

# **PROVIDING FOR THE OPERATION OF VERY HEAVY VEHICLES ON ROADS**

20 September 2007 (am)

## **SPECIAL SESSION 11**

### **INTRODUCTORY REPORT**

The aim of this session is to demonstrate the importance to the community of high productivity heavy vehicles on roads and how they can be acceptable to other road users. Effective utilisation of these vehicles enables the achievement of economic competitiveness through the efficient road transport whilst maintaining acceptable safety, environmental and asset standards.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Throughout the world there is a rapid expansion in freight, particularly road freight. This is leading to increasing conflict between heavy and light vehicles in urban areas and some congested inter-urban links. Community concern over noise, safety, environmental and amenity impacts of heavy vehicles is growing in the developed world and in many parts of the developing world.

This points to a need for innovative and imaginative approaches to vehicle design, regulation and access to best meet freight needs whilst addressing community concerns.

This session will include coverage of:

- the need for an integrated approach to the regulation of high productivity heavy vehicles;
- the value of performance based standards in preference to prescriptive standards, to allow vehicle designers and operators to innovate within defined safety standards, based on a Canadian case study;
- compliance and enforcement approaches that can be utilised to demonstrate to the community that these vehicles will comply with safety and environmental standards. This includes chain of responsibility legislation in Australia and a case study of an innovative use of heavy vehicle accreditation in South Africa;
- a view from shippers of freight needs and requirements for land freight transport;
- a view from road agencies of the difficulty of meeting mobility and freight needs whilst achieving amenity and safety goals;
- examples of the potential benefits of larger freight vehicles and the safety and performance gains in replacing some current rigid prescriptive standards with performance-based standards;

The session will conclude with a panel session which will include all of the speakers and will allow time for questions and comments from the audience.

The session would be of most relevance to developing countries, where:

- asset protection is most difficult to achieve using conventional enforcement techniques
- institutional arrangements to support restrictive regulation are weakest
- the economic benefits of larger vehicles is greatest
- capital availability for asset protection and enhancement is most constrained.

The session will also be of relevance to developed countries where the clash between amenity and efficiency needs is most stark.