to national regulators.

We are also placing emphasis on early engagement and using the principles of co-design as far as possible to drive a more collaborative approach, noting the final decisions on our reforms sits with ITMM.

Key risk: The NTC needs to manage competing priorities, timelines, and stakeholder capacity across the transport sector to successfully deliver reform.

Delivering reform within Australia’s complex transport environment requires an in-depth understanding of everyone operating within it, and how their objectives and roles align with the NTC’s reform work. The range of timeframes, agencies and sectors coming together to deliver transport reform adds another layer of complexity.

The NTC is taking a more active role as a facilitator to help promote and coordinate a cohesive approach to reform across national bodies and the wider transport system. This makes us well placed to provide a holistic view of reform programs to show how the work of multiple national bodies is aligning to deliver reform outcomes.

Enduring stakeholder relationships at all levels

To complement our engagement on specific reforms, we have an Enterprise Engagement Strategy in place to develop and strengthen our ongoing stakeholder relationships and broaden our engagement networks. This strategy also includes entering into formal partnerships and joint initiatives with other organisations where we can better achieve national outcomes together. We will continue to focus on building strong relationships across the sector by:

- Running regular NTC Industry Forums and events with key stakeholders to discuss our whole program of work, big issues and trends in transport, and engage early on upcoming reforms.
- Delivering an annual Enterprise Engagement Strategy.
- Contributing to a range of relevant taskforces and working groups across the sector.

Engagement capability & expertise (skills, processes, practices & systems)

Facilitation and engagement expertise allows us to bring together different perspectives into workable solutions and support stakeholders across the transport system to deliver those solutions. We want all our people to be able to deliver stakeholder engagement that is fit for the purpose and audience and that makes it easy to work with the NTC. We are building a culture of engagement, with an **engagement commitment** that provides our people with the principles to embody in their work, and ongoing capability development and in-house expertise.

To improve our engagement practices, the NTC will be:

- Optimising the use of our Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system to connect how we manage and coordinate our stakeholder engagement.
- Providing engagement training and development for our people including facilitation training.
- Developing best practice engagement resources and guidance material to support people to engage effectively.
- Acting on recommendations and findings from an internal audit of our stakeholder engagement practices.
- Responding to findings from stakeholder surveys through formal strategies or actions.



Focus area: Expertise in policy and regulatory reform and Australia’s transport system

Australia’s transport operating environment and regulation is complex. Successfully delivering reform in this environment requires specialised knowledge and expertise. For the NTC this means an emphasis on the following capabilities.

Thought leadership and stewardship for a cohesive national approach

The NTC is responsible for delivering significant national reform that has long-term benefits. We have a unique focus on harmonising the transport system nationally to deliver the best outcomes for Australia as a whole. To do this we need to have a thought leadership mindset and look at potential reforms from both a short and long-term perspective.

The NTC leads or engages in national sector-wide conversations exploring key trends and opportunities. One of the ways we do this is through hosting events such as ‘National Transport Conversation’ forums, Industry Forums, and partnering on other events such as roundtables. We also attend and speak regularly at industry conferences.

These events bring together senior people and experts across the transport sector and other sectors that we could learn from, and ensure that we hear and explore a range of perspectives. The NTC also runs internal thought leadership events such as facilitated discussions and guest speakers to continually test and grow our thinking.

Aware and responsive to changing trends and priorities

The NTC operates in a dynamic and changeable environment. As an organisation we need to be responsive, adaptable, and able to move quickly to ensure we are always aware of and delivering on governments’ priorities. To do this we are continuing to build organisational resilience and agility into how we work and manage our resources. This is supported by a more agile operating model that enables the NTC to pivot and respond to changing priorities.

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Key risk: *To be effective, the NTC needs to maintain a high degree of both broad and in-depth awareness across a changing transport environment.*

The NTC maintains in-depth awareness of the transport and regulatory trends and environments that we operate in. Executive and senior staff in each of the NTC’s policy portfolios are responsible for working with partners across the transport system and scanning trends in transport, technology, and regulation. These insights are shared and consolidated through regular program-wide discussions, forums and presentations to inform the NTC’s program of work as a whole.

Expertise in navigating regulatory, legislative & parliamentary processes

Key risk: *To deliver regulatory change, the NTC needs in-depth understanding of regulation, legislative and parliamentary processes to deliver workable implementation options that readily translate into law.*

The NTC maintains expertise in navigating government processes and governance arrangements. We have a team of regulatory and legislative reform specialists that work closely with the Parliamentary Counsel’s Committee and the Office of Impact Assessment. We are also strengthening our expertise in this area through workforce planning and embedding a formal legal services framework. This framework ensures the NTC is following best practice, and that our wider reform program has the resources, guidance and support to deliver regulatory change.

Workforce planning & investment in our future capability

To ensure we have the expertise needed, the NTC needs to attract and retain the right people and continually develop and grow staff capability. Our flexible operating model allows us to effectively resource, manage and deliver our reform work, and to optimise expertise across the organisation. This is supported by the ongoing development of more fit-for-purpose program and resource management systems and practices to allow us to dynamically scale and resource to priorities.

Key risk: *The labour market and dynamic transport policy environment makes it challenging to develop and retain the skills and capability required to deliver the NTC’s program of work.*

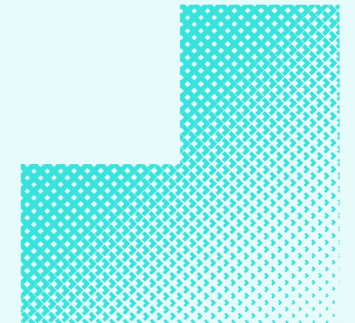
The NTC is responding by broadening how and where we recruit (employing people located across Australia), focusing on core policy and engagement skills, and enhancing our strategic workforce planning and development. How we attract and retain staff is also an important factor, which we are addressing through our focus area ‘A great place to work where all staff feel connected, engaged and valued.’

The NTC has capitalised on remote working by broadening our recruitment to include people based in locations across Australia. This allows us to get the best people for the role regardless of where they are based, gives us a workforce that better reflects our national role, and enables more local engagement with our partners in other locations. We are complementing this with co-location arrangements to provide remote staff (including from partner agencies) with a local office to work from.

The NTC is also bringing in specialist technical skills and resources only as needed to supplement our core workforce. This allows us to focus on excellence in our core skills while being able to quickly scale up or change tack to deliver additional work as needed.

