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Statement of preparation

I am pleased to present the NTC Corporate Plan 2020–2024 for the four reporting periods 2020–2021 to 2023–2024.

This plan is prepared in accordance with paragraph 35(1) (b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act) and in accordance with the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Rule 2014*.

This Corporate Plan details our reform objectives and program of work which support the priorities of the Transport and Infrastructure Council. I am confident the NTC is well-equipped to deliver on this Corporate Plan and I am excited to see how the organisation responds to future challenges and opportunities.

Carolyn Walsh
Chair



Foreword

This Corporate Plan outlines how the NTC will shape the Australian land transport system, both in the short and longer term.

We are optimising road, rail, and intermodal transport systems through four priority areas: safety, productivity, sustainability and future technologies. This focus positions us well to deliver our current work program, the forward reform agenda, and respond to longer term opportunities around automation and artificial intelligence, integrated freight systems and the future of work.

To support this, we are shaping the organisation to be more agile and responsive, and hone our capability in policy development, engagement and transport economics. These are the core skills that will enable the NTC to continue to deliver meaningful and long-lasting reform. Orienting ourselves around these focus areas enables us to build stronger partnerships and take a systems-centric approach to policy design.

At the same time, we are committed to fostering an engaged and committed workplace culture that celebrates collective success. My focus is on developing the NTC’s people, culture, expertise and systems to successfully deliver the existing program of work and prepare for the future reform agenda.



This Corporate Plan outlines how we will deliver reform that continues to serve all Australians across the next decade.

Gillian Miles
Chief Executive Officer
and Commissioner

About the National Transport Commission

Who we are

The NTC is a national land transport reform agency that supports Australian governments to improve safety, productivity and environmental outcomes, provide for future technologies and improve regulatory efficiency. Based in Melbourne, the NTC has around 40 staff who are policy, engagement and economics specialists.

The *National Transport Commission Act 2003* (the NTC Act) and the Inter-Governmental Agreement for Regulatory and Operational Reform in Road, Rail and Intermodal Transport (IGA) establish the NTC and define our role.

As a key contributor to the national reform agenda, the NTC is accountable to the Transport and Infrastructure Council (the Council) comprising Commonwealth, state and territory ministers responsible for transport and infrastructure, and local government representation. We work closely with the Council's advisory body, the Transport and Infrastructure Senior Officials' Committee (TISOC), which includes the heads of Commonwealth, state and territory agencies.

The Council determines our four-yearly program of work, which is set out in this plan. It provides further direction and guidance through its *Statement of Expectations and Performance Based Framework* for the NTC and the Council's *Strategic Work Programme* which outlines the Council's four reform priorities.

The NTC is accountable to all Australian governments with a focus on achieving truly national outcomes.

What we do

To support the Council, the NTC leads reform, from defining the problems and opportunities, developing policy and drafting law, through to implementation planning and review.

Responsibility for Australian land transport regulation spans all levels of government, and across multiple agencies and regulators. The NTC has a unique role within this landscape to harmonise Australia's land transport system. We do this by working with the Commonwealth, states and territories in consultation with a range of stakeholders to negotiate solutions for all of Australia.

The NTC has a legislative requirement to develop, monitor and maintain uniform or nationally consistent regulatory and operational arrangements for road, rail and intermodal transport.

Our vision

The NTC advances social and economic outcomes for all Australians through an efficient, integrated and nationally consistent land transport system.

Our purpose

We lead national land transport reform.



The NTC's role as defined in the NTC Act and legislative instruments is to:

Develop and propose reform

The NTC identifies, designs and champions regulatory and operational reforms by:

- recommending opportunities to improve land transport productivity, safety, environmental performance and regulatory efficiency
- undertaking other responsibilities and functions determined by Australia's transport and infrastructure ministers.

Advise on heavy vehicle charges

The NTC is responsible for providing advice to governments on heavy vehicle charges. These charges are intended to recover the road construction and maintenance costs that are attributed to heavy vehicles.

Advice the NTC provides is guided by pricing principles agreed by Australia's transport and infrastructure ministers.

Monitor and evaluate reforms

The NTC delivers independent annual assessments of the implementation of agreed reforms, including analysis on:

- the reasons for any delay, barriers to implementation, and actions required to address the delay
- whether any variations were implemented that would reduce the benefits of the reform.

