



**geelongchamberofcommerce**  
*the voice of business*

## **Presentation to Select Committee Inquiry into the Proposed Lease of the Port of Melbourne**

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## **About The Geelong Chamber of Commerce**

The Geelong Chamber of Commerce was established in 1853 and is the largest chamber in Victoria and the second oldest chamber in Australia. We have around 850 members and 35 corporate partners representing all businesses from small businesses to large corporates, not for profits and government enterprises. Our membership spans all cross sectors of the business community and is representative of the business demographic in Geelong. Our members collectively employ over 23,000 people or around one third of Geelong's workforce.

The Chamber's role is to support business and economic growth in the region and to advocate on behalf of our members. In addition to our regular networking events which attract between 300 and 350 business people each month, the Chamber delivers a number of programs including the Geelong Business Excellence Awards, our small business advisory service – Small Business Smart Business and Geelong Young Professionals, a networking group for future business leaders. We are the “voice of business” in the Geelong region and act as a regional chamber for the many smaller business groups and networks operating throughout the G21 region.

## **Delivering Victorian Infrastructure (Port of Melbourne Lease Transaction) Bill 2015**

The Geelong Chamber of Commerce is broadly supportive of the Delivering Victorian Infrastructure (Port of Melbourne Lease Transaction) Bill 2015, however, we want to ensure that the Bill does not preclude the ability to establish a second port in Victoria during the term of the 50 year lease or the further 20 year extension period.

The Chamber, in particular, is supportive of the establishment of a second Victorian container port at Bay West, as anticipated growth in the Western suburbs of Melbourne including Geelong and the western region of Victoria may see the need for a second port within that time frame. The Chamber is keen to work with Infrastructure Victoria in reviewing the need and siting for a second container port for Victoria given the Geelong region's projected growth and important future role as a major transport and freight hub with access to road, rail, air and port infrastructure.

The Chamber also understands that Port of Geelong users require access to shared shipping channels and accordingly we would like to ensure that these users are not disadvantaged or restricted in their access to shared shipping channels. The Chamber supports the role of the Victorian Regional Channels Authority to continue their important function of management of shipping channels at the Port of Geelong.

## **Conclusion**

In summary, the Geelong Chamber of Commerce is supportive of the Bill with the provisos:

- that it does not restrict or limit the establishment of a second port;
- that it does not restrict movement or access by Port of Geelong users; and
- that it does not impact upon the important role of the Victorian Regional Channels Authority.

The Chamber would also like consideration to be given to some of the proceeds from the lease being applied to further develop and invest in key infrastructure projects in Victoria, especially those that can help drive further economic growth within the Geelong region.

Further investment in the Port of Geelong and assistance to realise the long term vision of Avalon Airport to become an international air freight hub and central to a regional intermodal freight hub are examples of where the Chamber believes such investment can have maximum impact.

Thank you for the opportunity to present today.