

Implementation and oversight

- 5.1 Once a national policy framework has been articulated, it will be necessary to implement the Government's chosen reforms and monitor reform outcomes to assess the success of policy implementation.
- 5.2 Much of the national governance oversight arrangements are already in place. Organisations such as the ones listed below are currently undertaking national policy initiatives which impact on shipping in this country and could be utilised to implement the reforms recommended in this report. They include:
- the Australian Maritime Group (AMG)¹;
 - various COAG working groups;
 - the National Transport Commission; and
 - Infrastructure Australia.

Australian Maritime Group

- 5.3 The AMG considers a range of maritime sector issues and provides policy recommendations to the Australian Transport Council (ATC) through the Standing Committee on Transport. The AMG has four sub-groups which advise on a number of issues:
- National Marine Safety Committee;
 - National Plan Sub-Group;

1 Comprised of representatives of state, Northern Territory and Commonwealth Government maritime agencies.

- Industry Advisory Committee; and
- Education Sub-Group.²

5.4 The AMG 2007-08 workplan is outlined in the following table and reflects the nature of the work currently being undertaken by the AMG:

Table 2.2 AMG 2007-08 Workplan

Goal 1	Enhance contribution of the maritime sector to the national interest
	➤ Best practice study of maritime sector/government interaction
Goal 2	Address issues of national importance
	➤ Maritime skills – stocktake of skills initiatives, promotion of maritime sector;
	➤ Meyrick Report – consultation and analysis;
	➤ Investigate “national ports and shipping research centre”;
	➤ Coastal shipping development;
	➤ Contribute to marine pests management; and
	➤ Environmental issues - identify and address priorities.
Goal 3	Deliver a progressive national harmonised regulatory framework for maritime activities
	➤ Expedite approvals of NMSC Standards and implementation;
	➤ Progress reforms to maritime safety jurisdiction; and
	➤ Assist implementation of MARPOL (international maritime pollution) legislation.
Goal 4	Engage key stakeholders in the future of the maritime industry
	➤ AMG Workshop

Source Jim Hallion, *Key Note Presentation: Maritime Stakeholder Workshop*, http://www.transport.sa.gov.au/pdfs/AMG_Shipping_Study_-_Maritime_Stakeholder_Workshop_presentation.pdf, accessed 16 June 2008.

COAG working groups

5.5 COAG has four working groups engaged in areas significant to the maritime sector. They are the:

- Productivity (education and skills) Working Group;
- Climate Change and Water Working Group;

2 Jim Hallion, *Key Note Presentation: Maritime Stakeholder Workshop*, http://www.transport.sa.gov.au/pdfs/AMG_Shipping_Study_-_Maritime_Stakeholder_Workshop_presentation.pdf, accessed 16 June 2008.

- Infrastructure Working Group; and
- Business Regulation and Competition Working Group.³

Input from the ATC can play an important role in ensuring that the plans implemented by these groups address the needs of the maritime sector.

National Transport Commission

- 5.6 The National Transport Commission (NTC) was established to assist Australian governments in achieving their jointly agreed objective of 'improving transport productivity, efficiency, safety and environmental performance and regulatory efficiency in a uniform or nationally consistent manner'.⁴
- 5.7 The NTC's role is to advise the ATC and:
- ...lead transport regulatory reform nationally to meet the needs of transport users and the broader community for safe, efficient and sustainable land transport. It contributes to a vision of the best national transport outcomes for Australia. To achieve this, it consults widely and work with industry and all levels of government to establish priority areas for transport regulatory reform.⁵
- 5.8 The NTC's roles and responsibilities as noted above do not include maritime transport issues. However, in December 2007 the Federal Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government tasked the NTC with developing 'a national transport policy framework, including a national infrastructure plan' in which all modes of transport will be covered.⁶

3 Information in COAG working groups and their agendas can be found in the COAG Communiqué, 20 December 2007, <http://www.coag.gov.au/meetings/201207/index.htm>, accessed 16 June 2008 and Jim Hallion, *Key Note Presentation: Maritime Stakeholder Workshop*, http://www.transport.sa.gov.au/pdfs/AMG_Shipping_Study_-_Maritime_Stakeholder_Workshop_presentation.pdf, accessed 16 June 2008, p. 26.