The NTC also delivers scheduled evaluations of the impact of existing reforms, including whether further uniformity is required to optimise productivity and safety benefits.

Maintain, monitor and review laws and instruments

The NTC is responsible for the monitoring and maintenance of national laws, model laws and other instruments to ensure they remain contemporary and consistent with their policy intent.

National laws

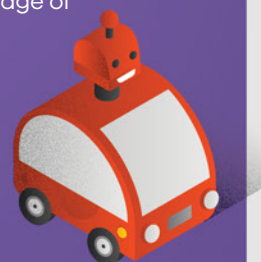
- Heavy Vehicle National Law (and Regulations) – hosted by Queensland
- Rail Safety National Law (and Regulations) – hosted by South Australia

Model laws

- Australian Road Rules
- Transport of Dangerous Goods by Road or Rail 2007
- Heavy Vehicle Charges Act
- Australian (Light) Vehicle Standards Rules

Other instruments

- Australian Defence Force Road Transport Exemption Framework
- Assessing Fitness to Drive for Commercial and Private Vehicle Drivers – with Austroads
- National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers
- Load Restraint Guide (Performance Standards for the Safe Carriage of Loads on Roads)
- Guidelines for Trials of Automated Vehicles in Australia – with Austroads
- National Enforcement Guidelines for Automated Vehicles



The NTC delivers this work through a four-yearly program which is approved by the Transport and Infrastructure Council.

Our reform landscape

Our operating environment is complex and dynamic, with responsibility for transport reform shared across all levels of government, other agencies and regulators.

Our transport environment

To respond to the mobility, freight and service needs of more than 25 million Australians, the NTC facilitates improvements to Australia's economic productivity and regulatory efficiency, as well as safety and environmental outcomes. We do this in a sector that is increasingly adopting or adapting to new technologies, including more automated vehicles. This creates both challenges and opportunities for our work.

Safety

The national road toll saw a dramatic decrease in fatalities from the 1980s to 2014. These rates have since stalled, but hospitalised injuries have risen significantly over the past decade.

There were 1,194 fatalities in the 2019 calendar year, an increase on 2018, and well above the national targets for reducing the road toll. Of these fatalities, 206 were the result of crashes involving heavy vehicles, a 27 per cent increase on 2018, but a reduction from previous years.

Some safety risks are inherent in transport, but there is opportunity to reduce these risks by moving towards more risk-based safety management systems.

With new technology offering many opportunities to improve safety, measures to encourage adoption of safe technologies are an important policy objective.

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Of these cases,
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New technology
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Productivity and regulatory efficiency

Transport is a major economic contributor in Australia: in 2015–16 total transport activity contributed 7.4 per cent (\$122.3 billion) of Australia's GDP.

However, transport productivity is inhibited by inconsistencies in the application and adoption of laws, which in turn creates a compliance burden for businesses. Not all states and territories participate in the national heavy vehicle regime, and both national and model laws are implemented by states and territories at different times and with variations.

Further harmonisation of laws and regulation could offer significant productivity gains.

Enabling new technologies is also expected to improve productivity.

In 2015–16
total transport
activity contributed
7.4%

\$122.3
billion
to Australia's
GDP



The Australian transport
sector produced around

18%
of Australia's
greenhouse
gas emissions

in the year to March 2019



Environment

The Australian transport sector (which includes domestic aviation) produced around 18 per cent of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions in the year to March 2019, an increase on the previous year and a 22 per cent increase since 2005.

Transport emissions have been predicted to continue rising, driven in part by a higher number of vehicles on the road and increased demand for freight.

Improvements in vehicle efficiency and greater uptake of electric vehicles are projected to reduce car and light commercial vehicles' share of transport emissions.

Our partners and role in the transport system

Collaboration is at the core of what we do: we can only deliver meaningful reform by engaging across the whole transport system. We work in partnership with governments (including non-transport agencies), safety regulators, standards boards, industry, the private sector and the broader community to deliver national transport reform.

The Australian community

The general public is our biggest stakeholder: our work affects every Australian as end-users of our reforms.

We are focused on making it easier for the community to understand our role, effectively engage with us and contribute their views.

The Council and TISOC

The Transport and Infrastructure Council sets the strategic direction and national transport agenda. The Council is advised and assisted by the Transport and Infrastructure Senior Officials' Committee.

