

MEDIA RELEASE



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RSRO CAUSES DEVASTATION FOR OWNER-DRIVERS

The devastating impact of the new Contractor Driver Minimum Payments Road Safety Remuneration Order 2016 (RSRO) has been revealed, with more than 300 members of the trucking industry converging in Ballarat today to share their experiences since the order came into effect on Thursday afternoon.

The meeting was called by Senator John Madigan and chaired by the Livestock and Rural Transporters Association of Victoria, following widespread concern about the effect of the order on the livelihood of many owner drivers. The Australian Trucking Association was represented by its Chair, Noelene Watson, and ATA Director Kathy Williams AM.

Mrs Watson said the meeting showed how hard and fast the effects of the order were hitting small operators.

"We've heard a lot very sad stories about owner-drivers who have had their contracts cancelled and were given notice by their customers as a direct result of the order," she said.

"Companies are announcing that they are buying their own trucks, because it's just not viable to use subcontractors any more.

"One owner operator said he had mortgaged his house to purchase a new rig - with no more work coming in, he's now looking at selling his truck at a tremendous loss.

"These drivers have nowhere to go. They're suffering, their families are suffering, and the pressure is immense.

"This order - which was meant to improve safety - is instead directly causing immense hardship for tens of thousands of owner-drivers across Australia.

"This is a matter of fundamental industry viability, and people's welfare and livelihoods. The ATA will continue to lobby for the repeal of the Road Safety Remuneration Act and the abolition of the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal in the next sitting of parliament," Mrs Watson said.

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