4 NTC website, <http://www.ntc.gov.au/ViewPage.aspx?page=A02300407400440020>, accessed 17 June 2008.

5 NTC website, <http://www.ntc.gov.au/ViewPage.aspx?page=A02300407400440020>, accessed 17 June 2008.

6 Jim Hallion, *Key Note Presentation: Maritime Stakeholder Workshop*, http://www.transport.sa.gov.au/pdfs/AMG_Shipping_Study_-_Maritime_Stakeholder_Workshop_presentation.pdf, accessed 16 June 2008.

- 5.9 As in the case of the COAG working groups, this direction represents an opportunity for maritime issues to be considered as part of a comprehensive national transport strategy.

Infrastructure Australia

- 5.10 Infrastructure Australia has recently been created to develop a strategic infrastructure blueprint for Australia's future infrastructure needs and, in partnership with the states, territories, local government and the private sector, facilitate its implementation.⁷
- 5.11 Over a period of twelve months Infrastructure Australia will be preparing a national infrastructure priority list that identifies the investment priorities and policy and regulatory reforms necessary to enable timely and coordinated delivery of national infrastructure investment.⁸
- 5.12 Infrastructure Australia's recommendations regarding port infrastructure will be of great interest to the maritime industry and could impact the future direction of coastal shipping in this country. Many submitters to this inquiry noted their concern regarding a lack of nation transport planning which included a maritime component.⁹ It is expected that the work of Infrastructure Australia will address this inequity and consider maritime infrastructure as part of its list of national infrastructure priorities.

Future national oversight

- 5.13 Each of these groups can play an important role in cooperatively progressing coastal shipping reform issues across federal and state jurisdictions once clear policy direction is provided by the Commonwealth Government; yet the Committee believes that coordinated reform implementation and performance monitoring will be integral to the success of any government reform agenda.
- 5.14 In reviewing existing national governance arrangements, the Committee considered possible oversight options available to

7 Infrastructure Australia website, <http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/department/infrastructureaustralia/>, accessed 17 June 2008.

8 Infrastructure Australia website, <http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/department/infrastructureaustralia/>, accessed 17 June 2008.

9 See for example, Ports Australia, *Submission No. 30*, p. 6 & MUA, *Submission No. 45*, p. 13.

progress the Government's coastal shipping reform agenda and avoid duplication of work across various organisations.

A shipping reform implementation group

- 5.15 It has been recommended to the Committee that the role of the AMG be altered so that its principal role would be to 'keep the ATC informed on the implementation of the new national shipping policy in accordance with agreed performance indicators'.¹⁰
- 5.16 It has been further proposed that a restructured AMG consist of advisory participants from the following organisations:
- Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics (BITRE) (to model and report on performance against agreed indicators to enable the ATC to monitor and refine the policy framework as required);
 - Australian Maritime and Safety Authority (AMSA) (to advise on IMO and (marine related) ILO Conventions to which Australia is party);
 - National Transport Commission (to advise on the regulatory issues associated with ports);
 - Transport and Logistics Industry Skills Council (to advise on labour market trends, training outcomes and skill development issues); and
 - key industry stakeholders such as the Australian Shipowners Association and maritime unions.¹¹
- 5.17 Utilising a revised AMG within the existing structure would allow for current reporting lineage to remain so that ultimately, COAG would be informed of progress being made.
- 5.18 The Committee sees merit in this recommendation. It is concerned, however, that the composition of a revised AMG, as noted above, does not include representatives of:
- the states and Northern Territory;
 - the ITRDLG department (in addition to AMSA representatives);
 - Infrastructure Australia;