The NTC is continuing to maintain and develop its expertise and capability, including through:

- Responding to the recommendations of an inaugural audit of our workforce planning practices and embedding practices and systems to more effectively plan and manage our work and resources.
- Further aligning recruitment, workforce planning, learning and development activities and performance management with the NTC Capability Framework.
- Providing greater opportunities for staff to work across locations, teams and roles to gain experience and knowledge and make the best use of everyone’s skills and knowledge.
- Continuing to employ staff located across Australia to get the right skills and experience and a workforce reflective of Australian communities.
- Proactive workforce planning and development that looks at how to optimise training for the NTC, ensures learning is transferred into the workplace, and plans for the future.



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Goal 5: A high performing organisation

We are a high performing organisation with a culture of continuous improvement



The transport ministers' *Statement of Expectations* for the NTC directs the Commission to "Create a culture of performance that effectively carries out the transport ministers' priorities with available resources, expertise and systems."

The NTC needs a strong foundation to deliver reforms that improve our transport system. We will focus on the following areas to make sure we have the people, culture and practices we need:

- Excellence in public governance, performance and accountability
- A great place to work where all staff feel connected, engaged and valued
- Efficient and resilient systems and practices that support staff to deliver their work well



Focus area: Excellence in public governance, performance and accountability

Exceptional integrity, regulatory compliance and alignment with Government priorities, strategies and directions

The NTC needs to successfully deliver its reform work while maintaining excellence in public governance, performance and accountability. The transport ministers' *Statement of Expectations* for the NTC directs the Commission to "Maintain high standards of professionalism, service, probity, reporting, accountability and transparency, consistent with Governments' aims of excellence in the public sector."



Key risk: The Commission needs to deliver on all aspects of the transport ministers' *Statement of Expectations* to ensure the success of the NTC.

The Commission has a clear focus on the NTC's performance, governance and relationships and addresses the *Statement of Expectations* through the NTC's corporate plan. The Commission meets four times a year to provide oversight and input into the NTC's work program. As a commissioner, the NTC's Chief Executive Officer provides a strong link between the organisation and the Commission. The Commission also meets as needed to discuss matters in more detail, and commissioners use their own expertise and networks to support the NTC's reform delivery.

Further oversight is provided through the Risk, Audit and Governance Committee, a committee of the NTC Commission that is responsible for independently assessing the NTC's governance and risk management policies and procedures, risk and control environment and management of that environment.

The NTC's governance practices need to align with relevant legislation, including the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* and whole-of-government policies such as the National Archives of Australia's information management policies. We work closely with the Infrastructure and Transport Secretariat (a function of the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts) to submit and seek approval of our work by transport ministers or their delegates.

We also contribute to Government strategies and priorities including the APS Net Zero Emissions targets. The NTC's goals and work program reflect the priorities set out by Australia's transport ministers and the *Inter-Governmental Agreement for Regulatory and Operational Reform in Road, Rail and Intermodal Transport*.

The NTC has clear processes and governance in place to ensure compliance with the wide range of legislative requirements and Government expectations. This is supported by our recently developed legal services framework which will enhance our legal compliance and oversight. We will maintain a focus on meeting Government expectations by:

- Continuing to utilise a targeted program of internal audits undertaken by an independent auditing organisation.
- Aligning our approach to good governance with that set out in the Australian Government's [Integrity Good Practice Guide](#).
- Streamlining our processes and practices to optimise our capacity to deliver on these requirements.

Robust corporate governance and planning

Effective program and corporate governance underpins the NTC's ability to deliver reform work and meet the legislative obligations and performance expectations of a public sector organisation. Our governance and planning capabilities also enable us to be adaptable and responsive to change as an organisation.

The NTC will maintain the robust governance practices already in place and continue to mature our Project Management Office (PMO) function to support the delivery of our work and ensure that all projects are properly scoped, planned and delivered using a consistent framework.

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We will improve how we deliver against our strategic objectives by enhancing our governance frameworks for corporate planning and delivery. This will enhance both how we identify, plan and deliver corporate projects as an integrated program of work, and how we get the best outcome from each individual project.

Positive risk culture

The NTC supports a positive risk culture, enabling people to take an honest and proactive approach to managing risk while not being constrained by a fear of failure. Fostering a positive risk culture is embedded in our values and we have an established risk management framework. We provide regular training and support for staff on how to identify, assess, respond to and report on risks that could prevent the NTC from achieving its organisational objectives.


We will continue to promote a positive risk culture through:

- Assessing and improving the NTC’s risk management maturity in line with the Commonwealth Risk Management Capability Maturity Model and Commonwealth Risk Management Policy 2023.
- Further developing staff training and awareness so everyone at the NTC can assist with the management of risk.
- Conducting regular ‘lessons learned’ exercises to honestly share and learn from both success and failure.

 **Focus area:** A great place to work where all staff feel connected, engaged and valued


Positive, inclusive, flexible, and safe workplace for everyone

Inclusion in the workplace ensures a more productive work environment, with stronger staff retention, as well as being a desirable and safe place to work.

 **Key risk:** The NTC needs to prioritise a healthy workplace culture to attract, retain, and bring out the best in staff.

The NTC aims to be an attractive place to work with an engaged and capable workforce and a culture that inspires. We take pride in our culture and level of engagement and want our workplace to be one that promotes health and wellbeing – a positive, diverse, and inclusive culture that brings out the best in everyone, supports the wellbeing of our people and ensures productive and respectful employee relations. Our aim is a workplace that ensures everyone, regardless of who they are or what their personal circumstances are, feels involved, included, empowered, and supported.

The NTC has developed a ‘Great Place to Work’ strategy to maintain a focus on our organisational culture and capability, and to respond to staff engagement surveys and other staff feedback. Delivery of this strategy is the responsibility of the leadership team and all people across the organisation and is further supported by staff-led groups and initiatives. The NTC also has a set of values that were developed by staff: care, commitment, courage, curiosity and collaboration. The NTC’s involvement in the Champions of Change Rail Group is another way we ensure we are consciously considering and promoting diversity in our workplace.

 **Key risk:** The NTC needs to embed effective hybrid and remote working practices to gain the benefits of greater flexibility for staff and the organisation while managing the risks.

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, we are establishing our ‘new normal’ working model which combines office-based and work-from-home arrangements, and remote staff working from different locations across Australia. This flexibility is critical to enabling greater diversity and inclusivity in our workplace, but needs to be balanced with ensuring all staff are safe, supported, and feel connected to our purpose and culture regardless of where they are working.