The NTC, alongside TISOC, acts as an expert adviser to Council to support the delivery of the Council's strategic work programme and reform priorities.

The Council approves our work program and reform proposals.

National transport bodies and regulators

National transport bodies and regulators have a significant role in Australia's transport system.

The NTC is focused on maintaining robust, effective and collaborative working relationships with our partner transport entities to achieve the Council's objectives.

Austrorads

Systems and research to harmonise practice and improve guidance for road transport managers.

Office of the National Rail Safety Regulator

Regulatory oversight of rail safety in Australia.

Transport Certification Australia

Assurance in the use of telematics and related intelligent technologies.

Rail Industry Safety and Standards Board

Development of Australia's Standards, Codes of Practice, Guidelines and Rules for the rail sector.

Australian Road Research Board

Independent transport knowledge and research.

National Heavy Vehicle Regulator

Regulatory oversight of heavy vehicle safety and productivity in Australia.

State, territory and Commonwealth governments

Australian governments are invested in the NTC's work as the owners of reform implementation.

As TISOC and Council members, Australian governments agree the NTC's work and reforms. The NTC works closely with transport agencies, police, and work health and safety agencies to ensure that our proposals are practical, supported, and represent the best possible national solution.

International partners

The NTC works with the United Nations and international counterparts and organisations to ensure Australia's transport regulation is aligned with international practices, systems and approaches to enabling new technologies.

Our risk environment

The NTC operates in a complex and changing national environment that faces rapid transformation through technology and innovation.

To deliver reforms in this environment, the NTC needs to engage with governments and other stakeholders to develop policy solutions that address both current and future challenges and opportunities. Failure to do so could result in:

- outdated transport regulation that lags behind the pace of change, impacting on Australia's productivity and its ability to capitalise on new and emerging technologies
- reforms that deliver diminished value for Australia due to a lack of government consensus
- a fragmented transport system that differs between state and territory borders
- disjointed or failed reform implementation due to misalignment between different elements of reform delivered across multiple timeframes, agencies and sectors.

The NTC is mitigating these risks by shaping the program of work and capability around:

- focus areas that clearly support the delivery of the Council's reform priorities and reforms that offer the highest value for Australia
- better engagement with all of our stakeholders to identify and develop the best options, and ensure our reform work is complementary and aligned with others across the sector
- ensuring we have the policy expertise to deliver high-quality work that is ready to be implemented.

For more detail on how we will achieve this, refer to the *Reform objectives* and *Capability* sections of this plan.

The NTC has a robust risk management framework in place to manage risks at project, program and enterprise levels, with additional oversight provided by the NTC's Risk and Audit Committee.

We are promoting a proactive risk culture to ensure risks are appropriately identified, assessed, communicated and managed across all levels of the organisation.

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Leading and delivering reform

The NTC works in partnership to deliver reform as part of the wider transport system.

Our reform objectives

The NTC's objectives are to improve safety, productivity and regulatory efficiency, and environmental outcomes in the land transport sector.

We do this by addressing the reform priorities set by the Council and through a work program targeting four priority areas:



Future technologies

Our goal is to remove barriers to innovation and enable the safe use of new and emerging technologies. Our focus is on ensuring Australia's regulations keep pace with rapidly evolving technologies within the transport sector, including the development of more automated vehicles.



Safety

Our goal is to promote the safe movement of people, freight and services, while managing the challenges and opportunities posed by changing technology.



Sustainability

Our goal is to facilitate a sustainable transport system that enables us to achieve our desired social, economic and environmental outcomes in both the short and long-term. Our focus is on supporting sustainable funding and promoting better environmental outcomes.



Productivity

Our goal is to promote competitive national and international supply chains while reducing the regulatory burden, to make Australia's land transport system more productive and efficient.

Our objective is to deliver meaningful reform in each of these areas to generate real public value.

Our program of work 2020–2024

The following work is planned across the next four years. We will add any additional work requested by Council as it arises.

