

FACT SHEET

Shaping the outcome before reacting to operational issues



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TRUCKING INDUSTRY ELECTION BRIEF

WHY THE TRUCKING INDUSTRY MATTERS

- Trucks move **three-quarters** of Australia's domestic freight, including every item on the shelves of every supermarket.
- Half the kilometres travelled by trucks are in cities. It is not practical for rail to move this freight; it can only be transported by road.
- The demand for truck freight is growing faster than the demand for other transport types.

SAFER ROADS

- The incoming government will need to **continue investing in roads** to connect freight routes to markets and ports.
- Roads need to be built to a standard that safely carries all vehicles - a safe systems approach to infrastructure provision is needed.
- **The industry needs more truck rest areas to manage driver fatigue and improve safety.** That's why the ATA is calling on political parties to make a commitment to continue funding truck rest areas after the existing government rest area program ends in 2011-12.

SAFER TRUCKS

- The incoming government should promote the use of **safer trucks with greater capacity** to move the growing freight task more efficiently.
- The advanced safety technology used in modern trucks means that they are safer than most cars.
- Business incentives, like accelerated depreciation on trucks and trailers, should remain to encourage the uptake of newer, safer vehicles that are better for the environment.
- Safer trucks with greater capacity do not need more monitoring than the rest of the trucks on the road.

SAFER DRIVERS

- The incoming government will need to continue to build industry capacity, while encouraging professionalism and skills development.
- As part of the national licensing reforms, the incoming government should adopt the **ATA's Enhanced Licensing Standard Proposal**. This would enable drivers to operate semi-trailers and multi-combination vehicles sooner, in return for undertaking enhanced training and meeting record-keeping requirements.
- The incoming government must help ensure drivers are fit to drive, with strong medical standards and support for driver health programs.

Telephone: 07 3394 4388

Facsimile: 07 3397 9324

Email: admin@qta.com.au

Web: www.qta.com.au

Postal Address: PO Box 325, STONES CORNER QLD 4120

Office: Suite 1, 96 Cleveland Street, Stones Corner Qld 4120

SAFER COMPANIES

- Encouraging voluntary compliance is the most effective way for governments to improve road safety.
- The ATA's TruckSafe program is a voluntary accreditation program that promotes safety management systems in businesses. Members are twice as safe as non-accredited companies¹.
- The incoming government should provide companies with **incentives to join programs like TruckSafe**.
- The incoming government should encourage the **voluntary use** of telematics for management and compliance.
- There should be support for voluntary industry codes of conduct, and **chain of responsibility legislation should be implemented and enforced nationally**. Under chain of responsibility, the industry's customers can be prosecuted if they force drivers to speed or drive while fatigued.

MORE EFFECTIVE REGULATION

- The ATA supports national regulations for an efficient cross-border operating environment.
- **National regulation needs to preserve existing local productivity and access arrangements and promote the adoption of these benefits in like circumstances**. There must also be a uniform solution on fatigue management that takes into account the unique characteristics of operations in Western Australia, Northern Territory and other remote areas.
- National regulations should be understandable, easy to comply with and potentially provide productivity enhancements.

FAIRER TRUCK CHARGES

- Trucks pay their way for use of the road. The current PAYGO system ensures that governments more than recover their truck-related road expenditure.
- For an efficient economy, charges need to be cost-reflective and simple for operators and regulators to administer.
- Currently, COAG is considering heavy vehicle charging reform, including the ATA's fuel based charging scheme. Fuel-based charging would change the fuel and registration proportion of heavy vehicle charges while recovering the same amount, and use the revenue for targeted road spending. It would achieve the desired efficiency gains without substantial technology and administration costs.
- The Henry Review recommended that COAG should speed ahead with looking at mass distance location pricing, where trucks would be charged based on the roads they use, the distance they travel and how much they weigh. **The incoming government should not take up this recommendation**. Mass-distance-location pricing could involve heavy compliance costs. Its consideration should not be rushed.
- Road and rail are complementary freight transport modes. Government regulation should improve the efficiency of both modes separately.

¹ Austroads (2008) *Analysis of the Safety Benefits of Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Schemes*. Report number APR13/08.

A CLEANER ENVIRONMENT

- Trucks have the best emission standards and fuel efficiency gains available.
- Market opportunities should exist to encourage investment in new technologies and alternative fuels.
- National climate policy needs to create the right incentives for businesses and individuals to achieve reductions at the least cost to the economy.
- The trucking industry could achieve even greater gains in environmental performance through the use of longer, safer trucks on appropriate routes.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the trucking industry's priorities and speaking notes, contact:

Bill McKinley, National Manager, Government Relations and Communications, Australian Trucking Association, Tel: 02 6253 6900, Fax: 02 6253 6999, Email: mckinleyb@atatruck.net.au