To support this, we are exploring how we can best embed hybrid and remote working practices while maintaining connection with each other. Remote or work-from-home working and the impacts of the pandemic have called for an increased focus on staff wellbeing and engagement. The NTC’s work health and safety program is playing an increasingly prominent role in managing mental and physical health considerations both in and out of the office.

Culture is not static – the NTC is committed to ongoing initiatives to drive and maintain a positive workplace, including:

- Optimising our hybrid working practices and the facilities and technology that enable this.
- Actively responding to annual staff engagement surveys and other feedback channels.
- Delivering our ‘Great Place to Work’ strategy and a comprehensive staff wellbeing program.
- Holding quarterly ‘all staff’ events at our head office to bring everyone in the organisation together.
- Actively supporting our people to organise a range of formal and informal activities to improve connection to each other, our work, and our purpose.
- Regular training for all staff on workplace health and safety and how to identify and appropriately manage bullying, harassment, and discrimination.



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Inspiring leadership at all levels

Key risk: *The NTC needs to prioritise leadership capability to attract and retain staff, and create a workplace where all employees thrive.*

The NTC recognises the importance of people leadership in creating a great place to work that enables the successful delivery of our work. Our leadership needs to be agile, responsive to change, and inspire belonging. We are actively building a culture where everyone is empowered to use their skills and knowledge to make their best contribution and lead change.

Our learning and development program promotes a collaborative leadership culture that avoids being excessively hierarchical. A significant component of this program is focusing on improving leadership, collaboration, and wellbeing to give our people the tools to work better with each other and thrive in the workplace.

We will continue to develop leadership capabilities through:

- Ongoing training and professional development opportunities, and a stronger focus on organisational development and workforce planning.
- Acting on feedback from our annual staff survey and the adoption of contemporary leadership approaches that support a high-performance culture
- Exploring how we can use the [APS Senior Executive Service Performance Leadership Framework](#) to place a greater focus on positive leadership behaviours and assessment of current organisational maturity.

Engaged through purpose & thought leadership

The NTC aims to maintain a culture where our people are engaged with and believe strongly in what we do. We want everyone to know and feel that we're contributing to something bigger than us as individuals and can see how our work connects to the bigger picture.

We demonstrate our value of 'curiosity' by engaging in strategic conversations about big issues, big problems and big solutions. We will continue to explore ideas and test and grow our thinking through internal thought leadership events such as regular forums and discussions, sharing learning, and guest speakers.

The NTC measures engagement and connection to our purpose in our annual staff survey, and will continue to act on survey feedback.

Rewarding development, training, and career pathways

The NTC aims to provide people with meaningful development opportunities and pathways as much as possible. This includes learning from working across different teams, roles, and areas, training and professional development, and coaching and mentoring.

We have a comprehensive learning and development program across the NTC supported by a capability framework. We will be placing greater emphasis on organisational development and enhancing our performance assessment and feedback processes to strengthen the links between our high-performance culture, the opportunities for personal development and the need to deliver high-quality reform outcomes.



Focus area: Efficient and resilient systems and practices that support staff to deliver their work well.

For our people to successfully deliver reform they need to work with processes and systems across the NTC including finance and procurement, program and project management, and resource management. Our information and communications technology (ICT) systems underpin all of the NTC's work and are critical to enabling us to operate as a digital workplace and engage effectively with stakeholders. All our systems and processes need to be reliable, fit-for-purpose and support us to deliver our work efficiently.

Key risk: *The NTC needs effective systems and processes to ensure staff are supported to deliver the NTC's work program.*

The NTC is ensuring the right systems and practices are in place by designing them around the people that use them; optimising and taking advantage of new technologies; providing training and support to the level people need; and embedding security, resilience and business continuity.

Intuitive and user-centric processes and technology

The NTC's systems and processes need to be easy for people to navigate while robust enough to ensure good governance over everything we do. We will place a greater focus on ensuring our processes and technology are user-centric through:

- Enhanced scoping and consultation to design our systems and processes for the people that use them.
- Reviewing and streamlining core business processes to be as easy and intuitive as possible while still meeting all governance requirements.
- Improving our ICT environment to better enable efficient, agile and collaborative work practices.
- Enabling more 'self-service' functionality to make it easier for people to find and access the tools or information they need.

Continuous improvement and adoption of new technology or practices that add value

The NTC has a strong focus on regular review and continuous improvement of our policies, procedures, and practices. These draw on staff consultation and input and are formally reviewed through governance meetings and the NTC's Risk, Audit and Governance Committee to ensure we're getting them right.

New technology and software such as artificial intelligence and productivity apps offer opportunities to improve how we work but need to be well managed to ensure we gain the desired potential benefits.

We will ensure we are optimising our systems and practices by:

- Proactively identifying and evaluating new technology, or better ways to use our existing technology, for adoption into our core suite of tools.
- Continuing to enable and encourage everyone to raise ideas or feedback on ways to improve our processes and technology.
- Consulting widely across the organisation to understand business requirements and identify opportunities.

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Training and support that gives everyone the tools and knowledge they need

Everyone at the NTC needs to know the processes and systems in place that apply to their role and how to use or navigate them. Providing this clarity makes it easier for people to deliver their work while ensuring the NTC meets its compliance obligations.

The NTC will place a greater focus on ensuring staff receive the training and support they need through:

- Enhanced change management practices and training when introducing new or different ways of working, with ongoing support provided as needed.
- A wider range of clear guidance and support material available to everyone.
- More comprehensive induction processes for new starters and internal promotions to ensure people are well prepared for their new role.

Effective cybersecurity, business continuity and information management practices

The NTC's systems and practices need to be resilient in the face of change or disruption, protect our information, and meet Government requirements and expectations around how we operate. We will continue to maintain a high standard by:

- Continuing to enhance the NTC's digital architecture and capability, ensuring a high and fit-for-purpose standard of cybersecurity and implementing whole-of-government information management policies.
- Conducting regular business continuity exercises and acting on any learnings to improve our resiliency.



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Our program of work for 2025–26 to 2028–29

The NTC works with its partners to deliver reform as part of the wider transport system. Our program of work sets out the key activities we will undertake to achieve our purpose and deliver on our reform goals:



Goal 1:
Safer transport



Goal 2:
A productive national system



Goal 3:
Improved environmental outcomes

The NTC's work has been planned across the next four years as set out in this section. We will add additional work requested by the Infrastructure and Transport Ministers' Meeting (ITMM) as it emerges.



