

# Media release



## FROM THE MINISTER FOR ROADS AND PORTS

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### **PALLAS WELCOMES ESSENTIAL SERVICES COMMISSION REPORT ON STEVEDORE COMPETITION**

The Minister for Roads and Ports Tim Pallas today welcomed the release of the Essential Services Commission's (ESC) final report on competition for container stevedoring services in Victorian ports.

Mr Pallas said the Essential Services Commission's review provided a valuable discussion of competition related issues to port planning, as well as analysis of the potential impacts of current port planning frameworks.

Mr Pallas said trade was expected to grow substantially over the next 10 years and the ESC supported the Victorian Government's expectations that additional stevedoring capacity will be needed to efficiently handle this freight.

"The review supports the Government's current approach to stevedoring and for the need to begin planning for additional stevedoring capacity in 2008-09," Mr Pallas said.

"Victoria's four commercial trading ports currently handle over \$80 billion in trade per annum and we are committed to ensuring they continue to produce results for the Victorian economy."

Mr Pallas said the report's findings indicate that there are no major constraints to stevedoring competition as a result of the current framework.

The report also finds that:

- the ESC does not consider local government planning schemes to be a potential barrier to stevedoring competition;
- there does not appear to be a competitive problem in the port supply chains but that the government should consider new opportunities to increase competition where appropriate;

- any land constraints at either the Port of Melbourne or the Port of Hastings are not due to port planning frameworks.

Mr Pallas said the Commission had highlighted in its report opportunities to better integrate port planning and general urban freight planning activity.

“The review was conducted to improve the ability for our ports to operate competitively without the burden of unnecessary regulation,” he said.

“Victoria has led the way in ensuring our ports are competitive and effective and we are enhancing our status as the nation’s freight and logistics hub.

The release of the report follows the Competition and Infrastructure Reform Agreement, signed by the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments at a Council of Australian Government meeting in 2006.

The final report can be viewed on the ESC website at [www.esc.vic.gov.au](http://www.esc.vic.gov.au)