



**Submission to the Heavy Vehicle Driver
Competency Working Group on the
National Heavy Vehicle Driver Competency
Framework**

January 2010

INTRODUCTION:

The Australian Trucking Association (ATA) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the invitation to submit views on behalf of the road transport industry regarding the proposed National Competency Framework for heavy vehicle drivers.

The ATA was established originally in 1989 as the Road Transport Forum, and is the peak national body representing the interests of the Australian trucking industry.

Membership of ATA's General Council comprises the peak state and sector-based transport associations, the Transport Workers' Union, some of the nation's largest transport enterprises, and elected representatives of small fleet owners and owner drivers.

The ATA has a Workforce and Skills Committee, which also formed a Heavy Vehicle Driver Licensing Working Group to develop specific industry views on the link between competency-based training and assessment and the future licensing of heavy vehicle drivers. The views expressed in this submission has been developed through this process, and endorsed generally by the ATA General Council.

There are two components to this submission:

1. ATA's responses to the "*Summary of Matters Under Consideration*" document released by the National Heavy Vehicle Driver Competency Working Group in November 2009; and
2. Specific proposals for a scheme to link enhanced competency-based training and assessment in the various heavy vehicle license classes to accelerated advancement through the Graduated Licensing System (GLS).

WORKFORCE CHALLENGES:

Skills Shortages and An Ageing Workforce:

The shortage of skilled and competent heavy vehicle drivers ranks as one of the major workforce challenges facing Australia's trucking industry.

An efficient road transport industry is vital to the continued growth of the Australian economy, and to achieve this, we need a skilled and competent workforce able to meet the demands of servicing the growing freight task in a safe and sustainable manner.

The Australian road freight transport industry has been one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy over recent years.

The Survey of Motor Vehicle Use (ABS, 1999-2008) reports that the total freight task carried by trucks in Australia (excluding light commercial vehicles) increased by over 59% between 1998 and 2007. The Motor Vehicle Census (ABS, 1999-2007) reported an increase of 11.4% in the number of trucks registered in Australia over the same period.

The comparatively smaller increase in the number of trucks relative to the increased freight task reflects productivity improvements, with a higher predominance of registered articulated vehicles and an increase in average distances travelled per vehicle by around 28% over the same period.

The growing freight task and the increase in the number of trucks to service that demand, particularly articulated heavy vehicles, requires more skilled heavy vehicle drivers. Yet, the industry is faced with an ageing workforce.

In August 2003, the ATA released “*Driving Australia’s Future*” – A Report and Action Plan Addressing the Skills Needs of the Road Freight Transport Industry.

This report identified clearly that the road transport industry’s workforce was ageing, with the proportion of 45 to 54 year-olds relatively higher than the proportion for all occupations, while the proportion of 18 to 24 year-olds was low. At that time, it was estimated that 10% of the road transport workforce would retire within a decade.

It was also noted that the industry was becoming more complex – trucks were becoming larger and more technologically sophisticated; distances travelled were increasing; customer expectations of quality and timely service were becoming more demanding; and regulatory and safety environments were being strengthened.

These external forces continue to require heavy vehicle drivers to be more skilled and competent to complete their job roles safely, sustainably and efficiently.

The Report concluded that the most pressing workforce need was for skilled heavy vehicle drivers, for whom at the time job vacancies accounted for more than half of the vacancies filled in the industry.

A later report commissioned by the Transport Workers’ Union and the Transport and Logistics Centre⁽¹⁾ concluded that if the road transport industry was unable to recruit and retain truck drivers, there was the potential for the driver workforce to be reduced significantly in less than twenty years.

Table 1 provides statistics for a typical truck driver derived from the TWU / TALC Report.

Table 1 – Truck Driver Statistics vs. All Occupations

	Truck Driver	All Occupations
Average age	43 years	39 years
Average hours worked per week	46.8 hours	39.7 hours
Percentage full time	92.6%	71.3%
Percentage male	97.5%	54.9%

Source: TWU / TALC Report – “*Workforce Challenges in Road Transport*” (Global Workplace January 2007, p.9), derived from job outlook information at <http://jobsearch.gov.au>

Research conducted by the Victorian⁽²⁾ Department of Transport in 2008⁽²⁾ reinforced that the higher average age of truck drivers has significant implications for the future workforce.

