



Carlos Da Rocha
Chair, Matrville Precinct
c/- 22 Harold Street
Matrville NSW 2036
www.matrville.info

4 May 2011

Mr John Austen
National Land Freight Strategy submissions
Infrastructure Australia
GPO Box 594, Canberra ACT 2601
T (02) 8114 1900
F (02) 8114 1932
mail@infrastructureaustralia.gov.au

Dear Mr John Austen,

National Land Freight Strategy Submission

The Matrville Precinct appreciates the opportunity to contribute to the development of a National Freight Network and which comprises road, rail and ship.

The suburb of Matrville is a south eastern suburb of Sydney, approximately 10km from the city, on the historic La Perouse peninsula.

As with most suburbs within close proximity of a celebrated international city, property demand continues to grow and the demographic continues to change. Our community and those of surrounding suburbs are committed to maintaining our health and improving our environment with regard to traffic congestion, environmental noise and pollution. We would like to underline, that without endeavour, the social encroachment on transport infrastructure will continue to grow and therefore future planning and forecasting for one is interrelated to the needs of the other – beyond imports and exports to include social well-being.

Matrville Precinct would make the following observations and suggestions:

1. Forecasting and data analysis

As detailed in the National Land Freight Strategy discussion paper (1):

- a. *'Some recent evidence regarding growing road congestion is ambivalent'*.
- b. *'Accurate and reliable freight data is critical to ascertain freight infrastructure needs and to inform policy development. Currently, freight data is **inadequate**, or is descriptive rather*

than analytic. Consequently, the ability to produce forecasts and scenarios is limited. There also are differences in the freight forecasts presented to Infrastructure Australia.'

It seems therefore prudent that before embarking on any further planning, more research should be conducted into projected impacts on community/environmental health and well-being.

Recommendation:

The National Land Freight Strategy to conduct further research and analysis into future freight demands/community impacts before finalising.

2. Freight security

Coupled with well researched forecasting, the security of our freight network should be at the forefront of any planning. Economic swings, innovative technologies and extreme weather events WILL inevitably impact on freight efficiencies and cause disruptions therefore adequate risk assessment and redundancies should be included and accounted for.

Events such as the flooding in Brisbane, cyclones in Townsville and even tornados in Auckland, present major challenges for transportation and such events are likely to become more frequent and intense. Transportation planning SHOULD account for these in its long-term planning of new or restructured transport systems by specifying and developing alternate infrastructure and decentralising to minimise potential disruptions and freight inefficiencies across our economy.

Recommendation:

The National Land Freight Strategy to detail risk assessment and redundancies to safe guard our freight security.

3. Urban encroachment

For over 15 years, Government policy has been to saturate rail corridors with high density housing to permit access to the rail network and reduce reliance on cars. Now freight is being encouraged along those routes, utilising old noisy and polluting locomotives, negatively impacting on the quality of life for residents attracted by the Government policies to live near the rail lines.

Urban development planning needs to identify major ports/transport networks of the future and ensure there are sufficient buffers, however increasingly higher values are placed on land close to the CBD and therefore it is counterproductive to use that land for lower value activities.

While the **aspirations of the Australian people** are stated as being at the forefront of the vision behind the National Land Freight Strategy it seems at odds to the refer throughout the document to *urban encroachment* which implies communities are advancing, with stealth, beyond our allowed limits, swallowing up land that is not 'ours' to have. Many of Matraville's homes were built in the early 1900's, well before Port Botany began operation in 1979. Population growth is what will grow demand and in turn our freight volumes, it is therefore **urban development or consolidation** (not encroachment) and for the large part already exists.

Recommendation:

The National Land Freight Strategy to genuinely acknowledge the aspirations of the Australia people and promote greater integration of urban development and freight strategy by all levels of government and stakeholders.

4. Externalities

Externalities, as per the National Land Freight Strategy, include *'congestion, global greenhouse gases, local amenity issues, and accidents.'* (1)

Externalities are the preeminent factor hindering efficient freight networks in urban areas, and rightly so. A recent publication by the World Health Organisation (WHO) Europe (2011) titled **"Burden of disease from environmental noise"** (2) defines **health** *'as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity'*, and concludes that *'... environmental noise should be considered not only as a cause of nuisance but also a concern for public health and environmental health.'*

The European Commission Directive 2002/49/EC of 25 June 2002 defines **environmental noise** as *'unwanted or harmful outdoor sound created by human activities, including noise from road traffic, railway traffic airports and industrial sites'* (3) and in the 2004 publication by the Department of Health and Ageing (DHA), **"The health effects of environmental noise - other than hearing loss"** (4) it is stated that environmental noise is a growing public health problem and *'it is generally agreed that there is sufficient evidence that community (environment) noise adversely affects: annoyance; sleep disturbance; children's school performance; and cardiovascular health.'*

Further discussion by the WHO establishes issues *'... such as the lower housing prices near noisy roads mean that the effect of noise is not uniformly distributed throughout the population'* (2) and that there is little research available considering the combined exposure to noise, air pollution and chemicals. General freight will grow near population and intrude into night time amenity, impacting on many more communities.

