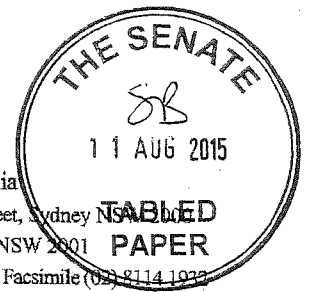




Australian Government  
Infrastructure Australia

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10 August 2015

Dr Rosemary Laing  
Clerk of the Senate  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

**Re: Motion to produce documents relating to the Perth Freight Link Project**

Dear Dr Laing,

I am writing in regards to the motion to produce documents relating to the Perth Freight Link Project.

As per similar motions in the past, I have sought the views of the Western Australian Government on this matter. The advice from Mr Reece Waldock, Director General of the Department of Transport, Commissioner for Main Roads Western Australia and Chief Executive Officer of the Public Transport Authority included significant objection to the release of documents at this time on the basis of its commercial in confidence nature and the potential impact any release may have on Commonwealth-State Relations.

Mr Waldock has advised as follows:

"The information provided to Infrastructure Australia (IA) on the Perth Freight Link project was provided to IA on a confidential basis for the sole purpose of assisting IA make its' required assessment of the project. This information which includes the Business Case remains the property of Main Roads WA and the Western Australian Government and no approval has been given for the information to be used for any other purpose or circulated or provided to anyone outside of IA."

"A 30 page Business Case Summary of the project has been publically available on Main Roads Website since the project was announced in late 2014. This summary includes a breakdown of the Benefit Cost Analysis results, details of the problems the project will resolve, the current challenges facing Western Australia and the freight system and the scope of the project. What was not released publically from the Business Case was the detailed information on the Cost Estimate, Revenue Forecasts and Traffic Demand as this information is considered "commercial in confidence" and it's release will prejudice the likely successful letting of contracts for both the construction of the project and implementing a heavy vehicle charging regime. Furthermore the release of this information may impact on the ability for Western Australia to achieve an optimum price for the Heavy Vehicle Income Stream if a decision was ever made to sell this to the private sector."



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As is required by the Infrastructure Australia Act, 2008 (the Act), Infrastructure Australia publishes a summary of any evaluations made as soon as practical in the quarter following the quarter in which the evaluation is made. As a matter of practice, Infrastructure Australia provides the project brief (the summary of the evaluation) to proponents prior to publication for the proponents to provide any comment to IA on the representation of facts and any 'commercial in confidence' material, in the brief. This final consultation is an important part of IA's process to ensure the final brief is an accurate reflection of facts and to maintain good working relationships with state and territory governments.

The project brief of the Perth Freight Link project is currently in the final stages of the consultation process and will be published on the IA website prior to the 30 September 2015 as is required by the Act. In providing the information to IA, state and territory governments expect IA will consult with them prior to the release of any material publically. It is IA's view that release of this brief prior to the finalisation of IA's regular consultation process may prejudice future working relations of IA with state and territory governments.

Given these issues, I respectfully request that the Senate consider these matters further.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. B. Davies', written in a cursive style.

**Philip Davies**

Chief Executive Officer