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## **Rebuilding Australia's Coastal Shipping Industry - Coastal shipping policy and regulation review report tabled -**

The Chair of the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government tabled the Committee's report into coastal shipping policy and regulation in Parliament on Monday 20 October 2008.

Committee Chair and Federal Member for Ballarat, Catherine King, said the need to revitalise Australia's coastal shipping industry has been discussed for some time and many have been calling for more concrete action.

"This report provides a framework by which government can move forward and develop a competitive and sustainable coastal shipping industry in Australia."

Ms King stressed the importance of incentives in rebuilding Australia's coastal shipping industry.

"Through the introduction of various incentives to industry, I expect Australia's coastal shipping industry can begin to rebuild and eventually undertake a larger role in Australia's transport task."

The report's recommendations include:

- reform of Part VI of the Navigation Act 1912, the Navigation (Coasting Trade) Regulations 2007 and the Ministerial Guidelines for Granting Licences and Permits to Engage in Australia's Domestic Shipping;
- the implementation of a single national approach to maritime safety for commercial vessels;
- the introduction of an optional tonnage tax regime in Australia that is linked to mandatory training requirements;
- the re-introduction of accelerated depreciation arrangements;
- a one year review of the Maritime Crew Visa;
- amendments to the Seafarers' Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1992 and the Occupational Health and Safety (Marine Industry) Act 1993;
- the creation of a national port development plan to address current and potential capacity constraints in Australia's ports;
- the creation of a national maritime training authority and the introduction of a national training vessel;
- a review of Section 23 AG of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1936; and
- the creation of a reform implementation group to implement any future Commonwealth Government reforms.

"The Australian coastal shipping industry has declined over the past decade. With Australia's freight task set to double by 2020, there is significant room for growth in Australia's shipping industry. It is the hope of the Committee that this report provides the opportunity for Government to significantly revitalise Australia's coastal shipping industry to ensure its future sustainability," Ms King said.

Copies of the Committee's report can be obtained from the Committee's website, <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/itrdlg> from Tuesday 21 October 2008, by contacting the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 2352 or by emailing [itrdlg.reps@aph.gov.au](mailto:itrdlg.reps@aph.gov.au)

For media comment:

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