

**Submission to:** National Transport Commission

**Title:** National Road Safety Partnership Program

**Date:** 18 October 2012



## Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
2. Australian Trucking Association .....	3
3. Recommendations.....	3
4. Fixing foundation knowledge.....	3
5. Improving industry safety - Recognition of TruckSafe.....	4
6. Project implementation .....	4

## 1. Introduction

The National Road Safety Partnership Program (NRSPP) wants to achieve large outcomes for road safety in Australia.

Road safety can constantly be improved and needs to be reinforced to make an impact on road users. The heavy vehicle industry is required to meet compliance for safety on every journey; many other road users are not required to have the same level of reporting on safety responsibilities. The heavy vehicle industry therefore can offer a practical insight in what has worked for drivers and what could be done to improve road user's safety.

Constructing links between government, business, industry and researchers to share knowledge will improve the quality of information that the NRSPP can provide about road safety.

## 2. Australian Trucking Association

The Australian Trucking Association (ATA) is the peak body that represents the trucking industry. Its members include the state and sector based trucking associations, some of the nation's largest transport companies, and businesses with leading expertise in truck technology.

## 3. Recommendations

### Recommendation 1

Corporate road safety programs developed under NRSPP should include education about how to share the road with heavy vehicles.

### Recommendation 2

Businesses in TruckSafe and similar accreditation programs should automatically receive recognition under the NRSPP recognition scheme.

### Recommendation 3

The ATA should be appointed to the NRSPP steering committee.

## 4. Fixing foundation knowledge

The first formal education many drivers experience is when they are applying for a driving license. Safety messages presented at this stage should be practical and strong. However, learner drivers are not informed about how to interact with heavy vehicles, nor is their understanding tested.

The current driver licensing system means drivers have limited factual knowledge of how to safely cooperate with heavy vehicles and would lead to people being likely to misunderstand the benefits of larger trucks and simply feeling intimidated by trucks.

While the focus on joining different corporate elements of road safety is important, the effect will be limited if the requirements for road users do not cover all aspects of basic safety. Foundations need to be strong; overlooking this gap in education of all drivers needs to be fixed.

Corporate road safety programs under NRSPP should therefore be required to include education about how to share the road with heavy vehicles.

### Recommendation 1

Corporate road safety programs developed under NRSPP should include education about how to share the road with heavy vehicles.

## 5. Improving industry safety – Recognition of TruckSafe

TruckSafe is an industry safety accreditation and business and risk management system that aims to improve the safety and professionalism of trucking operators nationwide. It is an industry initiative and, once accredited, enables operators to verify to customers that they are reducing their risks through safe work practices, safe and well maintained trucks, healthy drivers and sound management systems thereby meeting their duties under the Chain of Responsibility.

Operators seeking TruckSafe accreditation must meet high safety and management standards, which considerably exceed the ones required by law. The operators are audited regularly by independent auditors selected by TruckSafe.

An independent assessment has found that TruckSafe operators are twice as safe as non-accredited operators.<sup>1</sup> Their trucks have markedly fewer defects than non-accredited trucks or trucks in the government compliance scheme, National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme (NHVAS).<sup>2</sup> The Victorian Government has formally recognised TruckSafe as an industry code of practice under the state's *Road Safety Act*.

Other trucking industry accreditation programs also show positive safety results.

Given the substantial commitment that businesses in these programs have made to improve their safety, they should automatically receive recognition under the proposed NRSPP recognition scheme.

### Recommendation 2

Businesses in TruckSafe and similar accreditation programs should automatically receive recognition under the NRSPP recognition scheme.

## 6. Project implementation

Given the ATA's expertise in designing and running Australia's first safety accreditation program for the trucking industry, appointing the ATA to the steering committee would be of substantial benefit.

### Recommendation 3

The ATA should be appointed to the NRSPP steering committee.

---

<sup>1</sup> Austroads 2008, *Analysis of the Safety Benefits of Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Schemes*, Research Report AP-R319/08.

<sup>2</sup> Mooren, L et al 2011, *Review of Australian Alternative Compliance Schemes*.