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National Rail Action Plan – Advancing interoperability

The National Rail Action Plan (NRAP) aims to improve the productivity, safety, and ongoing sustainability of rail through greater interoperability of the national rail network. It builds on the first phase that has brought together government and industry to address longstanding legacy issues in three areas: skills, harmonisation, and interoperability.

NRAP has led to an expanded program of national rail reform, with rail interoperability now a national cabinet priority to maximise the benefits from the \$154 billion pipeline of rail investments over the next 15 years.

The goal is for an interoperable and interconnected national rail network in Australia, with a new generation of train signalling and control systems able to talk to each other; improved flow of supply chains through to the nation's ports; and a nationally consistent approach to rail skills training to help fill the current backlog of 70,000 jobs.

Infrastructure and Transport Ministers have tasked the NTC with delivering a four-year work program to lift national productivity, support Australian supply chains, improve safety performance, increase rail capacity, future proof faster rail and enhance sustainability. It involves developing a three-tiered national rail standards framework to underpin reform to support one integrated rail network. All Governments and key industry representatives are committed to the rail reform agenda and working together to create a national rail system that is simpler, safer and better.

Over the next year, the NTC will be working with governments and industry to develop a three-tiered National Rail Standards Framework and associated governance arrangements, including three new mandatory standards to ensure interoperability of train control systems across the national rail network. The reform package also includes initiatives to streamline rollingstock approvals, harmonise technical standards and rules and develop national and international pathways for digital skills required in Australia over coming years.

The key deliverables in this program are:

National Rail Action Plan - Advancing interoperability

Locking in critical standards and practices to improve rail's competitiveness

Driving national rail harmonisation, safety and interoperability by developing a national approach to rail standards governance. This includes a critical set of mandatory interoperability standards and agreed model standards to support local manufacturing, efficiency, and skills portability.

Ensuring train technologies for now and the future are interoperable

Developing a pathway for interoperability of train control and signalling systems across Australia's major passenger and freight networks. This will drive improved safety and productivity across critical network interfaces, and set a common approach to European Train Control System (ETCS) deployment across the National Network for Interoperability.

Reducing red tape and regulatory burden for rail operations

Harmonising safeworking rules, operating practices and driving mutual recognition of skills to support a more portable and productive workforce that can move easily across networks. It will reduce the knowledge and training burden on workers and rail operators, reduce costs and improve productivity.

Streamlining rollingstock approval regimes

Making it simpler and easier for rail operators to get newer, innovative and more sustainable trains running through a common national approach to network applications, safety assurance, acceptance and testing. It will drive safety, reduce costs to industry and improve interoperability.

Delivering workforce solutions to meet future rail skills demand

Facilitating a national approach to developing the future skills required to build, operate and maintain Australia's modernising railways. This includes a coordinated approach to the skills needed to support digital train control and signalling systems, and developing accelerated learning pathways for new and emerging digital skills.

| | FY 2025–26 | FY 2026–27 | FY 2027–28 | FY 2028–29 |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Locking in critical standards and practices to improve rail's competitiveness | | | | |
| Ensuring train technologies for now and the future are interoperable | | | | |
| Reducing red tape and regulatory burden for rail operations | | | | |
| Streamlining rollingstock approval regimes | | | | |
| Delivering workforce solutions to meet future rail skills demand | | | | |

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Rail safety program

The NTC maintains both the Rail Safety National Law and the *National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers* and undertakes any other relevant work to improve rail safety in Australia.

The NTC reviews and updates the Rail Safety National Law with industry, states, territories and the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator (ONRSR). When reviewing the *National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers*, the NTC consults closely with industry, rail workers and their representatives, rail safety regulators and medical professionals.

The key deliverables in this program are:

Rail safety program

Implementing the Rail Safety National Law review findings

Implementing the 24 recommendations outlined in the Rail Safety National Law (RSNL) review report. This involves the development of options to support the impact assessment for the legislative and regulatory recommendations, and progressing non-legislative recommendations alongside the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator (ONRSR).

Regularly reviewing the Rail Safety National Law

Regularly reviewing and updating (when required) the Rail Safety National Law to promote a seamless and coordinated national approach to rail safety regulation in Australia.

This law is reviewed at least once every two years but is only updated if changes are required.

Regularly reviewing the National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers

Periodically reviewing and updating the National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers. This is the standard against which all health assessments of rail safety workers in Australia are conducted. It provides practical guidance for rail transport operators for managing the risks posed by the ill health of rail safety workers.

These standards are reviewed every two years. Each review runs for a 2-year period.

| | FY 2025–26 | FY 2026–27 | FY 2027–28 | FY 2028–29 |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Implementing the Rail Safety National Law review findings | [Blue box] | | | |
| Regularly reviewing the Rail Safety National Law | [Blue box] | | [Blue box] | |
| Regularly reviewing the National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers | | | [Blue box] | |

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Automated vehicle program

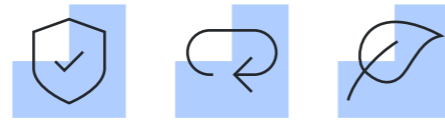
The Automated Vehicle Program is establishing a nationally consistent end-to-end framework that supports the safe deployment and operation of automated vehicles (AVs) in Australia. To achieve this, the NTC works in close partnership with the Australian Government and state and territory governments to develop nationally consistent laws governing the supply and use of AVs in Australia.

As part of this program, the NTC leads a range of national working parties to consider policy and regulatory reforms across a broad spectrum of transport and other relevant areas of law. The NTC leads stakeholder engagement with the growing automated vehicle industry; informs the program with up-to-date market insights; and supports close alignment of the regulatory framework with international regulations and standards for AVs.

The key deliverables in this program are:

| Automated Vehicle Program | FY 2025–26 | FY 2026–27 | FY 2027–28 | FY 2028–29 |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Developing complementary State and Territory policy and legislation for automated vehicles Leading policy development relating to complementary state and territory laws and, where appropriate, developing model laws to reflect agreed policy positions. | | | | |
| Supporting the implementation of the national regulatory framework for automated vehicles Working with all jurisdictions and industry to coordinate, facilitate and support implementation of the national regulatory framework. | | | | |
| Regularly reviewing the Guidelines for Trials of Automated Vehicles in Australia Regularly reviewing and updating the Guidelines for Trials of Automated Vehicles in Australia to ensure they remain up to date and support safe trialling of automated vehicles in Australia. <i>These guidelines are reviewed every two years. Each review is completed within a 12-month period.</i> | | | | |
| Coordinating the National Vehicle Generated Data Working Group Working with industry stakeholders, the Commonwealth, state and territory governments to seek out opportunities and strategic pathways for vehicle generated and road transport data to support positive road safety outcomes. | | | | |

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Road safety program

The safety program focuses on promoting the safe movement of people, freight and services while managing the challenges and opportunities posed by evolving technology. The NTC is responsible for maintaining several national and model laws and guidelines to support safety on Australia’s roads. The NTC also undertakes other work as directed to improve road safety.

