

**Rural & Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee**

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates 2016 - 2017

**Infrastructure and Regional Development**

**Committee Question Number: 01**

**Departmental Question Number: SQ17-000002**

**Program: n/a**

**Division/Agency: National Transport Commission**

**Topic: Scope of Who Moves What Where project**

**Proof Hansard Page: 5 (27 February 2017)**

**Senator Sterle, Glenn asked:**

**Senator STERLE:** This is a turn up for the books—four senators at estimates. We must be missing something. There must be a big party going on outside. Anyway, thank you ,Chair. Good morning. I want to go straight to the NTC. There was a paper or report released in August 2016 called, Who moves what where. We understand why it was done. What I really want to ask is how come shipping was excluded from this study when shipping accounts for near on 100 per cent of freight movements in and out of Australia and, I think, about 17 per cent internally?

**Mr Retter:** Good question. The fact is that our focus is on the movement of land freight. But, having said that, the fact is that the data that was collected included the movement of all freight into and out of ports, including data on containers, bulk and so on. But our focus was predominantly on rail and heavy vehicle movement of freight together with freight that is passing through inter-nodal points, including, obviously, our major ports. So in one sense we collected it. But the primary purpose of that data was to look at what is moving across Australia in road and rail, given the remit of the NTC is predominantly about service freight issues.

**Senator STERLE:** I understand that. But if you are taking on these studies, of course infrastructure imports are all-inclusive of what comes off of ships. My question is whether anyone can tell me why shipping was left out?

**Mr Retter:** I will get you an answer, if I may. I think to some extent we did look at shipping but perhaps not in the detail that you would want in terms of specific data on what tonnage was moving from port to port, if I'm correct and that is where you are heading in your question.

**Senator STERLE:** Can you tell me whose decision it was to only study land transport? Was it the minister, the Commissioner or the NTC itself?

**Mr Retter:** Ultimately, it would have been a decision in terms of the scope of the task that we were asked to undertake. But I would like to check, if I may, and come back to you on exactly the rationale for what the scope was and why it did or did not to some extent exclude shipping related stats.

**Answer:**

The rationale for the scope of the Who Moves What Where project was as follows:

- The transport and logistics industry in Australia is one of the key drivers of the Australian economy, yet it is often difficult to find up-to-date and comparable passenger and freight data for road and rail, that can assist in transport planning and reform. Some of these data sets, such as industry composition, had not been updated in several decades.
- This project proposed to produce a report that analysed the composition of the transport industry, and summarised other existing relevant information about freight and passenger movements.
- The report did not seek to duplicate existing information and utilised information from existing sources such as the ABS and BITRE, but updated industry composition information to provide a modern snapshot of transport operators in Australia.
- The *Who moves what where* information paper sought to better inform future planning and policy development by filling information gaps about the market structure of transport operators – road and rail, passenger and freight. The report was designed to better inform policy makers around Australia, to design and implement reforms to improve the productivity, safety and environmental performance of Australia's transport systems.

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- The Information paper provided figures on coastal shipping, together with analysis of commodity movements to and from the Ports and trends about changing import and export behaviours due to the decline in Australian manufacturing.
- The project scope was approved by the Council of Infrastructure and Transport, comprising ministers from all jurisdictions and the Commonwealth on 6 November 2015.