Externalities of congestion and local amenity are not just constraints, or unfortunate inconveniences, but matters of public health and should be addressed with a greater degree of seriousness, integrity and foresight, as argued by the Productivity Commission.

If the freight industry was quieter, cleaner, and more concerned about public safety then externalities and 'urban encroachment' wouldn't be the unfortunate constraints they are made out to be.

Attached is Matrville Precinct's recent submission to the Safe Work Australia, *'Model Work Health and Safety'* which highlights our community's concerns regarding environmental noise, with particular reference to reversing vehicle alarms. A recent video highlighting this single impact has been placed on youtube and can be found at >>> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G57OjGFLT4U> This one minute video, captured on a compact camera, illustrates the impact reversing vehicle alarms are having on communities bounding Botany Bay and the many hundreds of thousands of

residents across Australia who also endure this ridiculously unnecessary incessant intrusion from neighbouring industries.

Recommendation:

The National Land Freight Strategy to prioritise externalities, with particular reference to environmental noise and pollution, and their impacts on **public health**.

5. Engaging with the community at a high level

Matrville Precinct is a volunteer group of residents, we are passionate about Matrville, its past, present and future, and spend significant time and effort representing our community, endeavouring to protect, improve and promote our village.

- We are NOT experts in freight strategy, environmental noise attenuation, planners, strategists, etc. etc. etc.;
- We do NOT have funds at our disposal to build strong evidence based arguments to support our community and;
- We have limited time to expend on 'fighting' for our cause as our primary commitments are to feeding and nurturing our families.

As such, Matrville Precinct would indeed welcome engagement at a 'high level', with honest and transparent dialogue between all stakeholders.

Recommendation:

National Freight Land Strategy to expand on how it aims to engage with community at a high level.

Summary

Matrville Precinct request following to be considered in finalising a National Land Freight Strategy:

- conduct further research and analysis into future freight demands/community impacts before finalising
- detail risk assessment and redundancies to safe guard our freight security
- genuinely acknowledge the aspirations of the Australia people and promote greater integration of urban development and freight strategy by all levels of government and stakeholders
- prioritise externalities, with particular reference to environmental noise and pollution and its impact on **public health**
- expand on how it aims to engage with community at a high level

Regards,

Carlos da Rocha

Chair – Matrville Precinct

0419 204 056

matprecinct@gmail.com.au

References

1. **Infrastructure Australia.** National Land Freight Strategy Discussion Paper. [Online] 2011. http://www.infrastructureaustralia.gov.au/publications/files/NLFS_220211.pdf.
2. **World Health Organisation;** Burden of disease from environmental noise. [Online] 2011. http://www.who.int/quantifying_ehimpacts/publications/e94888.pdf.
3. **European Commission – Environment.** Directive 2002/49/EC. [Online] June 25, 2002 . <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/noise/directive.htm>.
4. **Department of Health and Ageing.** The health effects of environmental noise - other than hearing loss. [Online] 2004. http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/health-publHth-publicat-document-metadata-env_noise.htm.

Attachment

1. Matrville Precinct submission to the **Model Safe Work Australia**

C.C

Hon. Anthony Albanese MP, Minister for Infrastructure and Transport - a.albanese.mp@aph.gov.au

Hon. Tony Burke MP, Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities - tony.burke.mp@aph.gov.au

Hon. Nicola Roxon MP, Minister for Health and Ageing – nicola.roxon.mp@aph.gov.au

Hon. Peter Garrett AM MP, Member for Kingsford Smith, PO Box 249, Maroubra NSW 2035

Hon. Michael Daley, MP, Member for Maroubra - maroubra@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Hon. Kristina Keneally, MP, Member for Heffron - heffron@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Hon. John Flowers, MP, Member for Rockdale - rockdale@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Hon. Jillian Skinner, MP, NSW Minister for Health - office@skinner.minister.nsw.gov.au

Hon. Duncan Gay, MLC, NSW Minister for Roads and Ports - office@gay.minister.nsw.gov.au

Hon. Gladys Berejiklian, NSW Minister for Transport, office@berejiklian.minister.nsw.gov.au

Cr Murray Matson, Mayor, Randwick City Council - murray.matson@randwick.nsw.gov.au

Ray Brownlee, General Manager, Randwick Council - general.manager@randwick.nsw.gov.au

Cr Robert Belleli, South Ward Councillor, Randwick City Council - robert.belleli@randwick.nsw.gov.au

Cr Ron Hoenig, Mayor, Botany Bay City Council - mayor@botanybay.nsw.gov.au

Peter Fitzgerald, General Manager, Botany Bay City Council - council@botanybay.nsw.gov.au

Cr Bill Saravinovski, Mayor, Rockdale City Council - bsaravinovski@rockdale.nsw.gov.au

Chris Watson, General Manager, Rockdale City Council- rcc@rockdale.nsw.gov.au

Environment Defenders Office, NSW, Level 1, 89 York Street, Sydney NSW 2000