The NTC engages widely across the transport, enforcement, workplace, health and safety sectors to deliver the road safety program. To deliver the *Assessing Fitness to Drive* standards, the NTC works with specialist medical colleges and working groups to consult with medical professionals, driver licensing agencies, coroners and public health groups.

The key deliverables in this program are:

| Road safety program | FY 2025–26 | FY 2026–27 | FY 2027–28 | FY 2028–29 |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <p>Regularly reviewing the Australian Road Rules</p> <p>Regularly reviewing and amending the model Australian Road Rules that form the basis of road rules of each Australian state and territory.</p> <p><i>This model law is reviewed every two years and amended if required. Each review runs for a 2-year period (not including the adoption of model laws by states and territories).</i></p> | ■ | | | ■ |
| <p>Regularly reviewing the Load Restraint Guide for light vehicles</p> <p>Periodically reviewing and updating the Load Restraint Guide for light vehicles to provide light vehicle operators with basic safety principles for the safe carriage of loads when packing, loading, moving or unloading a vehicle.</p> <p><i>This guide is reviewed every five years (or as needed) and updated if required. Each review is completed within a 12-month period.</i></p> | | | | ■ |
| <p>Regularly reviewing the Assessing Fitness to Drive guidelines</p> <p>Regularly reviewing, with Austroads, the Assessing Fitness to Drive guidelines to ensure the medical standards reflect current medical knowledge and practices. The guidelines are a joint NTC and Austroads publication containing the nationally agreed medical standards for granting a driver’s licence.</p> <p><i>These guidelines are reviewed every three years in conjunction with the review of the National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers. Each review typically runs for a 2-year period.</i></p> | ■ | | | |
| <p>Identifying options to improve the diagnosis of medical conditions in heavy vehicle drivers to reduce road safety risks</p> <p>Identifying options to improve the diagnosis of sleep apnoea, diabetes and cardiac risk levels in heavy vehicle drivers, with a view to incorporating findings into the Assessing Fitness to Drive guidelines to reduce the risk of death, injuries and vehicle damage stemming from these medical conditions.</p> | ■ | | | |
| <p>Reviewing the Australian Roads Rules to align with best practice child restraint guidance</p> <p>Updating child restraint requirements in the Australian Road Rules to ensure that Australian requirements are contemporary and support safety.</p> | ■ | | | |

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Land transport of dangerous goods program

The NTC is responsible for maintaining the Australian Code for the Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road and Rail and the related Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road or Rail model laws and undertakes any other opportunities to improve the land transport of dangerous goods. The Code and associated laws place duties on those who classify, pack, label and consign dangerous goods as well as those who transport them.

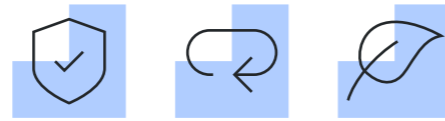
To deliver the dangerous goods program successfully, the NTC engages extensively with competent authorities, including the Competent Authorities Panel (CAP), transport agencies, peak bodies for operators and carriers who transport dangerous goods, and industries and associated industry bodies across the entire dangerous goods supply chain.

The NTC also acts as Secretariat for CAP, maintaining CAP records and hosting a public facing CAP webpage. In addition, the NTC represents Australia at the biannual meetings of the United Nations ECOSOC Sub-Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods.

The key deliverables in this program are:

| Land transport of dangerous goods program | FY 2025–26 | FY 2026–27 | FY 2027–28 | FY 2028–29 |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| <p>Regularly updating the land transport of dangerous goods code and model laws</p> <p>Maintaining the Code and model laws in alignment with United Nations recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods Model Regulations while identifying and progressing any other opportunities to improve the consistency and efficiency of regulating the land transport of dangerous goods in Australia.</p> <p><i>The Code and model laws are reviewed and updated every two years. Each review typically runs for a 2-year period.</i></p> | | | | |
| <p>Undertaking a comprehensive review of the land transport of dangerous goods code</p> <p>Conducting a full review of the Australian Code for the Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road and Rail (including the Australian-specific chapters that are not part of the regular updates) to update outdated chapters, identify and correct translation errors, and incorporate relevant concepts from the United Nations agreement on the land transport of dangerous goods to make the Code's requirements easier to understand.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Delivering the legislative amendments to the land transport of dangerous goods code</p> <p>Delivering the legislative amendments necessary to incorporate the findings of the comprehensive review.</p> | | | | |
| <p>Establishing training requirements for the land transport of dangerous goods</p> <p>Developing a training matrix based on a training needs analysis, including discrete, task-specific training, and exploring the potential for a dangerous goods specialist advisory competency. This would provide greater clarity for those involved in transporting dangerous goods, enable more fit-for-purpose training packages on the open market, and align with similar initiatives in the maritime and air transport sectors.</p> | | | | |

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Heavy vehicles program

The NTC is responsible for developing and maintaining a Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) with participating states and territories. For these jurisdictions, the HVNL regulates heavy vehicles over 4.5 tonnes gross vehicle mass. The NTC also undertakes other work as directed to support heavy vehicle safety, productivity and innovation.

To deliver the heavy vehicle program the NTC is engaging extensively across governments and the heavy vehicle sector and working with dedicated groups to advise us and ensure stakeholder representation. This has included: strategic oversight from senior representatives in each jurisdiction; a steering committee of the most senior transport officials; as well as consultative groups involving industry; the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, police and state transport representatives.

