

Media Release

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Transport laws must change

The NSW Farmers' Association is urging members of the Rural 2020 summit to continue to push their plan for nationwide harmonisation and standardisation of transport laws, beyond the weekend's event.

NSW Farmers' Association Business Economics and Trade Committee Chair Tom Smith says different state regulations are costing rural industries transporting goods around the country millions of dollars each year.

"We agree with the summit's opinion that harmonised transport laws are urgent, including uniform regulation, licensing, standards and enforcement for road and rail transport, particularly in regards to agricultural equipment," Mr Smith said.

"The Association has been working on this issue for some time, having ongoing discussions with groups such as the National Farmers' Federation, National Transport Commission and the Roads and Traffic Authority regarding its support for an integrated national transport framework," he said.

In 2002, the Association released its Rail Road Taskforce Green Paper, which highlighted the issues affecting the NSW supply chain and freight task, particularly the grains industry.

"This issue has been long running, but we are yet to see any changes, so it is important to have constructive and progressive outcomes following the summit," he said.

"That is why we are urging those delegates including Steering Committee member Tim Fischer, to continue pushing this excellent plan, so it doesn't again get pushed to the bottom of the agenda," Mr Smith said.

"The need for efficient and harmonised transport infrastructure is imperative for the long term commercial viability of the NSW Farming community.

"With 70% of Australian agricultural produce sold to overseas markets, maintaining price competitiveness is one of the key attributes to successfully competing in international commodity markets.

"To see state and local government regulatory reforms encouraged through Federal Government incentives and penalties, linked to the rate of progressive reform would be real and positive reform for this too long neglected area," Mr Smith concluded.

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