

MEDIA RELEASE



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STRONGER CHAIN OF RESPONSIBILITY LAWS TO HOLD INDUSTRY CUSTOMERS TO ACCOUNT

Strong new chain of responsibility laws will enable action to be taken against trucking industry customers who currently deny they are covered by the laws at all, the Australian Trucking Association Council heard yesterday.

The Council was briefed yesterday by NHVR Chief Executive Sal Petrocchio.

ATA Chief Executive Christopher Melham said the ATA and its members expressed continued support for the NHVR and its actions in improving road safety, and welcomed the forthcoming reforms to the chain of responsibility laws.

“The goal of the heavy vehicle chain of responsibility laws is to ensure that major customers are held to account for the demands they impose on trucking businesses. All too often, however, investigations start and end with trucking businesses and their drivers because it is too difficult to pursue customers,” Mr Melham said.

“In some cases, major customers won’t even concede that they are subject to the laws.

“The ATA and the NHVR held important discussions yesterday about the effect of the chain of responsibility reforms, which governments agreed to last year following lobbying by the industry. In the ATA’s view, it is essential that the forthcoming federal election does not delay the rollout of these reforms.”

Mr Melham welcomed the NHVR’s advice that new guidelines for industry codes of practice would be available from 1 July 2016.

“The ATA has already submitted an application to have the industry’s own safety accreditation program, TruckSafe, recognised under the industry code of practice guidelines,” he said.

“TruckSafe consists of four core modules around management, maintenance, driver health and training, with the voluntary TruckCare livestock transport module also available. These modules help accredited operators ensure they meet industry best practice in these areas of their business. A fifth module, covering on-road compliance, will be added in June as part of an update to the standards.

“TruckSafe accredited operators are audited by independent external auditors to ensure they are meeting the high standards TruckSafe requires of its members. Above all, TruckSafe is a voluntary program. Its members are operators who want to go above and beyond to make sure they are running the safest possible business they can.

“We are very proud of our TruckSafe accredited operators. I look forward to TruckSafe’s approval as an industry code of practice, so the efforts being made by these operators can be formally recognised by the NHVR as well.”

The ATA Council also agreed yesterday to develop a new Technical Advisory Procedure (TAP) covering tyres and tyre operations. The ATA’s TAPs set out industry best practice on a range of key technical issues, including wheel security and heavy vehicle wiring.

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Mr Melham said that tyre failures caused some 3.6 per cent of major truck accidents, according to NTI statistics.

“The new TAP will provide operators with best practice guidance on maintaining inflation pressure, correct load and speed ratings, tread depth tolerances and the effect of rolling resistance on fuel burn,” he said.

“The TAP is another example of how the ATA is getting on with developing practical measures to improve truck safety for everyone.”

The TAP will be released in 2017.

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