Table 2 below projects the estimated departure of truck drivers from employment due to the ageing workforce over the next two decades. 9 percent of the current generation of truck drivers will have reached the age of 70 by 2016, and 32 percent by 2026.

Table 2 – Estimated departures of truck drivers due to the ageing workforce (ABS, 2007)

2006		2016		2026	
Age Group	Proportion	Age Group	Proportion	Age Group	Proportion
15 - 24	4%	25 - 34		40 - 44	
25 - 29	7%	35 - 39		45 - 49	
30 - 34	11%	40 - 44		50 - 54	
35 - 39	14%	45 - 49	91%	55 - 59	68%
40 - 44	16%	50 - 54		60 - 64	
45 - 49	15%	55 - 59		65 - 69	
50 - 54	13%	60 - 64		70 - 74	
55 - 59	11%	65 - 69		75 - 79	32%
60 - 64	6.4%	70 - 74	9%	80 - 84	
65+	2.4%	75+		85+	
Total	100%	Total	100%	Total	100%

Source: "Workforce planning issues in the freight industry", Kazalac L., Ramsay E., Morris, J., Department of Transport, Victoria, for the 31st Australian Transport Research Forum 2008.

Recruiting Truck Drivers:

The growing use of articulated heavy vehicles to meet the freight task, together with increasing customer service, safety and technology demands, means that transport operators require truck drivers with the necessary skills and aptitudes, particularly in the higher license categories (i.e. heavy combination (HC) and multi-combination (MC)).

The current "time served" components of the Graduation Licensing System (GLS) disregard the demonstration of competencies to move to higher licensing classes in a timely manner, thereby contributing to a shortage of quality heavy vehicle drivers, particularly at the MC level. This was raised in the ATA submission to DEEWR on the 'Future Directions for Skilling Australia'⁽³⁾. While time requirements may be a barrier to job seekers, the availability of entry level jobs, cost of license upgrades or the lack of qualification recognition between states also discourage workforce participation.

There are also major impediments to the employment of younger people as heavy vehicle drivers. Major hurdles to overcome are insurance excess requirements on drivers under 25 years of age, and the license restrictions on younger people. These cautious restrictions on young drivers are not always evidence based. According to the NTI Major Accident Investigation Report 2009; there was no evidence of drivers under the age of 25 years increasing in their involvement in major truck crashes, and the average age of drivers involved in accidents has increased- from 38.5 years to 43.2 years⁽⁴⁾. For this reason the NTI has guardedly supported the acceptance of younger drivers under appropriate training schemes.

The road transport industry will remain at a disadvantage compared to other industries while significant barriers remain to take on employees for heavy vehicle driver training at school-leaver age.

The development of an enhanced program of heavy vehicle driver training and competency demonstration, linked to accelerated advancement through the Graduated Licensing System (GLS), will assist the industry to truly develop vocational traineeships linked to heavy vehicle driving tasks which realistically allows for the employment of younger people under structured training and employment arrangements. This would lead to the development of a “professional truck driver” vocational qualification aligned to the necessary licensing requirements.

Also, such a program would assist the industry to engage positively with the insurance industry, based on a demonstrably safer competency-based program of truck driver training and assessment, which is less reliant on age as a variable factor in risk assessment.

The industry’s proposals on the introduction of an Enhanced Licensing Standard aligned with acceleration through the Graduated Licensing System (GLS) are outlined in the final section of this submission.