PROGRAMS / PROJECTS	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Future technologies				
Automated vehicle trial guidelines update	✓		✓	
In-service safety for automated vehicles	✓	✓		
Government access to vehicle generated data	✓	✓		
Automated vehicle enforcement guidelines update		✓		
Safety				
Improving the land transport of dangerous goods	✓			
Barriers to the safe and legal use of innovative vehicles	✓			
Developing technology-neutral road rules for driver distraction	✓			
Rail Safety National Law (<i>amendments to national law</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Transport of dangerous goods (<i>amendments to Code and model laws</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Australian Road Rules (<i>amendments to model law</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Assessing Fitness to Drive – for commercial and private vehicle drivers	✓	✓		✓
National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers		✓	✓	
Review and update the Load Restraint Guide for light vehicles		✓		✓
Productivity				
Heavy Vehicle National Law review	✓			
Heavy Vehicle National Law review implementation		✓	✓	
Australian Defence Force Exemption Framework	✓			
7-axle truck and dog review	✓			
Vehicle standards for light and heavy vehicles (<i>amendments to model and national laws</i>)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sustainability				
National rail action plan implementation	✓			
Carbon dioxide emissions intensity for new Australian light vehicles	✓	✓	✓	✓
Advisory				
2021 heavy vehicle charges determination	✓	✓		
Maintaining and improving the forward-looking cost base prototype model	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reform implementation monitoring report	✓	✓	✓	✓

For more information and progress updates on our work, visit our website at www.ntc.gov.au.

Our projects



Future technologies

Automated vehicle trial guidelines update

The NTC, with Austroads, will review the national guidelines governing conditions for trials of automated vehicles to ensure they remain fit for purpose. These guidelines support trials at all levels of automation and across borders, and ensure national trial conditions are consistent.

In-service safety for automated vehicles

The purpose of this work is to develop legislative reform options to ensure in-service safety of automated vehicles, provide driving laws for automated vehicles, and establish legal obligations for automated driving system entities and human users.

Government access to vehicle-generated data

The NTC will develop policy options for government access and use of vehicle generated data for the purposes of network operations, investment, maintenance, planning and road safety. This will support Australia’s transport agencies to understand how they may access and create value from vehicle data without raising commercial, privacy and security issues or disincentives to the deployment of technology.

Automated vehicle enforcement guidelines update

The NTC will review the national enforcement guidelines, that clarify regulatory concepts of control and proper control for different levels of driving automation, to support consistent application of the law across jurisdictions.

Safety

Improving the land transport of dangerous goods

The NTC will examine ways to improve the consistency and efficiency of regulating the land transport of dangerous goods. The NTC will consider and develop:

- options for the legal mechanism (e.g. model law, applied law, referral of powers etc.) for implementing the laws for the land transport of dangerous goods
- options for the process used (e.g. status quo, improve the existing process, moving to a different process) to update the laws and Code for the land transport of dangerous goods
- ways to achieve consistent enforcement of requirements for the land transport of dangerous goods across Australia.

Barriers to the safe and legal use of innovative vehicles

The purpose of this work is to explore options for developing a performance-based framework for vehicle classification and to provide requirements for the safe and legal use of motorised mobility devices and personal mobility devices on appropriate road and road-related areas.

Developing technology-neutral road rules for driver distraction

This work seeks to ensure the road rules achieve better outcomes for road users regardless of the technology used. Any proposed changes to the road rules will consider their potential to change driver behaviour and enforceability while encouraging innovation and not prohibiting technology with the potential to improve road safety.

Routine and other policy-related amendments to laws/code:

- Rail Safety National Law (national law)
- Transport of dangerous goods (Code and model laws)
- Australian Road Rules (model law)
- Assessing Fitness to Drive – for commercial and private vehicle drivers
- National Standard for Health Assessment of Rail Safety Workers
- Review and update the Load Restraint Guide for light vehicles



Advisory

2021 heavy vehicle charges determination

In November 2019, the Council directed the NTC to undertake a heavy vehicle charges determination and provide final recommendations back to Council in November 2022. The determination is a thorough review of the current Pay-as-you-go (PAYGO) methodology for setting heavy vehicle charges. In 2020–21, this project will focus on research and investigation to review the current methodology and identify options for improvement. The NTC will then assess the impact of selected options with a Regulation Impact Statement.

Maintaining and improving the forward-looking cost base prototype model

The NTC will continue to maintain and update the prototype forward-looking cost base model in support of the Land Transport Market Reform work (led by the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications). In 2020–21 this project will focus on collecting road expenditure data for 2019–20 and incorporating it into the model.

