1. **Report from the Steering Committee**

In December 2012, the four ports working groups’ implementation plans were consolidated into a progress report for the Minister for Transport (Minister) by the Department of Transport (DoT). The progress report included the proposed “next steps” for the working groups for the period from now to the passage of legislation to establish the new port authorities.

The progress report was considered and approved by the Steering Committee at its 15 January 2013 meeting, subject to a number of agreed changes. On 21 January 2013, the amended report was endorsed by the Minister.

The Steering Committee met on 14 February 2013 to allocate priorities to and responsibility for the activities in the “next steps”, and agree on the appointment of project managers to assist the four ports working groups.

Steering Committee members include the Chairs of the Port Hedland and Bunbury port authorities, Chief Executive Officers (CEO) of the Dampier and Albany port authorities, and Deputy Directors General of DoT and the Department of State Development (DSD).

**Priority and responsibility for “next steps” activities**

In endorsing the progress report, the Minister has also approved the proposed “next steps” activities included in the report.

The “next steps” activities represent the new terms of reference for the four working groups, who will be asked to further develop their transition arrangements, complete due diligence of outstanding issues, examine potential to harmonise services and systems, implement risk mitigation and facilitate communication.

**Appointment of dedicated project managers**

The Steering Committee agreed that project managers should be appointed as soon as possible to implement the “next steps” activities.

A range of options were considered. These include the steering committee, through DoT, appointing a single project manager to manage the work of all four working groups; each ports working group appointing its own project manager; and the appointment of a project team instead of a project manager to provide a more comprehensive range of advice and services.

It was agreed that each working group is to appoint their own project manager. Working groups will determine how their program of “next steps” activities will be managed.

**Revisiting the amalgamation risk register**

The Steering Committee will revisit its risk register and update the risk mitigation measures after the 9 March 2013 State general election.

2. **Discussions with the Australian Taxation Office**

On 5 February 2013, port Chief Financial Officers and DoT, DSD and Treasury officers met with officers from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). The purpose of the meeting was to discuss potential tax issues and approaches to ensure that the amalgamation will...
be treated in a tax neutral manner for National Tax Equivalent Regime (NTER) and Goods and Services Tax (GST) purposes.

The steering committee endorsed the proposal for DoT to seek an omnibus ruling from the ATO Commissioner on the extent of any NTER and GST ramifications at the whole-of-project level. The ATO has agreed to provide further information on their requirements when seeking a ruling to assist the department in its preparation of the submissions.

3. **Contacts for more information**

If more information is required, please contact:

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