

MEDIA RELEASE



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SIMPLIFY NATIONAL TRUCK LAW TO IMPROVE SAFETY AND COMPLIANCE

The National Transport Commission (NTC) should work on simplifying the heavy vehicle national law to improve road safety, the Chief Executive of the Australian Trucking Association, Stuart St Clair, said today.

Mr St Clair was commenting on the ATA's submission to the NTC's Heavy Vehicle Compliance Review. The review investigates methods to improve compliance and ensure that parties who break the law do not gain a competitive advantage.

Mr St Clair said it was gratifying to see the NTC acknowledge the major improvements the heavy vehicle industry has made in safety over the past forty years.

"We think the best way for the NTC to see this trend continue is to develop policies that make it simple for drivers and operators to comply with the law," he said.

"These policies need to recognise what is feasible – for instance, a driver can't stop for a mandated rest break if there's nowhere safe to pull over – and put safety as the highest priority."

The submission reiterates the ATA's call for governments to develop a nation-wide, public database of coronial road safety recommendations, including updates and responses to recommendations.

"Currently, there is little followup on the recommendations coroners make in the wake of a tragic accident," Mr St Clair said.

"This new system would not require governments and the industry to follow every coroner's recommendation. But it would give everyone involved a greater incentive to consider these recommendations seriously.

"In the longer term, governments, the industry, the NHVR and the Australian Transport Safety Bureau need to look at establishing a national 'no blame' accident investigation capacity for fatal truck crashes similar to the approach used to investigate aviation, marine and rail accidents."

The submission also calls for the NTC to give greater consideration to the TruckSafe® program.

"In the consultation draft, the NTC makes much of the proposed five star licensing scheme, for which there are few details and no known case studies," Mr St Clair said.

"In comparison, TruckSafe® is the industry's leading safety accreditation program with hundreds of members and thousands of accredited trucks and trailers."

The full submission is available at www.truck.net.au/advocacy/submissions/submission-ntc-heavy-vehicle-compliance-review.

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