



## Opening Statement

### Review of the Transport Security Amendment (Security of Australia's Transport Sector) Bill 2024

- The transport sector is critical in facilitating the movement of people, goods, and services; providing access to employment, education, healthcare, and other social services; and fostering social cohesion and inclusivity.
- A secure and resilient transport sector directly contributes to Australia's prosperity and unity by ensuring critical supply chains are not disrupted and essential services are maintained, bolstering trade networks and economic growth.
- 11 September 2001 brought home how vulnerable the transport sector is to terrorism and the significant impact that it can have on the national and economic security of a nation and the global environment.
- Australia is not immune to terrorist attacks. In 2017, an Australian counter terrorism operation, Operation SILVES, disrupted an attempt to bring down an aircraft using an improvised explosive device.
  - Had this conspiracy been successful it would have led to the loss of over 400 lives and would have been the largest terrorist attack in Australian history.
- More recently, Australia has faced security threats at airports and seaports, ranging from individuals breaching secure areas, failures to detect or prevent prohibited items entering into sterile areas, and invalid air cargo security declarations being issued.
- The current transport security legislative frameworks largely focus on physical threats within an entity's boundary or physical location.
- However, over the last 20 years there has been a significant shift in the security environment. While traditional threats such as terrorism continue to exist and challenge Australia, the transport sector is facing new and evolving threats that have been exacerbated by rapid technological advances, and issues, and events that have arisen both domestically and globally.
- The frequency and severity of threats to the transport sector is increasing, with the security and resilience of Australia's critical infrastructure continuously being challenged.
  - Over the past twelve months, we have seen international threats to transport infrastructure. For instance, prepositioning of state based actors on airport's and seaport's systems, international sabotage using incendiary devices, and motivated actors breaching, or attempting to breach, security-restricted areas or bringing prohibited items through airport checkpoints.
- The threat environment continues to evolve. To keep pace, our regulatory frameworks must evolve too.
- If a security threat materialises in Australia, it could result in loss of life and compromise the reliability, continuity, and security of Australia's transport sector. This would have subsequent adverse impacts for Australia's prosperity and security by disrupting essential services, as well as eroding public confidence.
- This is Australia's opportunity to be proactive, rather than reactive; to be world-leaders in transport security and set the global standard.

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