The key deliverables in this program are:

| Heavy vehicles program | FY 2025–26 | FY 2026–27 | FY 2027–28 | FY 2028–29 |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Supporting the implementation of the new Heavy Vehicle National Law Program Supporting the implementation of and transition to a new HVNL including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting passage of the legislation through Queensland parliament* Developing other statutory and non-statutory instruments that assist with the transition to the new law | ■ | | | |
| Delivering future improvement to the Heavy Vehicle National Law Safety and Productivity Program Develop policy positions and legislative package to support remaining elements of the HVNL Safety and Productivity Program along with further improvements to the HVNL as agreed by ministers. Key elements will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementing changes to allowable mass, height and length of heavy vehicles Finalising ministerial guidelines and standards for accreditation Technology and data framework. | ■ | | | |
| Regularly updating the Heavy Vehicle National Law Regularly reviewing and updating the National Law to ensure it remains contemporary and meets its policy objectives. <i>This law is reviewed each year but is only updated if changes are required. Each review is typically completed within a 12-month period (not including passage through parliament).</i> | | ■ | | ■ |
| Facilitating zero and low emission heavy vehicles Identifying national policy and regulatory requirements (including any mass limit changes) necessary to support an increased adoption of zero and low emission heavy vehicles. | ■ | | | |

*Queensland is the host jurisdiction for the heavy vehicle national law scheme

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Heavy vehicle charges program

The NTC is responsible for providing advice to governments on heavy vehicle charges (guided by pricing principles agreed by Australia’s transport and infrastructure ministers). These charges are intended to recover the road construction and maintenance costs that are attributed to heavy vehicles.

To deliver this program, the NTC maintains relationships with industry associations, and transport agencies and treasuries of state, territory and Commonwealth Governments.

The key activities in this program are:

Heavy vehicle charges program

Developing an implementable forward-looking cost base

Developing and evaluating an implementable forward-looking cost base that could be used as a basis for setting heavy vehicle charges from 2026–27 onwards. This will include developing the model in collaboration with jurisdictions, evaluating how it would perform if adopted and engaging with stakeholders to build familiarity with the model and its likely performance.

The NTC’s regular work ‘maintaining and improving the forward-looking cost base prototype model’ will be suspended while a new cost base is developed. Annual maintenance of the cost base model is expected to resume once a new cost base is in place.

Advising on an annual adjustment to heavy vehicle charges

Calculating adjustments to heavy vehicle charges when required to allow revenue from heavy vehicle charges to keep pace with changes in heavy vehicle fleet use and governments’ road spending programs. This includes making ongoing recommendations for setting the regulatory component of registration charges to reflect the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator’s approved budget.

Advice on adjusting the roads component of registration charges and the Road User Charge is provided each year unless heavy vehicle charges have been set for multiple future years by ITMM. The process to provide this advice is completed within a 12-month period.

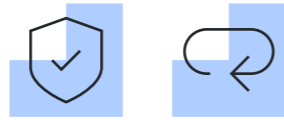
Sourcing transport usage data to support future work on heavy vehicle charges and policy

Ensuring vehicle usage data is available to support work on heavy vehicle charges and transport policy.

| | FY 2025–26 | FY 2026–27 | FY 2027–28 | FY 2028–29 |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Developing an implementable forward-looking cost base | | | | |
| Developing and evaluating an implementable forward-looking cost base that could be used as a basis for setting heavy vehicle charges from 2026–27 onwards. This will include developing the model in collaboration with jurisdictions, evaluating how it would perform if adopted and engaging with stakeholders to build familiarity with the model and its likely performance. | | | | |
| <i>The NTC’s regular work ‘maintaining and improving the forward-looking cost base prototype model’ will be suspended while a new cost base is developed. Annual maintenance of the cost base model is expected to resume once a new cost base is in place.</i> | | | | |
| Advising on an annual adjustment to heavy vehicle charges | | | | |
| Calculating adjustments to heavy vehicle charges when required to allow revenue from heavy vehicle charges to keep pace with changes in heavy vehicle fleet use and governments’ road spending programs. This includes making ongoing recommendations for setting the regulatory component of registration charges to reflect the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator’s approved budget. | | | | |
| <i>Advice on adjusting the roads component of registration charges and the Road User Charge is provided each year unless heavy vehicle charges have been set for multiple future years by ITMM. The process to provide this advice is completed within a 12-month period.</i> | | | | |
| Sourcing transport usage data to support future work on heavy vehicle charges and policy | | | | |
| Ensuring vehicle usage data is available to support work on heavy vehicle charges and transport policy. | | | | |



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Australian Defence Force exemption framework program

The NTC is responsible for maintaining the *Australian Defence Force Road Transport Exemption Framework*. This framework provides nationally uniform road transport law exemptions for using Australian Defence Force military vehicles and equipment on public roads. It aims to reduce risk and minimise damage to roads and related structures while allowing oversized Australian Defence Force vehicles to operate on approved routes without the need to apply for special permits.

The NTC delivers this program in collaboration with the Australian Defence Force Exemption Framework Working Group which represents all states and territories' road agencies, the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator and the Australian Defence Force.

The key deliverables in this program are:

Australian Defence Force exemption framework program

Updating the Australian Defence Force exemption framework

Updating the *Australian Defence Force Road Transport Exemption Framework* to ensure it remains current.

Ongoing frequency of updates will depend on the outcomes of 'online geospatial tool to digitise the Australian Defence Force exemption framework.'

Enabling an online geospatial tool to digitise the Australian Defence Force exemption framework

Translating the current turn-by-turn descriptions of approved routes in the *Australian Defence Force Road Transport Exemption Framework* into a geospatial, web-based tool to make the Framework more accessible for jurisdictions and the Australian Defence Force, allowing it to be integrated into online maps and streamline the ongoing process for updating the Framework.

Project will recommence once the parent act has been amended.

| | FY 2025–26 | FY 2026–27 | FY 2027–28 | FY 2028–29 |
|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Australian Defence Force exemption framework program | | | | |
| Updating the Australian Defence Force exemption framework | | | | |
| Updating the <i>Australian Defence Force Road Transport Exemption Framework</i> to ensure it remains current. | | | | |
| <i>Ongoing frequency of updates will depend on the outcomes of 'online geospatial tool to digitise the Australian Defence Force exemption framework.'</i> | | | | |
| Enabling an online geospatial tool to digitise the Australian Defence Force exemption framework | | | | |
| Translating the current turn-by-turn descriptions of approved routes in the <i>Australian Defence Force Road Transport Exemption Framework</i> into a geospatial, web-based tool to make the Framework more accessible for jurisdictions and the Australian Defence Force, allowing it to be integrated into online maps and streamline the ongoing process for updating the Framework. | | | | |
| <i>Project will recommence once the parent act has been amended.</i> | | | | |



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Vehicle standards program

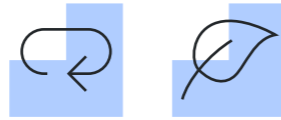
The NTC is responsible for maintaining the Australian Light Vehicle Standards Rules (model law) and the Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation (under the Heavy Vehicle National Law and model law in Western Australia and the Northern Territory) to ensure they remain contemporary and promote improved transport productivity and safety outcomes.