INDUSTRY PRINCIPLES: ALIGNMENT OF LICENSING WITH COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT:

In establishing proposals regarding an enhanced competency assessment program linked to acceleration through the GLS, the ATA has adopted the following principles:

1. Road safety is paramount. The goal is to work with governments to ensure that the link between enhanced competency assessment and licensing improves driver skills attainment and on-road driver safety performance.
2. Reward for effort. Evident achievement of enhanced competency through a more rigorous training and assessment regime controlled by the licensing authorities should be rewarded with timely advancement through the GLS.
3. Lift the professional image of the industry. The poor public image of the heavy vehicle sector can be enhanced through demonstration of a true link between licensing and competency attainment as a heavy vehicle driver.
4. Reduce barriers to entry. The enhanced program will go a long way to reducing barriers to entry for truck drivers, particularly younger entrants to the industry.
5. Support career paths through formal vocational recognition of drivers’ skills and competency attainment.
6. Consistent framework by licensing authorities. A consistent approach to training and assessment of heavy vehicle drivers, including the adoption of the enhanced program option by all licensing jurisdictions, would be welcomed by the trucking industry as it will reduce regulatory “red tape” and provide greater certainty on licensing quality and outcomes.
7. Provide clear options. People obtain heavy vehicle licenses for a variety of reasons. Licensing authorities should provide clear options, including the current licensing option of heavy vehicle licensing assessment at the base standard which would not qualify for any accelerated advancement through the GLS.

“SUMMARY OF MATTERS UNDER CONSIDERATION” - ATA RESPONSE:

Prior to canvassing the ATA’s Enhanced Licensing Standard proposal, we have responded below to the policy matters set out in the document entitled “*Summary of Matters Under Consideration for a National Heavy Vehicle Driver Competency Framework*” released by the National Heavy Vehicle Driver Competency Working Group in late November 2009 for comment.

The policy matters under consideration are précised below, with a corresponding ATA response:

Policy Matters	ATA Response
<p>Eligibility Criteria – the training and assessment requirements (for heavy vehicle licensing) will form part of the eligibility criteria and be applied consistently across all Australian jurisdictions.</p>	<p>Agree.</p> <p>Ultimately however, the industry would want to see all of the eligibility criteria harmonised across Australia, including age of the applicant and driver experience in the various license classes. However, it is understood that this may become more practical when the eligibility criteria is controlled and delivered by a National Heavy Vehicle Regulator.</p>
<p>Integration into the VET system. The Transport & Logistics Industry Skills Council (TLISC) is establishing a licensing Skills Set within the Transport & Logistics Industry Training Package (TL107) for each class of heavy vehicle driver licence.</p>	<p>Acknowledged. The ATA has liaised with the TLISC in the development of the licensing “Skills Sets”.</p> <p>The ATA supports the continuation of the existing licensing classes (i.e. LR, MR, HR, HC, and MC).</p>
<p>Competency Assessment – competency will be assessed using the Units of Competency within the relevant Skills Sets in the Transport & Logistics Industry Training Package (TL107).</p>	<p>Agree:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Competency assessment will be subject to a Final Competency Assessment requiring the applicant to demonstrate competency in the broad range of the elements of the driving task in combination. ○ The jurisdictions will use the same Final Competency Assessment instrument. ○ Licence applicants will not be permitted to undertake the Final Competency Assessment until they are eligible for the issue of a licence in the relevant class.

Policy Matters	ATA Response
<p>Competency Assessment Service Providers: the Final Competency Assessment will be administered directly by the Licensing Authorities, or by competency Assessment Service Providers approved by the Licensing Authority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Competency Assessment Service Providers will include Commercial Service Providers which will be Registered Training Organisations (RTOs) operating within the VET system. ○ Commercial Service Providers will be the preferred channel for delivery of assessments. Licensing Authorities or approved non-RTO third party assessors (such as Police Officers) should deliver assessments only where the preferred channel is not practicable; for example in remote areas or for drivers with special needs. ○ Commercial Service Providers will be approved by Licensing Authorities using a consistent national approach. ○ The performance of Commercial Service Providers will be audited and monitored jointly by the State Training Authority and the Licensing Authority in each jurisdiction. 	<p>Strongly Agree. Given the alignment of licensing outcomes with the driving units of competency within the Transport & Logistics Industry Training Package, it is the industry's preference for the Assessments to be undertaken by RTOs approved by the Licensing Authority and regulated through the VET system.</p> <p>In that way, disciplines are applied to the professional standard of delivery of the competency assessments as the RTOs are subject to the rigors of registration through the VET system, as well as through the approval processes applied by the Licensing Authority.</p> <p>Agree – consistent with the views above.</p> <p>Strongly Agree. This is highly important to ensure consistency in assessment delivery standards. As a minimum, the Commercial Service Provider would need to demonstrate that it is a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) with the relevant units of competency in its scope of delivery.</p> <p>Strongly Agree. It is important for the State Training Authorities under the VET system to work closely with the relevant Licensing Authorities to ensure adequate performance of the Commercial Service Provider.</p>

