

**3 August 2020**

The Hon Daniel Andrews MP  
Premier of Victoria  
1 Treasury Place  
MELBOURNE VICTORIA 3002



By email: [daniel.andrews@parliament.vic.gov.au](mailto:daniel.andrews@parliament.vic.gov.au)

CC:

The Hon Melissa Horne MP, Minister for Ports and Freight;  
Senator David Fawcett, Chair of the Parliament's Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade  
Committee; and  
Mr Neville Power, Chairman National COVID-19 Coordination Commission

### **Stage 4 Restrictions**

Dear Premier

Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA) represents in excess of 400 corporate member including Australia's largest international trade logistics service providers, e-commerce market- place platforms and major importers. FTA also performs the Secretariat role for Australian Peak Shippers Australia (APSA), being the peak body for Australia's containerised exporters and importers designated under Part X of the Competition and Consumer Act 2010 and by the Federal Minister of Infrastructure and Transport.

FTA and APSA also provide trade and logistics advocacy to the following entities:

- Australian Horticultural Exporters and Importers Association (AHEIA);
- Australian Cotton Shippers Association (ACSA);
- Australian Meat Industry Council (AMIC);
- Australian Council for Wool Exporters and Processors;
- Australian International Movers Association (AIMA);
- E-commerce Reference Group (ECRG) - comprising Alibaba, Amazon and eBay; and
- Tasmanian Logistics Committee (TLC)

As outlined in our evidence before last weeks' public hearing *'Impact of COVID-19 on Australia's defence, trade and international relations'* and in our correspondence to the National COVID-19 Coordination Commission on 27 March 2020, the move into stage 4 restrictions cannot come at the cost of impacting on international trade and logistics services.

While we appreciate the difficult situation that Victoria is now facing and the need to further restrict social movement, it is essential that the operations maintain business continuity to keep filling our shelves and making last-mile deliveries to homes.

While the restrictions apply to Victoria, the Port of Melbourne is a major hub port to other states and critical to Tasmania as its gateway to mainland Australia and global markets.

It is imperative that all importers and exporters be allowed to continue to receive and dispatch goods and fall in the definition of essential services.

As well as stevedores, air cargo terminal operators, transport operators, licensed depots, fumigation providers and empty container parks (physical handlers of cargo), it is imperative that freight forwarders and customs brokers be included as essential services.

Freight forwarders are playing a critical role in co-ordinating freight and arranging international transport and consolidation of freight. Customs brokerages are trade professionals that play an essential role of managing import compliance requirements and co-ordinating domestic transport. Biosecurity compliance managed by customs brokers is more important than ever during these challenging times.

Standards cannot be compromised as Australia cannot afford an imported pest infestation that would decimate our agriculture industry on top of a pandemic.

The entire international supply chain is fragile at the best of times, removing or limiting the capabilities of one link is not an option.

While it has been clearly articulated by the Victorian Government that major supermarkets will continue as an essential service, a need exists for business continuity of other retail sectors.

In an environment whereby the policy intent is for the majority of our population to self-isolate, "last-mile" deliveries by carriers and Australia Post, facilitated through ecommerce, will play an essential role.

To ensure that freight and logistics can continue to operate effectively, all steps along the supply chain need to remain operational. Warehousing, as well as fulfilment at retail sites (where those sites may be closed to consumers), will be critical to ensuring goods are delivered and businesses can remain viable.

Your sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Zalai', with a stylized, cursive script.

**Paul Zalai**

Director, Freight & Trade Alliance (FTA)  
Secretariat, Australian Peak Shippers Association (APSA)