These instruments prescribe vehicle standards with which a light or heavy vehicle must comply for its use on a road and aligns with the Australian Design Rules as appropriate which are developed and administered by the Commonwealth Government. The NTC engages with states, territories, the Commonwealth Government, the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, industry and a range of specific road-user stakeholders to deliver the vehicle standards program.

The key deliverables in this program are:

| Vehicle standards program | FY 2025–26 | FY 2026–27 | FY 2027–28 | FY 2028–29 |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Regularly reviewing the vehicle standards for light and heavy vehicles Regularly reviewing the Australian Light Vehicle Standards Rules and the Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation. <i>These standards are reviewed at least once every two years and amended if needed.</i> | | | | |
| Updating Mass limits and other regulator settings to address the impact of Euro VI standards Investigating and updating heavy vehicle mass limits and other regulatory settings to ensure productivity is appropriately balanced with the benefits of Euro VI emissions standards. | | | | |
| Deliver improvements to achieve national harmonisation of light vehicle modification standards Deliver the first phase of improvements identified from the review to achieve national harmonisation of light vehicle modification standards. | | | | |

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Emissions reporting program

The NTC has been collating, analysing and reporting on the carbon dioxide emissions intensity of new cars and light commercial vehicles sold in Australia for the past 15 years. In 2024, the NTC developed a new model report to replace the annual *Carbon Dioxide Emissions Intensity for New Australian Light Vehicles with a comprehensive ‘whole of light vehicle fleet’ emissions report for Australia.*

The NTC worked with Austroads, the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI), the Bureau of Infrastructure and Transport Research Economics (BITRE), and the Green Vehicle Guide to develop the comprehensive report.

The *Light Vehicle Emissions Intensity in Australia: Trends Over Time* analyses data from nearly 17 million cars registered since 2003 and still in use today, providing a richer and more complete picture of emission trends to help governments, industry stakeholders and everyday drivers make more informed decisions.

The NTC will continue to deliver this reporting annually.

The key deliverable in this program is:

Emissions reporting program

Reporting annually on carbon dioxide emissions intensity for Australian light vehicles

Developing and publishing an annual report on the carbon dioxide emissions intensity of cars and light commercial vehicles.

| | FY 2025–26 | FY 2026–27 | FY 2027–28 | FY 2028–29 |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Reporting annually on carbon dioxide emissions intensity for Australian light vehicles | ■ | ■ | ■ | ■ |



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Reform monitoring and evaluation

The NTC is responsible for providing assessments of the implementation of agreed reforms (including analyses on derogations and variations as well as the reasons for any delay, barriers to implementation, actions required to address any delay and whether any variations were implemented that would reduce the benefits of the reform), and minor policy reviews as needed to assess the success of implementation.

The NTC also delivers larger evaluations (when scheduled) on the impact of existing reforms, including whether further uniformity is required to optimise productivity and safety benefits. The NTC's reform monitoring is informed by engagement with states, territories, the Commonwealth Government, the Heavy Vehicle National Regulator and the Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator.

The key deliverable in this program is:

Reform monitoring and evaluation

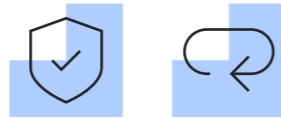
Delivering the annual National Transport Reform Implementation Monitoring Report

Developing the annual *National Transport Reform Implementation Monitoring Report* to provide Ministers with an understanding of whether reform objectives and their anticipated benefits were achieved.

| | FY 2025–26 | FY 2026–27 | FY 2027–28 | FY 2028–29 |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Delivering the annual National Transport Reform Implementation Monitoring Report | | | | |



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Strategic partnerships program

The NTC leads the development of strategic partnership opportunities to accelerate and facilitate land transport system reform. The NTC delivers the National Women in Transport program together with government and industry partners.

The key deliverable in this program is:

Strategic partnerships program

Delivering the National Women in Transport initiative

Maintaining the Speaker Bureau, and growing the impact of the initiative to:

- showcase Australian women working in transport
- increase participation by women in the transport sector
- support the creation of a modern and inclusive transport sector.

For more information and progress updates on the NTC's work, visit our website at www.ntc.gov.au.

| | FY 2025–26 | FY 2026–27 | FY 2027–28 | FY 2028–29 |
|--|------------|------------|------------|------------|
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Evaluating our performance



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How we evaluate our performance

The NTC monitors its performance to drive continuous improvement both for how we deliver our work and the quality of work we do.

We report regularly or are assessed on our performance and on the delivery and implementation of our program of work through:

- **NTC annual report** – reporting on the NTC’s performance in line with the requirements of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.
- **The National Transport Reform Implementation Monitoring Report** – annual reporting on the implementation of nationally agreed reforms.
- **NTC work program progress report** – six-monthly reporting to the Infrastructure and Transport Senior Officials’ Committee (ITSOC) on the progress of the NTC’s program of work.
- **Progress reporting on specific program areas or reforms** – updates provided to ITSOC or the Infrastructure and Transport Ministers’ Meeting (ITMM) as relevant or requested on significant pieces of work being delivered by the NTC.
- **Six-yearly statutory review of the NTC** (as required under s 51 of the National Transport Commission Act) – a review of the NTC to assess if the organisation delivers on the objectives specified in the Inter-Governmental Agreement for Regulatory and Operational Reform in Road, Rail and Intermodal Transport and should continue operation.

These mechanisms, and the NTC’s performance measures respond directly to our purpose, role, strategic goals, and the transport ministers’ Performance Based Framework (PBF) which sets out ministers’ performance expectations for the NTC. The NTC goals incorporate directions from ITMM including their strategic priorities, Statement of Expectations and PBF for the NTC, and recommendations from the statutory review of the NTC. Our key activities (the delivery of our program of work) align with these goals.

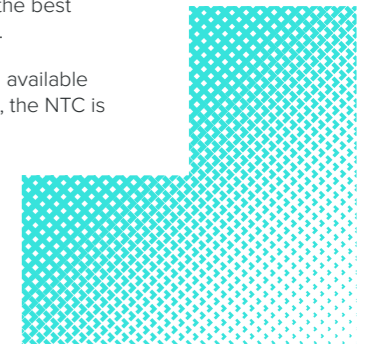
The primary way the NTC fulfils its purpose is by delivering its program of work. This program is agreed by transport ministers (through the Infrastructure and Transport Ministers’ Meeting) in alignment with other work across the transport system to achieve their strategic objectives. Assessing how well we deliver this program of work is therefore critical to measuring the NTC’s performance.