Policy Matters	ATA Response
<p>Assessment Options: A licence applicant will be able to undertake assessment through any or a combination of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated training and assessment; • An approved stand-alone assessment; • Recognition of prior learning / current competency through a process approved by the Licensing Authority; • Special assessments where approved by the Licensing Authority (i.e. special needs or in exceptional circumstances) <p>○ Competency assessment by an approved assessor in any jurisdiction will be recognised for the issuing of a Heavy Vehicle Driver Licence in all jurisdictions.</p>	<p>Agree – however, we believe strongly that the special assessments should be approved only when indeed there are special circumstances – it should not be used to approve non-RTO assessment providers on a general basis.</p> <p>Strongly Agree - the industry seeks a consistent application of the assessment processes on a national basis.</p>
<p>Transitional Arrangements: there will be a transitional period, during which applicants for a higher class of licence who may have already commenced learning at the beginning of the transition period may demonstrate competency through existing arrangements.</p>	<p>Agree – however, the transitional period should not be unduly long.</p>
<p>Commercial Service Providers: must be RTOs with Scope of Registration for the relevant competency units and are approved by the Licensing Authority in the jurisdiction in which it operates.</p>	<p>Agree.</p>
<p>Auditing and Control: all assessments providers will be subject to auditing and monitoring of assessments and related activities by auditors representing the VET system and/or the Licensing Authority</p>	<p>Agree – however, it would be expected that the Licensing Authority would take an active stance in the auditing processes, not just leaving it to the VET licensing authorities by default.</p>
<p>Heavy Vehicle Driver Training Options: Licence applicants may develop competency through instruction by a Motor Driving Instructor, or, under the direction of a supervising driver or by other means.</p>	<p>Agree – however, Licensing Authorities will need to stress that the Final Competency Assessment can only be delivered by an RTO, or other organisation or person approved by the Licensing Authority.</p>

Policy Matters	ATA Response
<p>Heavy Vehicle Driver Training Standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consideration was given to a proposal to set a compulsory minimum duration for training. However, it was noted that training must be sufficiently flexible to respond to the individual needs of learners. The HVDCWG considers that it would not be appropriate to set a minimum duration for training. ○ Consideration was given to the proposal for a mandatory learner log book for heavy vehicle learner drivers. However in the circumstances where there will be no mandatory minimum on-road experience requirement or training period, it was considered that the imposition of a log book requirement was not warranted. 	<p>Strongly Agree – We are of the view that the HVDCWG reached the right decision in not proposing a minimum duration of training.</p> <p>To be consistent with the principles of competency-based training and assessment, trainers and assessor need to take account of the levels of experience and competence of the individual candidate, and to recognise prior learning.</p> <p>Agree – but only in relation to the base standards of competency to be achieved for each license class.</p> <p>The ATA’s enhanced competency assessment proposal linked to acceleration through the GLS proposes that drivers record on-the-job driving activities as a demonstration of applied competency in the workplace.</p>
<p>Recognition of Heavy Vehicle Driving Schools: it is not meaningful to recognise organisations that only offer training without assessment. Commercial Service Providers eligible to offer assessment (or a combination of training and assessment) will be required to be an RTO within the VET system and to have Scope of Registration for one or more of the heavy vehicle driver licensing skills sets.</p>	<p>Strongly Agree – consistent with our views above.</p>
<p>Administration: The competency framework will be implemented by the Licensing Authority in each jurisdiction and, as far as practical, the variations between jurisdictions in administration arrangements will be confined to back-office systems and operations.</p>	<p>Agree – the industry will be seeking national consistency in the administration of the new licensing criteria and arrangements, and, ultimately, for the licensing to form part of the responsibilities of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator once established.</p>

