

MEDIA RELEASE



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ATA WELCOMES NTC REVIEW INTO DRIVER HEALTH STANDARDS

The Australian Trucking Association (ATA) has welcomed the National Transport Commission's (NTC) review into the Assessing Fitness to Drive medical standards, announced this morning.

The Assessing Fitness to Drive standards set out the medical requirements for drivers of private or commercial vehicles, including truck drivers. The current guidelines were released in 2012.

ATA Chair Noelene Watson said the review was good news for the industry, community and drivers alike.

"Ensuring our drivers are healthy and well is a top priority for industry. Heavy vehicle drivers have a demanding job, and ensuring their medical needs are met is essential for both safety and staff wellbeing," Mrs Watson said.

"But the current commercial driver health standards lack effective screening tests for major health issues such as sleep apnoea and diabetes. Recent studies have estimated that more than 25 per cent of long distance truck drivers may have undiagnosed sleep apnoea.

"We've also had feedback from operators through our Trucking Australia open forum, where attendees called for the ATA to promote healthier driver lifestyles and seek better medical standards. We responded by developing a new series of driver health fact sheets, with the first released on 3 October.

"We were also charged with working to have the standards changed so drivers sent for medical tests can keep driving until the results are assessed.

"Earlier this year, the ATA wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister highlighting our concerns with the current Assessing Fitness to Drive Guidelines and requesting that a review be added to the NTC's forward work program.

"The ATA will work closely with the NTC as the review progresses, and press for medical standards that are both effective and fair."

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About the ATA: The Australian Trucking Association (www.truck.net.au) is the peak body that represents the trucking industry. Its members include state and sector trucking associations, major logistics companies and operators and suppliers with leading expertise in truck technology.

A safe, professional and viable trucking industry