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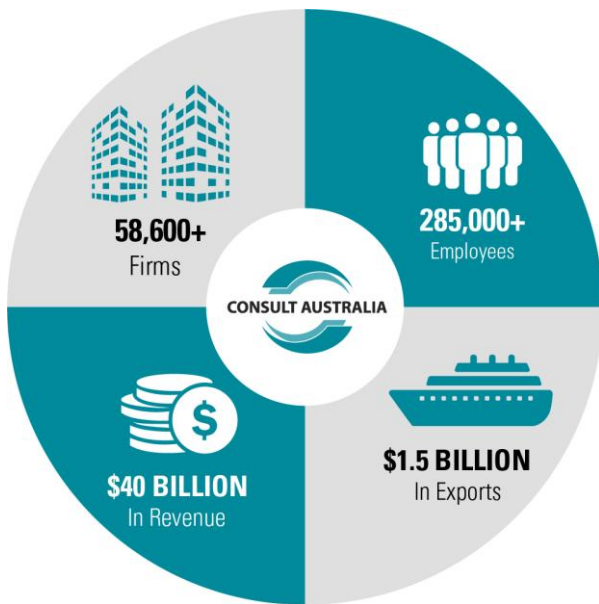
National Future Transport Summit Discussion Paper

**SUBMISSION TO CENTRE OF CONNECTED AND
AUTOMATED TRANSPORT**

Consult Australia

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About us

Consult Australia is the industry association representing consulting businesses in design, advisory and engineering, an industry comprised of over 58,600 businesses across Australia. This includes some of Australia's top 500 companies and many small businesses (97%). Our members provide solutions for individual consumers through to major companies in the private sector and across all tiers of government. Our industry directly employs over 285,000 people in architectural, engineering and technical services and many more in advisory and business support. It is also a job creator for the Australian economy, the services we provide unlock many more jobs across the construction industry and the broader community.

Our members include:



A full membership list is available on our [website](#).

Executive Summary

Consult Australia welcomes the opportunity to respond to the National Future Transport Summit discussion paper. The members of Consult Australia have a vital role in the transport industry, with a well-established role in supporting transport planning, design and delivery. The highly technical services our members provide across the transport asset lifecycle are a critical part of the supply chain required to deliver the government's transport priorities.

The discussion paper identifies challenges across the five themes of safety, productivity, sustainability, infrastructure and social legitimacy to deliver the vision of a safe, efficient and sustainable transport system for Australia, across all sectors and modes, driven by world leadership in connected and automated technologies. The identified challenges will impact on the procurement of the services our members provide.

Political support will be critical to confirm the vision and to provide the legislative and regulatory framework for progress. Given the importance of political direction, Consult Australia recommends the challenges are expanded to cover future state, regulation and interdependencies.

Looking to next steps and solutions, we point to our previous work, including our:

- [Enabling Digital by Default White Paper](#)
- [Submission to Productivity Commission's 5 Pillar Productivity Agenda](#) to reduce excessive or inappropriate regulation to unshackle businesses and enhance business dynamism and productivity.
- [Submission to Australia's Productivity Pitch](#) to enable productive businesses through reforms to remove barriers to participation, address regulatory inefficiencies and improve procurement practices.
- [Submission to Treasury's Revitalising National Competition Policy](#) consultation addressing regulatory complexity, inconsistency and market behaviours that compromise regulatory intent.

Consult Australia recommends the National Future Transport Summit support our calls for reform to improve regulation and procurement, enhance competition and increase use of nationally approaches in advancing digital, improving productivity and boosting innovation. Consult Australia's recommendations will lead to an improved and productive operating environment to progress the future of connected and automated transport.

Recommendations - Summary

Consult Australia recommends the **challenges are updated** to include the following:

- The inability to obtain political support and leadership to define the future state.
- Unnecessary differentiation in regulation hampers future opportunities.
- Interdependencies can have unintended consequences for access and equity.