ENHANCED TRAINING AND COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT LINKED TO ACCELERATION THROUGH THE GRADUATED LICENSING SYSTEM (GLS):

Consistent with the Industry Principles set out above, the Australian Trucking Association (ATA) proposes that Licensing Authorities should adopt a program linking enhanced competency training and assessment in each heavy vehicle driver license class to an acceleration through the “time served” components of the Graduated Licensing System (GLS).

The historic decision of Transport Ministers to implement heavy vehicle licensing reforms by 2010 presents an important opportunity for all jurisdictions to consider an Enhanced Licensing Standard proposal that will assist the road freight transport industry to overcome many of the current barriers to employment and licensing, while enhancing safety and employment outcomes.

It is recognised that people seek to obtain a heavy vehicle license for a variety of reasons (i.e. a farmer seeking to use a heavy vehicle in the course of their farming pursuits, or persons seeking employment in the hire and reward sector of the road freight industry, etc).

Therefore, the enhanced program advocated by the ATA should be introduced in addition to the licensing proposals outlined in the national framework considerations to align heavy vehicle licensing with competency-based training and assessment.

In this regard, it should be recognised that the ATA is advocating on behalf of the “professional” sector of the trucking industry engaged in the important task of carrying the nation’s freight. We are conscious however that “time served” under the current GLS is not necessarily a limiting factor for all persons seeking a heavy vehicle licence.

However, the ability to have truck drivers rewarded for achieving enhanced training and assessment outcomes through an accelerated graduation to higher licensing categories would impact positively on driver attraction, retention and career path options in the road freight sector.

Using the **Heavy Rigid Driver License category** as an example, the ATA proposal is illustrated in Table 3 below:

Table 3 – Enhanced Licensing Standard – Heavy Rigid (HR) Licence Example:

Licensing Standard Option	Competency Requirement	Graduated Licensing System (GLS)
Base Licensing Standard	TLILIC 1609A – License to Drive HR vehicle unit of competency (<i>minimum standard to be set by the Licensing Authorities</i>)	No acceleration through the GLS
Enhanced Licensing Standard	TLILIC 1609A – License to Drive HR vehicle unit of competency, combined with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Additional RTO competency training focussed on the driving task, as well as ○ TLIB 407C – Carry Out Vehicle Inspection ○ TLIH 207D – Plan & Navigate Routes ○ Record-keeping of on-the-job driving for a specified period 	Acceleration through the GLS (see Table 5)

The current eligibility requirement for a Heavy Rigid Licence is the possession of a Car (category C) licence for 2 years. The HR licence holder is then ineligible to obtain a Heavy Combination licence until he/she has held the Heavy Rigid (or a Medium Rigid) licence for one year.

With the introduction of the Enhanced Licensing Standard as an option, the ATA is proposing that to be eligible, the applicant must have been in possession of a Car licence for one year, and, subject to the satisfactory completion of the enhanced training and competency assessment, including record keeping of a safe driving record on-the-job for a specified period, would be eligible to obtain a Heavy Combination (HC) licence after six months.

The Enhanced Licensing Standard would then be applied to the Heavy Combination (HC) and Multi Combination (MC) licensing categories, with corresponding acceleration through the GLS as set out in Table 4:

Table 4 – Enhanced Licensing Standard Proposal – Heavy Combination (HC) and Multi-Combination (MC) License Categories:

