

MEDIA RELEASE



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GOVERNMENTS MUST SET START DATE FOR NEW TRUCK LAWS

The Australian and state governments must set a start date for the strong new truck laws scheduled to start in 2018, the Chair of the Australian Trucking Association, Geoff Crouch, said today.

Mr Crouch was responding to the Fairfax media stories over the weekend (9-10 September) about truck safety.

“The ATA and its members lobbied strongly for the new laws, which include a new primary safety duty for all businesses in the road freight transport chain of responsibility, including the extension of the laws to maintenance, a due diligence obligation on company executives, and a massive increase in maximum penalties,” Mr Crouch said.

“These laws are needed to stop large industry customers from pressuring trucking businesses into operating unsafely on the road.

“The laws are due to come into effect in 2018, but we do not yet have a defined starting date.

“The ATA and its members are running strong information campaigns about the new laws, as is the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator. With the Australian Logistics Council, we are jointly developing a master registered code of practice to help businesses comply. But **having a specific starting date is needed to focus the attention of every industry customer**,” he said.

Mr Crouch said governments must also commit to **publish the results of the current review into truck driver training and licensing**.

“As a result of pressure from the good operators and trainers in our industry, governments are reviewing the truck driver licensing and training system. The consultants undertaking the review are scheduled to report back in November 2017,” he said.

“Given the concerns raised by industry about the quality of driver training and licensing, and the stories over the weekend, governments must now commit to make the report public so we can all see the findings,” he said.

Mr Crouch said the rate of fatal crashes involving large trucks like semitrailers was steadily improving.

“Authoritative statistics from the University of Adelaide Centre for Automotive Safety Research (CASR) show that the fatal crash rate for articulated trucks **declined 82 per cent between 1982 and 2016**.

“The number of articulated trucks in Australia increased from about 47,000 in 1982 to more than 96,000 in 2016, but despite the growing fleet the number of fatal accidents is trending downwards.

“The truck accident rate won’t be acceptable until it’s zero, but we are making progress – and the changes we are seeking will result in further progress,” he said.

A chart showing the fatal articulated truck accident rate from 1982-2016 is attached

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Articulated truck fatal crash rate

