

# MEDIA RELEASE



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## TRUCKING OPERATORS KEEP FUEL TAX CREDITS DESPITE TOUGH BUDGET

Trucking operators will continue to receive fuel tax credits despite the \$22 billion in cuts in tonight's budget, the Chief Executive of the Australian Trucking Association, Stuart St Clair, said this evening.

Operators in the industry receive fuel tax credits of 15.543 cents per litre on the fuel they use, provided they meet one of four environmental conditions. The fuel tax credit rate is set so the trucking industry pays for its use of the road system, based on figures calculated independently by the National Transport Commission.

Mr St Clair said the Government had made the right decision to keep the fuel tax credit system, despite the pressure on the Budget and intensive lobbying from its partner in government, the Greens, and the environmental movement.

"The Greens want to abolish the trucking industry's fuel tax credits because of their wrong-headed belief that more freight would be transported by rail," Mr St Clair said.

"But there isn't a railway siding at the back of your local supermarket. The Greens' policy would simply push up prices for everyone who buys goods delivered by truck – and that's every single person in Australia."

Mr St Clair welcomed the Government's announcement of extra funding for Australia's roads, including an extra billion dollars for the Pacific Highway.

"The Government will now invest \$28 billion in roads over the six years of its current Nation Building Program. This massive investment will provide Australia with a safer and more efficient transport system," Mr St Clair said.

"From the trucking industry's point of view, the ATA particularly welcomes the \$28 million the Government will invest in heavy vehicle rest areas in 2011-12. Australia's truck drivers are required to take breaks to manage their fatigue: it's essential they have somewhere to stop."

The Government will also invest \$25.3 million to continue work on developing the national regulators for heavy vehicles, the rail sector, and the maritime sector.

"The Government's plan for national transport regulations is a historic reform, but it's also very complex. For example, the ATA supports the national truck laws, but we have identified 245 issues with the draft that need to be resolved.

"By delivering more resources, the Infrastructure and Transport Minister, Anthony Albanese, has made sure the public servants working on the details of the reforms can get them right."

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