

MEDIA RELEASE



FORREST ACT 2603
Tel: (02) 6253 6900
www.truck.net.au

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JULIE RUSSELL APPOINTED CHAIR OF SKILLS AND WORKFORCE COMMITTEE

The Australian Trucking Association has appointed 2015 National Trucking Industry Woman of the Year, Julie Russell, as the Chair of its industry Skills and Workforce committee.

Julie Russell is a Director for her family business, RB Russell Transport.

ATA Chair Noelene Watson welcomed Ms Russell to the role.

“Julie has a real passion for the trucking industry, and she is committed to improving safety both on the road and in the industry’s depots,” Mrs Watson said.

“Her appointment will bring a valuable new perspective to the work of the Skills and Workforce Committee.”

Ms Russell said she looked forward to working with the members of the committee.

“Skills and workforce is a hugely important area for continued improvements in on-road driver behaviours and safety,” Ms Russell said.

“Unfortunately, when something goes wrong in a heavy vehicle on our roads, it can have devastating consequences. Having better skilled heavy vehicle drivers, with professional driving behaviours, is critical to reduce both the road toll and road incidents involving heavy vehicles.

“When we change these behaviours, we’re saving lives – our driver’s life, and the lives of the people next to them on the road. I see several short-term opportunities for the committee in this area by working with RTOs and government bodies to add certain skillsets / focus points to the training programs and qualification standards.

“In the long term, I intend to see the committee producing implementation-level plans that can be introduced across Australia, providing tangible support for our operators.

“We particularly need to look at the transition periods where people are coming into and leaving the industry – both training up and bringing in new entrants, and supporting workers as they head towards retirement, drawing on their skills and knowledge.

“I think there’s a real opportunity to develop mentor/mentee programs to help businesses with both incoming and outgoing staff transitions.

“With technology constantly evolving in our trucks and road networks, we also need to be open to how this will change our industry and the people it attracts. It’s a challenge that I’m really excited to tackle.”

Julie Russell has extensive experience working with industry and government groups, including work with the NHVR, QLD Transport and Main Roads, the QTA and Workplace Health and Safety Queensland.

Media contact:

Kathleen Horne

02 6253 6900 / 0409 524 120

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