Consult Australia also recommends that the National Future Transport Summit consider the following reforms which will enable an operating environment to advance Australia's connected and automated transport system:

Digital by Default

- All governments to collaborate with industry on actions to enable a digital by default environment, including prioritising the implementation of community of practice measures for transport infrastructure.
- All governments to provide clear direction to advance digital by default by moving away from the 'digital by exception' mindset to clearly specify digital requirements in procurement processes.

Regulatory and procurement improvements

- All governments to reduce the complexity of regulation across different regulatory instruments and avoid duplication and overlap in regulatory and compliance processes.
- All governments to apply more rigour to regulatory market analysis.
- The federal government to support long-term transport infrastructure planning, including the appropriate evidence base needed to make informed decisions and fully consider options, cost benefit, community engagement and social outcomes.
- All governments to undertake targeted reviews to assess if legislation, government policies or processes are negatively impacting competition in a particular market or creating barriers to entry of new participants and technologies.
- All procuring agencies to invest more time and resources in the planning and/or pre-design phases of projects, engaging with industry and community during these phases.
- All governments to change the procurement practice of labelling bids as 'non confirming' to allow innovation to be considered.
- All governments to simplify and streamline the approvals process for major projects and avoid duplication in the regulatory process.

Challenges are updated

Consult Australia recommends **challenges are updated** to include the following:

- The inability to obtain political support and leadership to define the future state.
- Unnecessary differentiation in regulation hampers future opportunities.
- Interdependencies can have unintended consequences for access and equity.

Political support will be critical to confirm the vision and provide the legislative and regulatory framework for progress. Yet this is not clearly articulated in the discussion paper. Consult Australia recommends covering this issue by including the following three challenges.

The inability to obtain political support and leadership to define the future state

The future of transport technologies is a well discussed topic. The paper outlines a vision for connected and automated transport technology. However, the future state and how success will be measured is still to be determined. The future state cannot be defined without government support and leadership.

Consult Australia therefore recommends that the potential inability to obtain political support should be highlighted as a key challenge that will need to be navigated to define the future state of connected and automated transport. The appetite and support of political leaders should also be qualified prior to the summit to inform recommendations.

Unnecessary differentiation in regulation hampers future opportunities

The discussion paper proposes consideration of Australian-specific conditions in setting or tailoring standards and regulations. The paper also promotes harmonisation of standards across jurisdictions and alignment with international standards.

Consult Australia recommends prioritising alignment with international standards. Australia is a late adopter of connected and automated transport, and the opportunity exists to leverage global experience and knowledge, rather than differentiate itself. There are other countries with a range of climatic conditions and transport systems (rural, regional, remote) like Australia and if an international standard already exists, it should be critically evaluated to determine if a different approach is necessary and/or beneficial for Australia.

As noted in the paper '*Australia's infrastructure planning and investment must align with international standards to remain interoperable and competitive*'. It will be important to get the level of regulation right, so as not to unnecessarily restrict the uptake of connected and automated transport.

Interdependencies can have unintended consequences for access and equity

In confirming the vision and to inform future planning, it will be important to consider interdependencies and the possible unintended consequences on things such as access and equity. Consult Australia recommends the further consideration of the varying roles of the public and private sector, as well as land use patterns. For example, a future connected and automated transport system primarily driven by the private sector will likely have different equity outcomes to one that is driven by the public sector. Similarly, land use patterns inform urban planning and as the uptake of connected and automated transport makes longer commutes feasible, this will change drivers and expectations for land use and transport planning.

Digital by default reforms

- All governments to collaborate with industry on actions to enable a digital by default environment and prioritise the implementation of community of practice measures for transport infrastructure.
- All governments to provide clear direction to advance digital by default by moving away from the 'digital by exception' mindset to clearly specify digital requirements in procurement processes.

