



# KEEP FREIGHT ON AUSSIE TRAINS!

24 June 2021

## CAMPAIGN UPDATE

**Our campaign to stop proposed changes to coastal trading laws, which make it easier foreign-flagged ships to undercut Australian rail freight services, is clearly being heard in Canberra.**

**Last week the RTBU National Office attended a meeting with the Department of Infrastructure to discuss the proposed laws, along with senior executives from SCT, Pacific National and Aurizon.**

We learned that the proposal is largely being driven by the customers of bulk shipping services who are trying to drive down their freight costs at the expense of Australian transport jobs. Little thought has gone into the impact of the proposed changes on the intermodal rail freight sector.

The rail representatives (ie the RTBU and the companies) stressed that allowing foreign ships to take more containerised freight would further undermine intermodal rail freight, put thousands of jobs at risk in regional Australia, and potentially leave the Inland Rail as a massive white elephant before it was even built.

The RTBU also stressed that it was fundamentally unfair to allow foreign ships that do not pay Australian wages to compete for domestic Australian freight work.

The Department advised that it is now going to review its initial proposal, but it still hopes to take a draft bill to Parliament.

**In other words, we've forced the Government to reconsider its plans, but the job is not done yet.**

Since that meeting was held, the National Party has dumped Michael McCormack as Party Leader and Deputy Prime Minister, and replaced him with Barnaby Joyce.

Mr Joyce is now the new Minister for Infrastructure and Transport – so he has the power to squash the proposal straight away. But if Barnaby decides to put the interests of bulk freight users first, then the rail industry will suffer.

We need to make sure Barnaby gets the message about the need to keep freight on Aussie trains.

**That's why we're asking you to jump online and send an email to Barnaby Joyce ASAP!**

**Stand up for jobs in rail freight by sending an email to the new Federal Infrastructure and Transport Minister Barnaby Joyce. Go to:  
[www.keepfreightonaussietrains.org.au](http://www.keepfreightonaussietrains.org.au)**

**TELL BARNABY TO PROTECT RAIL JOBS!**