

Questions and Answers - 2019

Does the Government agree with the Working Group's recommendations?

The Government welcomes the final Report and thanks Wayne Brown and the working group members. Cabinet are unanimous in the need to look to a future beyond Port of Auckland handling freight operations.

The future freight projections out of Auckland makes the status quo untenable. The final Report makes the strategic argument for freight operations to transfer to Northport.

The Government has asked the Ministry to fully test the recommendations of the working group, and to work with all interested parties to build consensus on a way forward.

Why is Northport the Working Groups recommendation based on EYs analysis when three years ago it was ranked 12th according to the 2016 Future Ports study that also used an EY analysis?

The 2016 Port Future Study was a mayoral initiative to provide Aucklanders with an opportunity to have their say on the future of Auckland's port. The 2016 Port Future Study and the 2019 Upper North Island Supply Chain Strategy had different scope and methodology, and placed different weightings on various factors.

Northport was included in the scope of EY's 2016 Future Port Study in both scenario and option development, however it was discounted, in part, because of its reliance on rail. The level of government commitment to rail in 2019 made it a viable option.

The Working Group, in 2019, for its part, discounted a potential West Coast option due to advice received from the marine insurance industry.

Why is rail highlighted as a priority in this Report compared to road freight?

Rail is a more efficient and environmentally friendly way to move large amounts of freight.

What is the scope of the work that is being undertaken by the Ministry of Transport?

The Ministry will be testing and clarifying the recommendations presented by the working group.

This includes optimal locations for port operations, logistics and supply chain investment costs and environmental considerations, together with a transport and freight analysis which includes the feasibility of a West Auckland freight hub.

What about environmental considerations?

An important part of the Ministry's work programme is to weigh the environmental impacts of any move.

Analysis will consider environmental effects, including on local ecosystems and on New Zealand's overall greenhouse gas emissions.

Why has the Ministry of Transport requested additional funding to support the work programme?

The Ministry of Transport recognises the valuable work of the Working Group, which provided a good basis upon which further work can be undertaken.

The recommendations of the Working Group require further investigating by the Government before a commitment to any scenario can be made. The work we will undertake requires technical and analytical expertise to model and sensitivity test the analysis done to date. Specialist technical advice can be expensive, and we want to ensure that we have the best data and analysts working on the project given the national significance.

How will any port move be funded?

Funding and finance is an important part of the advice the Government will get in May next year. This includes clarifying the Crown's commitment and involvement by local government and the private sector.

When is the Government going to make its final decision on the future of the Port of Auckland?

The Ministry of Transport will be testing all of the recommendations from the final UNISCS Report and will report back by May 2020. Cabinet will then consider all the analysis before any final decision is taken.