The discussion paper highlights challenges with technology, sustainability, digital infrastructure, data and security. The transition to a connected and automated future will be strongly influenced by government policy on digital and energy. Government energy policies will influence fuel sources and sustainability outcomes. Whilst government's digital policy can help boost productivity, accelerate innovation and catalyse a range of benefits like net zero emissions reduction. Consult Australia's [Enabling Digital by Default](#) paper presents five recommendations for a practical, industry-informed roadmap to create an enabling digital environment across Australia:

1. Build a Digital by Default Community of Practice
2. Invest in the business case for digital technology
3. Harmonise standards and guidance for data and information management
4. Embed requirements through procurement with an outcome-led approach
5. Build capability and skills.

The roadmap for digital transformation presented by Consult Australia aims to address industry fragmentation, innovation inertia and sluggish productivity. By leveraging the expertise and commitment of diverse stakeholders through a community of practice, we can drive the necessary standards and innovations to build momentum and achieve digital by default and do so consistently across jurisdictions.

Through a community of practice all governments can look to embed digital by default for transport infrastructure by prioritising the following measures:

- Supporting a common national approach to information frameworks and requirements applied across transport infrastructure assets.
- Recognising information as an asset in projects and programs that informs effective insights, drives action and investment throughout the project lifecycle.
- All major contributors to transport infrastructure delivery should have clear digital transformation strategies, moving to a fully digital approach for design and construction where appropriate.
- All transport infrastructure projects and programs should identify minimum critical data sets for design, construct and operation phases (and for carbon emissions tracking of transport projects and the adoption of digital twins).
- Programs should adopt development and procurement approaches that enable innovative transport infrastructure solutions and collaborative delivery models.

Consult Australia views these recommendations as the solution to the challenges raised for technology, digital infrastructure, data and security.

Regulatory and procurement improvements

- All governments to reduce the complexity of regulation across different regulatory instruments and avoid duplication and overlap in regulatory and compliance processes.
- All governments to apply more rigour to regulatory market analysis.
- The federal government to support long-term transport infrastructure planning, including the appropriate evidence base needed to make informed decisions and fully consider options, cost benefit, community engagement and social outcomes.
- All governments to undertake targeted reviews to assess if legislation, government policies or processes are negatively impacting competition in a particular market or creating barriers to entry of new participants and technologies.
- All procuring agencies to invest more time and resources in the planning and/or pre-design phases of projects, engaging with industry and community during these phases.
- All governments to change the procurement practice of labelling bids as 'non confirming' to allow innovation to be considered.
- All governments to simplify and streamline the approvals process for major projects and avoid duplication in the regulatory process.

There are several regulatory, planning and procurement challenges identified in the discussion paper. Consult Australia agrees that fragmentation is having a significant impact and hampering Australia's ability to advance the future of transport. Consult Australia has previously called for reform to improve regulation, enhance competition and increase use of nationally approaches to improve productivity and boost innovation.

Consult Australia views adopting a nationally consistent, cohesive and coordinated approach on regulations and standards for transport infrastructure as a key solution to enable opportunities and mitigate identified challenges. Combined with changes to procurement practices that foster innovation and digital, this can encourage delivery of transport infrastructure that supports connected and automated transport.

Innovation has the best chance if discussed earlier in the process. Talking innovation at or after tendering is too late. Innovation needs to be a core element in business cases and industry briefings. With the current 'non-conforming bid' mindset evident in government procurement, any deviation by bidders is left unconsidered, limiting innovation. More early involvement of the supply chain in the pre-design phase and collaboration would enable a detailed understanding of desired project outcomes between client and supplier and can facilitate innovation and adoption of technology advances.

To enable a productive regulatory, planning and procurement environment for the national future transport vision, Consult Australia's recommendations on regulatory and procurement improvements should underpin summit recommendations.

Contact

We would welcome any opportunity to further discuss the issues raised in this submission.



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Thanks to our Industry Champions

For their outstanding leadership and engagement on behalf of the industry.



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