MEDIA RELEASE

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DAVID COONAN RETIRES FROM THE ATA

The Australian Trucking Association's policy manager, David Coonan, has retired.

The Chief Executive of the ATA, Stuart St Clair, said Mr Coonan had decided to retire after an extended illness.

"As the ATA's National Manager, Policy, David gave the ATA eight years of exceptional service as a passionate advocate on behalf of trucking operators across Australia," Mr St Clair said.

"I appointed David to his role in 2006, after knowing him for many years when he was a public servant working in heavy vehicle regulation.

"David had an expert understanding of government process and regulation, and he was able to back it up with a detailed knowledge about how trucks and engines work. For example, he could be heard in the office discussing with regulators the pin voltages on electronic brake connectors, before switching to a teleconference about truck charging.

"David's major achievements at the ATA included his role in working through more than a thousand issues with the original draft of the Heavy Vehicle National Law. The law isn't perfect, but it's much better than it would have been if David hadn't been involved.

"David was a strong advocate for the industry on heavy vehicle charging. After years of discussion, the ATA finally convinced transport ministers to review the existing charging system. As a result, the NTC concluded that the existing system would overcharge the truck and bus industries by $232 million in 2014-15.

"David campaigned for the increased use of high productivity vehicles. His truck impact chart, developed with Bob Woodward of Barkwood Consulting, is now a standard reference. He presented about high productivity vehicles at one of the foremost truck research centres in the world, the University of Michigan Transport Research Institute.

"David will be greatly missed. On behalf of everyone at the ATA, I wish him better health and all the best for his retirement," Mr St Clair said.

Mr Coonan started his career as a diesel mechanic. He then managed the Department of Housing and Construction's ACT vehicle fleet, before joining the ACT Government as its Deputy Registrar of Motor Vehicles. Mr Coonan later worked as a senior transport policy officer for the ACT and Australian governments.

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