



Ways for businesses to collaborate

During 2014, the [Freight Expert Advisory Panel](#) worked with Tasmanian small to medium businesses to assist them to improve their freight outcomes. One of the focus areas of the Panel was business collaboration, an approach that has the potential to reduce freight costs, improve efficiency and support better market access.

Have you considered working with other businesses to transport your products and materials?

Collaboration may offer small to medium businesses a number of benefits including:

- reducing your freight and transport costs – such as through co-loading and better use of space in containers or on pallets
- improving the efficiency of your supply chain – such as improving the reliability or time taken to transport your products; and
- helping your business to access new markets.

Working with other businesses located near you, accessing similar markets, or using similar freight services, could help improve your supply chain by:

- combining your freight – and seeking improved freight rates/service levels as a group of businesses or to use all of the space available on a pallet or container to reduce costs;
- improving your freight options – by combining products to meet volume/turnover requirements for warehousing, distribution options or to access new markets and customers; and
- using shared facilities – working together may support the leasing/purchase of facilities important for your supply chain such as freezing facilities or warehousing for packaging and storage.

Ways to collaborate

There is a range of ways that you can work with other businesses.

[Networking/informal partnerships](#) – engage with one or more businesses directly and work together by agreement.

Use existing groups – Tasmania has a number of industry and representative groups that support businesses in the State. These support groups provide a networking and information sharing opportunity that can support collaboration between members.

Establish an organisation – businesses can also work together through organisations. These provide a formal and structured approach to collaboration, and may require a financial commitment.

Consider which of these models best suit your business needs.

Engage with businesses involved in your representative groups and in your local area to see if there are opportunities for you to work together.

For businesses interested in establishing an organisation to drive collaboration, you may like to consider some of the options below.

Formal organisational structures that could be considered

Private Company	A private company is a legal entity that is separate from its shareholders, and has a view of making profit.
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Company limited by guarantee	A company limited by guarantee is a company structure suitable for not for profit organisations, where the liability of the company's members is limited to a certain amount.
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Incorporated Association	An incorporated association is a legal entity separate from its individual members that is not for profit.
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Co-operative	A co-operative is a not for profit entity owned and controlled by the people who created it and use its services. Co-operatives can provide goods and services to its members and to the general public.
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Partnership	A partnership is a set of people or entities conducting a business together, with a view of making profit.
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Joint venture	A joint venture is a set of people, companies or registered bodies that have a business arrangement for the undertaking of a common purpose/activity, but may not have formed a separate entity.
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Useful sources of information on organisational structures include:

- Consumer Affairs and Trading Tasmania www.consumer.tas.gov.au
- Australian Securities and Investments Commission www.asic.gov.au
- Business Tasmania www.business.tas.gov.au
- Your solicitor or accountant may also be able to assist