

LOCAL: Channels Authority to coordinate port of Geelong infrastructure

by Anastassia Perets — last modified Jun 06, 2014 01:19 PM

Infrastructure projects for the port of Geelong will now be coordinated by the Victorian Regional Channels Authority (VRCA), to ensure "a streamlined approach to prioritise and develop critical projects".



The Victorian Regional Channels Authority has been appointed the Port of Geelong's port-city coordinator. Credit - Jim Wilson and Hema Maps

Lloyd's List Australia was unable to reach the port of Geelong for comment by deadline.

Victorian minister for ports David Hodgett was in the city on Wednesday visiting the VRCA to discuss a new port-city coordinator job role.

"The VRCA, port owners, users and the City of Greater Geelong have contributed to port strategies which are critical to identifying targeted infrastructure improvements and unlocking trade growth at the port of Geelong," Mr Hodgett said.

"With a number of projects requiring business case development and funding submissions, there is a need for a port-city coordinator role to facilitate and develop infrastructure proposals, particularly where they are identified as having collective industry priority."

Existing constraints with freight infrastructure have provided the basis for identifying a range of projects for further investigation.

Initial priorities include developing the following projects:

- road closures within the port to amalgamate port land;
- a new rail connection to Lascelles Wharf;
- direct road access to the highway network (westbound);
- future re-use of Alcoa and Ford sites; and
- improved capacity for channels (width, draft and passing lane).

VRCA CEO Captain Peter McGovern said planning for the future of the port will support the forecast trade increase.

"Cargo throughput is predicted to increase significantly, reaching 16.5m tonnes by 2020.

"Therefore, efficient coordination of improvements in access to the port for ships, rail cars and trucks is vital," he said.

Last year, the port of Geelong handled around 13m tonnes of cargo.

"I look forward to hearing from all those with an interest in the development of the port at the Port-city Coordinator Forum to be held on June 11," Captain McGovern said.