Reform implementation monitoring report

The NTC produces the National Transport Reform Implementation Monitoring Report for the Council meeting in November each year. It provides Council with:

- an assessment of the implementation progress of national transport reforms and projects
- advice on where delays have occurred
- any corrective actions or interventions needed to bring implementation back on track.

The advice includes analysis of derogations and variations, and minor reviews as needed, including a review (if required) of the policy on small breaches for electronic work diaries.



Sustainability

National rail action plan implementation

The NTC will implement the National Rail Action Plan following endorsement by Council in November 2019. The Plan has three major streams of work:

- Skills and labour – to ensure Australia has the skilled people it needs to build and operate its rail networks
- Common standards – to align infrastructure and rolling stock standards
- Interoperability – to align operating rules and communication systems across rail networks.

Carbon dioxide emissions intensity for new Australian light vehicles

The NTC publishes an annual report on the carbon dioxide emissions intensity of new cars and light commercial vehicle sales. The report uses data provided by the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries, and gives consumers and governments a transparent benchmark on how Australia's new car emission performance is tracking.

Productivity

Heavy Vehicle National Law review

The purpose of this review is to deliver – from a first principles perspective – a modern, outcome focussed law regulating the use of heavy vehicles that will:

- improve safety for all road users
- support increased economic productivity and innovation
- simplify the HVNL, its administration and enforcement
- support the use of new technologies and methods of operation
- provide flexible, outcome-focussed compliance options.

Heavy Vehicle National Law review implementation

The NTC will implement ministerially agreed policy changes to the HVNL resulting from the review. Implementing the agreed policy will lead to an updated law that better supports safety, productivity and innovation.

7-axis truck and dog review

The NTC, with the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, will undertake a review of the seven-axis truck and dog reforms that were approved by the Council in 2015. The Council directed the NTC to undertake this review no earlier than three years after implementation.

Routine and other policy-related amendments to laws:

- Australian Defence Force Exemption Framework
- Vehicle standards for light and heavy vehicles (model law, Heavy Vehicle (Vehicle Standards) National Regulation including Engine Brake Noise Standards).

Supporting reform implementation and other national work

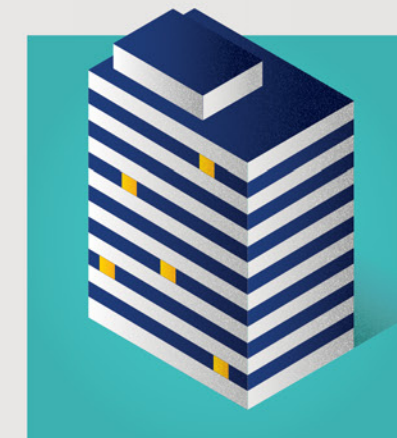
The NTC supports the Commonwealth, states and territories and national regulators to implement Council-approved policy recommendations in alignment with all other work.

The NTC provides ongoing support to all stakeholders by providing advice, clarification, information or guidance material as needed on implementing, administering, and complying with approved reforms. We also help progress policy recommendations through additional decision-making bodies (where relevant).

Once an NTC reform or amendment package is agreed by Council, the NTC works with the host jurisdiction to assist with passage of the legislation.

The NTC contributes to national strategies, groups and steering committees, including:

- Austroads taskforces and projects (e.g. Future Vehicle and Technology Taskforce and the freight and safety taskforces)
- Remote Areas Consultative Group
- National Transport Technology Policy Framework and Action Plan.



The NTC plays an active role in national strategies, groups and steering committees.



Our capability

The NTC is committed to being an agile and adaptable organisation with an engaged and highly skilled workforce. Our focus is on getting the right people, culture, expertise and systems to successfully deliver reform outcomes.

Our people and culture

We are actively shaping a culture that is owned by all staff and championed by our executive to embed and embody:

- **a positive and inclusive workplace culture** that brings out the best in everyone and supports the wellbeing of its people.
- **an agile, flexible and adaptable approach** that is responsive to change in what we deliver and how we work.
- **a collaboration mindset** that puts collaboration and partnerships at the heart of everything we do, and makes the best use of everyone's skills and knowledge.
- **a strong internal communications culture** that promotes transparency and ensures everyone has all the information they need to do the best job, to the best of their ability.



