# WRITTEN STATEMENT

# BY

# THE WELSH GOVERNMENT

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| **TITLE**  | **Freight in Wales - Report of the Freight Working Group**  |
| **DATE**  | **4 April 2016** |
| **BY**  | **Edwina Hart AM CStJ MBE, Minister for Economy, Science and Transport** |

I have received a report from the Wales Freight Working Group.

The purpose of the group has been to build on the work of the Freight Task and Finish Group in providing advice and recommendations for maximising the growth and capability of freight markets in Wales, including their associated supply chains.

I would like to thank the Chair of the Group, Brian Curtis, and all the members for their expertise and input.

A clear theme from the report, which includes associated recommendations, is the need for an intermodal transport network in Wales which is well integrated and fully capable of effectively moving goods at the local, national and international level. I endorse the recommendations, a number of which are already being taken forward.

A key recommendation is the need for gauge enhancement in the Severn Tunnel to enable the efficient transportation of large intermodal freight containers into Wales – one of the key growth markets for freight. I have made representations to the UK Government and Network Rail on this matter and have now received confirmation that the gauge enhancement works will go ahead at the same time as electrification works to the tunnel.

Looking to the future, it will be important to continue considering freight needs on an integrated, all-Wales basis, reflecting the goals and principles of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act, and ensuring the sustainable development opportunities identified are maximised.