As a reform organisation, most of the NTC’s work contributes to shared and long-term objectives across the wider transport system and is implemented by others. As a result, there is limited evaluation or data on the reform impacts directly attributable to the NTC.

The NTC’s unique role in the transport system and our relationship with ITMM mean that output-based measures often provide the clearest way to assess performance:

- Measures on how well we meet the performance expectations of ITMM (as set out in the performance-based framework and other directions to the NTC) are used to help assess **effectiveness**.
- Measures on how well we deliver the agreed program of work within existing resources are the best indicators of **efficiency**.

To improve the information available for assessing performance, the NTC is enhancing our broader evaluation program to include more evaluation on the impacts of our reforms.



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Our performance measures

| Strategic alignment | Performance measure and rationale | Target | Assessment methodology and data source | 2025–26 | 2026–27 | 2027–28 | 2028–29 |
|---|---|---|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| <p>1.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NTC Purpose: improve safety, productivity, environmental outcomes and regulatory efficiency, and enable future technologies Goals 1, 2 and 3: improved safety, productivity, and environmental outcomes | <p>Evaluations of the impact of the NTC’s reforms (once implemented) show clear evidence that the reforms delivered the desired outcomes.</p> | <p>No target – All implemented NTC reforms evaluated are shown to have been beneficial.</p> | <p>An assessment of the key findings of evaluations undertaken in developing the <i>National Transport Reform Implementation Monitoring Report</i> and (where available) by third parties such as the Productivity Commission.</p> <p>This measure will not be introduced until 2026-27 at the earliest as there are no reform evaluations planned in the current reporting periods.</p> | | | | |
| <p>2.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NTC purpose: promote an integrated and nationally consistent land transport system Goal 4: Expert advisors who act in the best interests of Australia; robust and transparent policy practices | <p>The NTC develops reform proposals that offer national benefits.</p> | <p>All the NTC’s reform proposals include clear advice and evidence of the expected benefits of implementing the reform.</p> | <p>Quantitative (total net present value) and qualitative assessment of anticipated benefits, including as assessed through a Policy Impact Analysis.</p> | | | | |
| <p>3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NTC purpose: help achieve the strategic objectives of Australia’s infrastructure and transport ministers Goal 4: High-quality advice | <p>The NTC’s advice is relevant and valuable to ITMM, to enable them to deliver on their strategic objectives.</p> | <p>All the NTC’s recommendations are acknowledged by ITMM (even if not adopted) and influence and inform their decision making.</p> | <p>An assessment of how well the NTC’s recommendations were received by ITMM, considering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How the NTC’s recommendations are reflected in ITMM decisions (based on ITMM communiqués, initiatives or requests for work, or other related interactions) Any feedback the NTC receives from ITMM or ministers on its advice. How supportive ITMM or ministers are of considering NTC advice | | | | |
| <p>4.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NTC purpose: help achieve the strategic objectives of Australia’s infrastructure and transport ministers Goal 5: A high performing organisation | <p>The NTC delivers its ITMM-agreed deliverables on time and within budget, to enable ITMM to deliver on their strategic objectives.</p> | <p>100 per cent of ITMM-agreed deliverables are completed on time against the ITMM-agreed work program and within budget.</p> | <p>A count of deliverables completed (using NTC program management records and papers submitted to ITMM) compared with the approved annual work program and budget.</p> | | | | |

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| Strategic alignment | Performance measure and rationale | Target | Assessment methodology and data source | 2025–26 | 2026–27 | 2027–28 | 2028–29 |
|---|--|--|---|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| <p>5.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NTC role and functions: Regulatory reform, instruments and frameworks NTC purpose; Goals 1, 2, 3, and 4: improved safety, productivity, environmental outcomes and regulatory efficiency | <p>The NTC delivers a comprehensive program of legislative reviews and amendments as scheduled in the work program to ensure all legislation that the NTC is responsible for is kept contemporary and consistent with its policy intent.</p> | <p>No target - Legislative instruments are reviewed each year with amendment packages submitted when a review identifies that a legislative instrument requires changes.</p> | <p>A count (based on NTC program management records and papers submitted to ITMM) of amendment packages submitted to ITMM.</p> | | | | |
| <p>6.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NTC purpose: promote an integrated and nationally consistent land transport system NTC role and functions: research, reporting and evaluation Goal 2: Productive national system Goal 4: High-quality advice; robust and transparent policy practices | <p>The NTC undertakes regular monitoring and reporting on the implementation of ITMM-agreed land transport reforms to promote an efficient and nationally consistent approach.</p> | <p>The <i>National Transport Reform Implementation Monitoring Report</i> is provided annually to ITMM and published on the NTC website.</p> | <p>A review of what the NTC submitted to ITMM and the NTC website to confirm that the <i>National Transport Reform Implementation Monitoring Report</i> was provided annually and meets the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusion of the status for each jurisdiction for all land transport reforms being implemented Inclusion of recommendations to address any identified barriers to successful implementation. | | | | |
| <p>7.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NTC purpose: help achieve the strategic objectives of Australia's infrastructure and transport ministers Goal 4: high-quality advice; expertise in policy and regulatory reform | <p>All NTC reforms and regulatory amendments are proposed with a clear implementation pathway to support those responsible for delivering the reforms to do so in an easy and consistent way that meets the reform intent.</p> | <p>100 per cent of NTC reforms and regulatory amendments presented to ITMM have an implementation pathway that includes outputs, timeframes and accountabilities.</p> | <p>A review of all NTC reforms submitted to ITMM (using NTC program management records and papers submitted to ITMM) to confirm implementation plans that meet the criteria were provided.</p> | | | | |
| <p>8.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal 4: Meaningful engagement and partnerships | <p>The NTC seeks and uses stakeholder feedback constructively to improve organisational performance and stakeholder engagement practices.</p> | <p>No target - The NTC provides evidence that the organisation is taking active steps to collect and respond to stakeholder feedback and build constructive relationships.</p> | <p>Reporting on actions taken to elicit and act on feedback to improve stakeholder engagement practices, and the outcomes of those actions.</p> | | | | |
| <p>9.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goal 5: High performing organisation; a great place to work | <p>The NTC has engaged staff and has a supportive culture improving its capability to deliver its program of work.</p> | <p>An overall staff engagement and alignment score that indicates the NTC is in the top quartile of results compared to similar organisations.</p> | <p>An annual staff engagement and alignment survey is conducted and analysed by an independent consultancy.</p> | | | | |