- **a proactive and outcomes-oriented mindset** that always looks for the most effective way to deliver our work, to achieve the results we want, and to add value.
- **engaged and committed staff** who are passionate about what we do, intellectually curious, and actively create a positive workplace culture that celebrates success.
- **a positive risk culture** that promotes an open and proactive approach to managing risk and considers both threat and opportunity through a culture of transparency.

Our expertise and skills

The NTC is made up of diverse thinkers who bring a range of complementary skills to the organisation. Our goal is to improve how we develop and use our capabilities to ensure that we have the right skills at the right time to deliver the right outcomes.

We are doing this by embracing more agile practices in how we allocate people across our work to maximise our expertise. Our capability planning and development will be focused around the three core skills that underpin our ability to deliver workable solutions and high-value reform:

- **Policy expertise:** Strong policy skills are critical to developing and gaining buy-in to meaningful and outcomes-driven reform. The priorities for our policy skillset are:
 - Strong research and analysis capabilities that bring together deep critical thinking with qualitative and quantitative analysis to build a robust case for change.
 - Effective written communication that is clear, concise and compelling and provides all the information required to act.
 - In-depth understanding of legislative and parliamentary processes to deliver workable implementation options that readily translate into law.

- **Engagement expertise:** Engagement is integral to effectively identifying, planning, and co-creating solutions that meet our stakeholders' needs. We are reshaping how we plan and deliver our work to ensure it is designed with, and for, our stakeholders. Our goal is to build meaningful relationships and engage the right people at the right time to achieve the best outcomes.
- **Economics expertise:** The NTC draws heavily on both qualitative and quantitative economic analysis to assess the expected costs and benefits of reform proposals. Our economics expertise is a critical component in developing Regulation Impact Statements (RIS) for initiatives.

We also rely on our economics expertise to fulfil our role in heavy vehicle charging, as well as assisting the Land Transport Market Reform project led by the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications.

Our systems and practices

We are focused on ensuring we have systems and processes in place to effectively resource to priorities and allocate the right people to the right work at the right time.

We are streamlining and strengthening how we manage our work effectively with 'fit for purpose' policy practices, project and risk management methods and quality assurance systems. We are designing our processes and technologies around how they can best support the delivery of our work and promote collaboration, agility and innovation.



Evaluating our performance

The NTC uses performance monitoring and evaluation to drive continuous improvement in what and how we deliver. As a Commonwealth corporate entity, we report regularly on our performance in line with the requirements of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (PGPA Act). We also report on our performance to TISOC through six-monthly reports on work program progress.

Our performance measures look at a combination of three elements to provide an overall picture of how well we deliver on our purpose:

- **Our efficiency:** how well we use our resources and deliver our core functions within the time and budget given to us.

- **Our effectiveness:** how well we do our work based on the quality of what and how we deliver.
- **Our impact:** how well we meet our strategic objectives (noting that we have limited influence over how our proposed reforms are implemented).

This is shown in the following diagram:



Our performance measures

Group	Performance assertion	Performance metric	Target
Efficiency	The NTC delivers projects on time and within budget	Portion of projects completed on time and within budget	> 90%
	The NTC maintains, monitors and reviews land transport reforms	Routine legislative maintenance packages submitted to TISOC	≥ 5 / year
		Reform implementation reporting provided when due	100%
Effectiveness	The NTC develops policy reform proposals of high value	Total Net Present Value (NPV) benefits of regulatory reforms agreed by Council	> 3-year rolling average (NPV)
	The NTC develops practical reform recommendations	Portion of NTC recommendations presented to Council and agreed	> 90%
		Portion of NTC regulatory amendments presented to Council with a TISOC-agreed implementation plan	100%
	The NTC engages effectively with its government partners and stakeholders	The NTC receives positive feedback on how it engages via a two-yearly stakeholder survey	Demonstrated improvements on the previous survey
	The NTC has engaged staff who support a culture of performance	Annual staff engagement survey results	An increase from the previous survey in overall staff engagement
Impact	The NTC delivers on the IGA	Section 51 review (in 2021) confirms the value of the NTC in meeting the objectives specified in the Inter-Governmental Agreement for Regulatory and Operational Reform in Road, Rail and Intermodal Transport (IGA)	NTC recognised as highly valuable