10 MUA, *Submission No. 45*, p. 14.

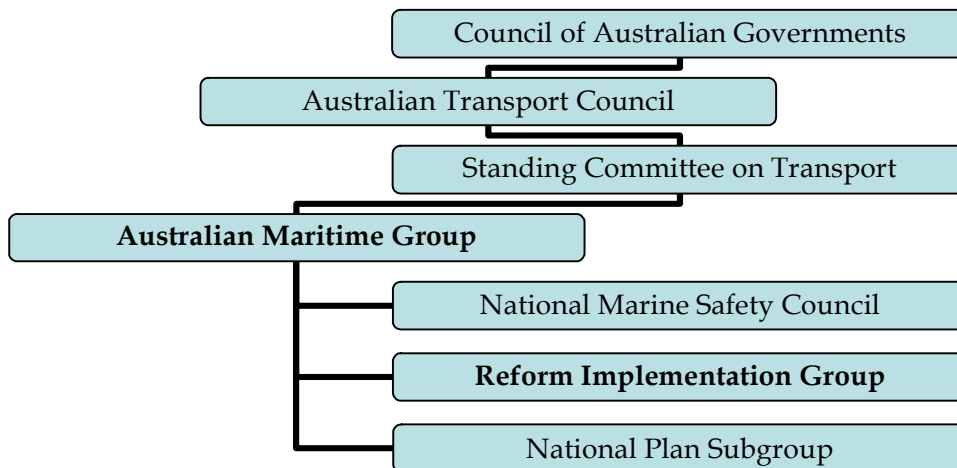
11 MUA, *Submission No. 45*, p. 14.

- a newly formed training authority (as noted in Recommendation 10); or
- the Royal Australian Navy which could provide advice on civilian/defence cooperation matters.

5.19 Nor does it take into consideration existing sub-groups. Furthermore, a revised AMG would provide valuable oversight to progress shipping reform but it would not satisfy the need for a constituted, full-time reform implementation group to drive reform within specified time frames. In the initial stages of reform implementation a working group of this nature would be particularly valuable.

5.20 As the Committee has noted, there are currently several governance organisations undertaking review and reform in areas which impact on shipping in this country. A new reform implementation group under the supervision of a restructured AMG would need to undertake a liaison and coordination role to ensure that reform was progressing according to established policy goals and that duplication of work was avoided.

5.21 National marine policy governance arrangements in the future could take the following form:



5.22 The manner in which reform is implemented, coordinated and monitored is as important as the nature of the reform. The Committee recommends that any future Commonwealth Government reform initiatives be implemented by a reform implementation group which operates under a restructured AMG. A new AMG should comprise representatives from:

- The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government – including AMSA;
- state governments and the Northern Territory;
- National Transport Commission;
- Transport and Logistics Industry Skills Council;
- Infrastructure Australia;
- a national training authority (as noted in Recommendation 10);
- The Royal Australian Navy (in an advisory capacity); and
- key industry stakeholders such as the Australian Shipowners Association and maritime unions.

A restructured AMG should also retain its current sub-groups in order to advise the Reform Implementation Group on their portfolios.

5.23 Initially, specific time-frames and performance milestones should be established for the Reform Implementation Group and reported on by the BITRE. Once these have been met the AMG may decide to disband the group and continue monitoring performance outcomes through information provided by the BITRE.

5.24 The AMG should report regularly to the ATC, which, in turn would report on the work of the Reform Implementation Group to COAG.

Recommendation 14

5.25 **The Committee recommends that any future Commonwealth Government reform initiatives be implemented by a reform implementation group which operates under a restructured Australian Maritime Group. A new Australian Maritime Group should comprise representatives from:**

- **The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government – including AMSA;**
- **state governments and the Northern Territory;**
- **National Transport Commission;**
- **Transport and Logistics Industry Skills Council;**
- **Infrastructure Australia;**
- **a national training authority (as noted in Recommendation 10);**
- **The Royal Australian Navy (in an advisory capacity); and**
- **key industry stakeholders such as the Australian Shipowners Association and maritime unions.**

A restructured Australian Maritime Group should also retain its current sub-groups in order to advise the Reform Implementation Group on their portfolios.

Specific time-frames and performance milestones should be established for the Reform Implementation Group and reported on by the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics. Once these have been met, the Australian Maritime Group may decide to disband the Reform Implementation Group and continue monitoring performance outcomes through information provided by the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics.

The Australian Maritime Group should report regularly to the Australian Transport Council, which, in turn would report on the work of the Reform Implementation Group to COAG.

5.26 Coastal shipping reform will require a long-term view by government. This report is a starting point and the Committee is aware that its recommendations are not exhaustive. Throughout the course of the reform review and implementation process other strategies may need to be considered and structural adjustment support provided. A systematic, staged approach to reform is necessary because the Australian coastal shipping industry will be beginning this process from a low point. That should not, however, restrict the reform process from moving forward in a timely fashion. The Australian coastal shipping industry is an integral part of the Australian economy and its revitalisation requires action.

Catherine King MP

Chair

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