

4 May 2023

The Honourable Jim Chalmers MP, Treasurer  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600  
Via Email:

CC: The Hon Dr Andrew Leigh, Assistant Minister for Competition, Charities and Treasury  
The Hon Catherine King, Minister for Transport, Regional Development and Local Government

**Re: THE PERFORMANCE OF AIR AND MARITIME LOGISTICS SYSTEMS IN DELIVERING COMPETITIVE, AFFORDABLE AND RELIABLE SERVICE**

Dear Treasurer,

I am writing on behalf of the twenty Industry Associations listed below, representing industries, businesses and stakeholders across the economy that are reliant on the import and export of a wide range of (containerised) goods and products.

**1. Background:**

In October 2021 a diverse range of Industry Associations from across Australia, representing the interests of businesses involved in international trade wrote to the then Treasurer the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP regarding the performance of Australia's air and maritime logistics systems in delivering competitive, affordable and reliable service and their impact on the broader economy.

At that time the supply chain was faced with COVID-19 related sea and air freight supply chain delays and soaring consumer demand leading to shipping containers backing up at Australian and global ports. These delays affected a variety of imported and exported products, including perishable food, urgent medicines and life-saving materials, furniture, machinery, components, parts, packaging, and clothing.

In response the Australian government commissioned an inquiry – [\*Lifting productivity at Australia's container ports: between water, wharf and warehouse\*](#) – a report to examine the structural issues affecting the productivity of Australia's maritime logistics system. The purpose of this inquiry was to understand any long-term trends, structural changes, and impediments that impact the efficiency and dependability of Australia's maritime logistics system and connected supply chains.

**2. Productivity Commission Report**

The Inquiry was undertaken by the Productivity Commission with excellent industry buy-in receiving 144 submissions from across the economy. The final report *Lifting productivity at Australia's container ports: between water, wharf and warehouse – inquiry report* was handed to the Australian Government on 21 December 2022 and publicly released on 9 January 2023. There has been no further announcement or action regarding the report.

There are several recommendations in the report that if actioned will lift the productivity of Australia's container ports and will provide benefits to the Australian economy. The parties endorsing this letter support the Report's recommendations and do not want to lose the opportunity to improve Australia's productivity through improving the efficiency of the nation's seaport terminals. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed many critical risks in Australia's import and export supply chains, of which our container port terminals was one. The undersigned groups are therefore calling for the Albanese Government to support and articulate its plan on how, and when it will action the important recommendations in the Productivity Commission's *inquiry report*.

The group **wish to understand** a plan of action for each of the various recommendations included in the report and would welcome the opportunity to discuss the matter further.

Twenty Industry Associations from across the economy have agreed to submitting this letter and the Terms of Reference. These groups are listed below. The policy contact for this matter is [tim.ross@Graintrade.org.au](mailto:tim.ross@Graintrade.org.au) .

Yours sincerely,



**Pat O'Shannassy**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

## ENDORSEMENTS

**The following industry associations were consulted in the drafting of this letter.**

Australasian Steel Association  
Australian Cotton Shippers Association (ACSA)  
Australian Council of Wool Exporters and Processors  
Australian Food and Grocery Council (AFGC)  
Australian Industry Group (Ai Group)  
Australian Meat Industry Council (AMIC)  
Australian Nut Industry Council Ltd (ANIC)  
Australian Peak Shippers Association (APSA)  
Chemistry Australia  
Citrus Australia Ltd  
Export Council of Australia (ECA)  
Freight and Trade Alliance (FTA)  
Grain Growers Limited  
Grain Trade Australia (GTA)  
Housing Industry Association (HIA)  
Medical Technology Association of Australia (MTAA)  
Medicines Australia  
National Farmers Federation (NFF)  
Omni Cotton Australia  
Pathology Technology Australia (PTA)

*Ends:*

