
Under the Intergovernmental Agreement on Federal Financial Relations and clause 24 of the National Partnership Agreement to Deliver a Seamless National Economy (SNE NP), the COAG Reform Council (the Council) is required to provide COAG with an annual report on progress against SNE NP Implementation Plan milestones.

On 4 December 2012, the Council released its fourth annual report on the performance of governments under the SNE NP. The findings of this report reflect the Council’s assessment of progress against 2011-2012 milestones (and any outstanding 2008–09, 2009-10 and 2010-11 milestones) as at 17 August 2012.

Response:

COAG welcomes the Council’s assessment that the majority of SNE NP reforms are now completed or close to completion and the Council’s conclusion that these reforms are a major step in enabling Australian business to lower costs, become more productive, and compete in a rapidly changing international environment.

COAG notes the Council’s assessment that of the reforms due to be completed by governments by 30 June 2012, 17 of the deregulation priority reforms are complete.

COAG agreed on 25 July 2012, that 17 of the deregulation priority reforms were operational (with the commencement of Business Names reform).

Since the finalisation of the Council’s report, milestones for the National Construction Code reform have been completed, or substantially completed, by all jurisdictions, providing a single consolidated set of nationally consistent building and plumbing regulations. In addition, Oil and Gas reform is largely operational, with the final milestone, agreement by governments to principles of engagement for petroleum developers with local government, expected to be finalised by end of December 2012.

COAG welcomes the Council’s assessment that in addition to the three competition reforms that COAG agreed were complete on 25 July 2012, a further competition reform, infrastructure (competitive neutrality), has now been finalised.

COAG has agreed that when the SNE NP concludes on 31 December 2012, the Business Regulation and Competition Working Group, chaired by the Commonwealth Minister for Finance and Deregulation and the Minister Assisting for Deregulation, will cease and the newly established COAG Taskforce on regulatory and competition reform will oversight the completion of any remaining SNE NP reforms.

COAG acknowledges the significant role the BRCWG has played in overseeing implementation of the SNE NP reforms and thanks members of the BRCWG for their contribution.

COAG will consider a more detailed response to the Council’s report at its first meeting in 2013, including any action to manage risks to delivering the remaining reforms identified by the Council.