

# Media Release

**The Hon Melissa Horne MP**

Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

Minister for Ports and Freight

Minister for Fishing and Boating



Wednesday, 30 March 2022

## REFORMS CHART A BRIGHTER PORT FUTURE FOR VICTORIA

Victoria will continue leading the nation as Australia's biggest exporter with new legislative reforms designed to strengthen the operations of commercial ports, supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs and economic growth across the state.

The Andrews Labor Government is delivering on its response to an independent review of the sector with the introduction of the *Port Reforms and Other Matters Bill* into State Parliament last week.

The Government has accepted all 63 recommendations from the *Independent Review of the Victorian Ports System*, including establishing Ports Victoria as a single entity to lead the strategic management and operation of Victorian commercial ports and waterways.

With the freight and logistics sector already contributing \$21 billion to state's economy each year and employing 260,000 Victorians, the Bill is set to make it more agile and efficient in supporting economic growth and recovery, and adaptable as circumstances change.

As well as embedding Ports Victoria in legislation, the changes include adapting its charter to promote and facilitate trade, undertake operational activities, and provide technical and consultancy services concerning the whole of the Victorian ports system.

The Bill will further improve the safety of essential port services such as pilotage and towage by giving harbour masters clear responsibility and powers to ensure navigational safety in their ports. Transport Safety Victoria will retain responsibility for licensing individual pilots and registering pilotage services providers; however, the Bill provides that registration must follow the issue of a licence by Ports Victoria.

The Review recommended targeted reform to give Ports Victoria a specific role overseeing the operational performance of the state's harbour masters to ensure their safety roles and functions will reliably and consistently apply across Victoria's commercial ports.

The Port of Hastings Development Authority will become the Port of Hastings Corporation to better reflect its future role and open the potential for investment and development across a range of dry and liquid bulk trades. The port will potentially play a key role in supporting new energy projects such as offshore wind and hydrogen.

Approximately \$26 billion of locally produced and manufactured exports pass through Victoria's commercial ports annually, handling almost a quarter of Australia's total food and fibre exports. The Port of Melbourne is the largest port for containerised and general cargo in Australia, handling around 36 per cent of the nation's container trade.

The Bill is a significant step forward in implementing the Government's response to an independent review of the port system.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne

*"With freight volumes expected to more than double over the next 30 years, the safe and efficient operation of our ports is vital to Victoria's economic growth and this bill is another significant step to improving the operation of our ports."*

*"These changes will make our port system more efficient, adaptable and ready to support growth and recovery."*

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