



SUBJECT: JOBS CRISIS LOOMING FOR AUSTRALIA’S CRUCIAL \$63 BILLION TRANSPORT AND LOGISTICS INDUSTRY

A critical shortage of skilled workers over the next decade in Australia’s \$63 billion a year transport and logistics industry could threaten the nation’s future economic growth. A poor community perception of the industry – leading to an inability to attract workers - is the major contributing factor to the looming jobs shortage.

The grave warning was made today by the State’s peak freight transport advisory group - the Tasmanian Freight Logistics Council - as it unveiled a Tasmanian version of a national whole-of-industry careers information program designed to attract people to the industry.

The Logistics Information and Navigation Centre (LINC) was officially launched in Hobart on 11 December 2008 by the Minister for Infrastructure, Mr Graeme Sturges MHA.

The Tasmanian LINC information was developed by the South Australian Freight Council in partnership with the Tasmanian Freight Logistics Council.

This web-based resource will enable the public, business and the freight industry to access specific information on career pathways and job information, industry sector information, assistance in locating service providers and major facilities, and fact sheets on diverse topics including regulatory change. Youth and other job seekers will be able to investigate jobs and plan career pathways through the transport and logistics industry, and learn about the skills and experience necessary to progress within the industry.

Tasmanian Freight Logistics Council Chairman, Mr Philip Petersen, said: “Australia’s future economic viability relies on the efficient management of Australia’s transport, storage and logistics industry.

“This crucial industry underpins every decision made by consumers, and is the vital cog in the wheel that keeps all Australian industry running,” he said.

“Without it, Australian industry and thousands of jobs will simply stall.

Mr Petersen said the immediate challenge for the industry to combat the worker shortage was to change “people’s mindset” by educating the community to the opportunities, diversity and challenges of a rapidly evolving and sophisticated industry.

LINC has been designed with that specific objective in mind by offering a “one-stop shop” for freight transport and careers information.

“Currently, we are not on the radar screens of people looking for work, a change of career path or industry, or young people looking at the different industries available in Tasmania, and the qualifications they need to enter those workforces,” Mr Petersen said.

“We do not have a good image as a career choice by potential employees or the community at large.

“Much of this is a generational legacy of a strong, male-orientated, labour-intensive workforce. We suffer from a severe and unwarranted identity crisis of being a classic blue-collar industry, with traditionally low pay and poor career pathways.

“Yet there are significant opportunities in today’s increasingly complex and integrated industry.

“We believe LINC is the first step in the process of attracting new industry professionals and we are confident the program will be embraced very quickly.”

Infrastructure Minister Graeme Sturges MHA said the Tasmanian Government was working closely with the transport and logistics industry to foster an innovative approach to attracting and retaining the people to drive our industry forward.

“This country’s transport, storage and logistics industry accounts for about nine per cent of Australia’s GDP – or about \$63 billion a year. Nationally, the industry employs well over 460,000 people.

"With the amount of freight moved around the country expected to double between now and 2020, coupled with the increased global demand for skills and labour it is essential that we work together to profile the industry for what it is - a dynamic and rapidly growing industry that is critical to the Australian economy," Mr Sturges said.

The LINC website will assist industry employers, educators and job seekers to easily access career information for Australia's multi-modal transport and logistics industry. It will be promoted through schools, professional industry associations and at various careers expos.

For more information about the LINC website, and career opportunities in transport and logistics, contact Tasmanian Freight Logistics Council on (03) 6236 3663 or freightlogistics@tcci.com.au or check the LINC website www.the-linc.com.au