

New task force to examine Western Australian shipping industry

On Saturday, March 5th, Western Australia's Deputy Premier Roger Cook and Minister for Transport, Planning and Ports Rita Saffioti announced the establishment of a Shipping and Supply Chain Taskforce.

Unprecedented flooding on Australia's East Coast and in South Australia alongside severe weather events in the North-west have caused significant supply chain issues and food shortages in Western Australia. The newly established task force will examine ways to build resilience into the system and strengthen the state's supply chains in preparation for future natural disasters.

The task force will be chaired by the Hon. Kyle McGinn MLC and Jessica Stojkovski MLA, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Transport and Ports. In particular, the task force will examine:

- the role intrastate and interstate shipping can play as an ancillary route for freight movements in the event of natural disasters and disruptions to other supply chains;
- potential support for a national approach to the agile use of interstate shipping to strengthen critical supply chains;
- the sustainability and resilience of WA's on-water maritime labour force, including any emerging skill gaps, training requirements or critical worker shortages;
- opportunities to develop multi-modal responsiveness towards disruptions in vital WA freight supply chains; and
- opportunities to improve supply chain coordination and service quality at WA ports

The possibility of buying or leasing container publicly-owned container ships to use in emergency situations will also be explored. However, this would require a national approach that would be reliant on assistance and coordination with the Federal Government.

The task force will directly engage with the shipping industry, customers, port authorities, unions and the broader community and will report back to cabinet by March 31, 2023.

For more information, please contact Emma Ramage, Western Australian Director on +61 430 811 929.

Hawker Britton

Government Relations Strategy

Hawker Britton Group Pty Ltd ABN 79 109 681 405 TEL +61 431 744 115
Postal Address: GPO Box 609, BRISBANE QLD 4001 Street Address: Stanley Street Plaza, Southbank BRISBANE QLD 4101



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