## ATA Response to PBS RIS Workshop outcomes

The ATA appreciates the consultative efforts to produce a PBS outcome that will be workable and will achieve productivity gains. The opportunity to comment further on the outcomes of the PBS RIS Workshop held on the 18th of May is taken below.

The impediments to PBS working well lie in the network management and access arrangements. Some fundamental hurdles to effective PBS were raised at the workshop and we continue to make a point of them.

It is clear what the next steps need to be. Classifying and mapping the road network into the PBS levels according to the assessment guidelines is primary. This should result in automatic access approvals for approved vehicles without attached special conditions.

Road agencies or infrastructure providers cannot have the ability or choice to assess infrastructure according to standards that are more restrictive than the PBS assessment guidelines. These guidelines have been established through a process of vehicle operation testing, engineering research and legislative arrangements and to act differently is to defy the work of the NTC.

The environment of the PBS RIS workshop and the nature of the attendees meant there was a variety of conversation and points raised. Some points made at the workshop have already been addressed in the PBS process, or come from a direction that is different from PBS desires or previous decisions by Ministers. For example, the motivation for PBS being driven from road infrastructure funding needs was raised. While this may be a current issue, it is not a focus of PBS outcomes. PBS is about unlocking existing capacity not building capacity.

The ATA, consistent with the COAG agreement, believe modular B-Triples must be kept out of the PBS scheme. There are no operating issues that mean these vehicles need different control mechanisms to 26 meter B-Doubles or standard Type 1 Road Trains. This issue was settled at COAG with the directive to develop a separate national B-triple network. Therefore B-Triples should not be included in PBS arrangements.

As part of the issues and opportunities identified in option 3, it was mentioned that “200,000 hours of further consultation to do it right” was needed. This is not required to get PBS running and nor should such resources be devoted to it. Majority of the material has been discussed and decided. It is the final, small, albeit painful steps that need to be taken by road agencies. The reference to rail as part of the infrastructure needs/assessment solutions is questionable, rail interest should not have a vote over road.

Part of the implementation issue is the understanding about the purpose of PBS. The NTC has a role in ensuring road agencies and industry understand that PBS is developed to promote safety and efficiency. Postponing the improvements to make PBS effective will put further pressure on infrastructure and push industry and individual states to seek dimensional and mass creep as a solution. From history, we know dimension and mass creep works well.