



## “A proud and successful trading nation”

By The Hon BARNABY JOYCE MP,  
Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Development

Australia is a proud and successful trading nation. Maintaining this into the future by keeping ships moving is what will drive our future prosperity.

To the crew, pilots, stevedores and everyone who makes this industry tick, thank you for all you've done to do just that in 2021. You have all worked tirelessly through another difficult year to keep our supply chains open. This enables our farmers, exporters and manufacturers to move goods efficiently to market by sea, and ensures access to critical imports for businesses and households.

High demand for shipping services has influenced freight costs worldwide, reminding us of shipping's critical role in enabling global trade. The Australian Government appreciates the challenges for businesses. Freight rates are likely to remain high for some time and we are seeking to reduce disruption and costs in the freight system where possible to support efficient and safe shipping operations.

The Government is continuing to deliver improvements to the supply chains linking producers to ports. This is happening through our record \$110 billion, 10-year infrastructure pipeline.

Projects such as the Port Botany Rail Line Duplication, Melbourne Port Rail Shuttle and efficiency upgrades at the Port of Burnie are part of our National Freight and Supply Chain Strategy and National Action Plan that will directly benefit maritime trade.

Looking to the future, our \$16.5 million investment in a National Freight Data Hub will deliver data projects, help us to better understand port performance and shipping movements, and inform future policy and investments.

Work to improve everyone's safety

aboard vessels continues. Our Government has committed to an independent review of Australia's domestic maritime safety laws to ensure they remain fit for purpose, improving safety with a proportionate regulatory burden. I encourage all fishers, tourism operators, tug companies and every domestic commercial vessel operation to engage in this process, so we hear as many people's views as possible about how we can enhance the safety of these vessels and keep our shipping industry strong into the future.

While the COVID-19 pandemic persists, vaccination remains the best way to protect our community and reduce disruptions to Australia's supply chain. Sick seafarers can't do their job moving our freight. The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communications has been exploring how to vaccinate international seafarers visiting Australia, with vaccinations already underway in some jurisdictions.

In light of the ongoing impact of COVID-19, at the start of 2021 we announced a \$6 million boost to the Bass Strait Passenger Vehicle Equalisation Scheme, supporting no cost or substantially reduced fares to Tasmania between March and June. This supported thousands of trips, bringing in business and holiday makers, and reuniting families. In May, we announced \$67.7 million to expand the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme to eligible imported goods shipped from the mainland to Tasmania with no direct Australian-made equivalent, further supporting Tasmanian businesses and workers as the economy recovers from COVID.

The Government is also focused on supporting the shipping industry to reduce emissions. We are engaged at the

International Maritime Organization to develop practical steps toward the IMO's goal of halving global shipping emissions by 2050. We have supported energy efficiency measures to reduce the carbon intensity of shipping, and will support uptake of low and zero-carbon marine fuels and technologies such as green hydrogen and ammonia. Our \$464 million investment through the Clean Hydrogen Industrial Hubs grants program will help co-locate hydrogen producers and users, generating exports and supporting use of clean fuels in domestic transport and international shipping. Further, our \$30 million Australia-Singapore partnership will drive clean hydrogen technologies for shipping and port operations, and partnership with the US, Japan and India will develop green shipping corridors in the Indo-Pacific.

It has been another challenging year, but our shipping industry continues to perform strongly, driving our economy and ensuring the products we need and export are where they need to be.

I look forward to working together in the year ahead to ensure Australia continues to enjoy shipping services and a maritime sector that is safe, secure, reliable, efficient and protects Australia's marine environment. ▲