License Category	Enhanced Licensing Standard	Graduated Licensing System (GLS)
Heavy Combination (HC)	TLILIC 1709A – License to Drive Heavy Combination (HC) vehicle unit of competency, combined with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Additional RTO competency training focussed on the driving task, as well as ○ TLIB 407C – Carry Out Vehicle Inspection ○ TLIB 807C – Carry Out Inspection of Trailer ○ TLIH 207D – Plan & Navigate Routes ○ Record-keeping of on-the-job driving for a specified period 	Acceleration through the GLS (see Table 5)
Multi-Combination (MC)	TLILIC 1809A – License to Drive Multi-Combination (MC) vehicle unit of competency, combined with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Additional RTO competency training focussed on the driving task, as well as ○ TLIB 407C – Carry Out Vehicle Inspection ○ TLIB 807C – Carry Out Inspection of Trailer ○ TLIH 207D – Plan & Navigate Routes ○ Record-keeping of on-the-job driving for a specified period 	Acceleration through the GLS (see Table 5)

Again, the Base Licensing Standard would exist as an option for HC and MC licensing, but would not attract any acceleration through the Graduated Licensing System (GLS).

The “reward for effort” proposed for completing the Enhanced Licensing Standard via acceleration through the Graduated Licensing System (GLS) is illustrated in Table 5:

Table 5 – Enhanced Licensing Standard Proposal – Graduated Licensing System (GLS) Acceleration:

Licence Category	Current Eligibility Criteria	Enhanced Licensing Standard Option – Eligibility Criteria
Heavy Rigid (HR)	Car licence held for 2 years	Car licence held for one year, then subject to satisfactory completion of the enhanced competency training & assessment and on-the-job driving record-keeping: 
Heavy Combination (HC)	Held HR licence for 12 months	Held HR licence for six months, then subject to satisfactory completion of the enhanced competency training & assessment and on-the-job driving record-keeping: 
Multi-Combination (MC)	Held HC licence for 12 months	Held HC licence for six months, then satisfactory completion of the enhanced competency training & assessment and on-the-job driving record-keeping.

Enhanced Licensing Standard – Link to Vocational Qualification Outcomes:

The adoption of the Enhanced Licensing Standard would have a positive impact on the alignment of vocational qualifications in transport and logistics with the units of competency related to the “drive vehicle” skills.

With the drive units of competency embedded and finally relevant to the vocational qualification, for the first time ever the industry and governments will have the opportunity to promote vocational qualification attainment as a true standard of professionalism for truck drivers in Australia.

It is likely that this will lead to a greater uptake of traineeships aligned to Certificate Level III or Certificate Level IV in Driving Operations qualifications under development by the Transport & Logistics Industry Skills Council (TLISC), wherein heavy vehicle drivers can have their driving skills recognised, while being trained in the other important units of competency that will assist in shaping the driver workforce of the future.

The eligibility criteria proposed for the Enhanced Licensing Standard for heavy vehicle driver licensing categories would favour the employment of younger people in structured vocational traineeships with employment as heavy vehicle drivers as an outcome.

For example, a secondary school-leaver could be employed under a traineeship with the vocational structure:

Table 6 – Possible Vocational Traineeship Structure Aligned to the Enhanced Licensing Standard:

Age of Trainee	Vocational Traineeship Structure
18 years	<p>Front end loading of units of competency in first year of the traineeship in such areas as “following occupational health and safety procedures”, “apply fatigue management strategies”, “carry out basic workplace calculations”, “shift materials safely”, “prepare workplace documentation”, “load and unload goods / cargo”, “complete workplace orientation / induction”, and other relevant vocational units of competency.</p> <p>Car licence is obtained and held for one year.</p>
19 years	<p>Completion of Heavy Rigid (HR) Enhanced Licensing Standard and continued vocational traineeship units of competency.</p> <p>On-the-job record-keeping of the HR driving task (in accordance with the Enhanced Licensing Standard criteria)</p>
20 years	<p>Completion of Heavy Combination (HC) Enhanced Licensing Standard and continued vocational traineeship units of competency.</p> <p>On-the-job record-keeping of the HC driving task (in accordance with the Enhanced Licensing Standard criteria).</p>
21 years	<p>Completion of Multi-Combination (MC) enhanced Licensing Standard and continued vocational traineeship units of competency.</p> <p>On-the-job record-keeping of MC driving task (in accordance with the enhanced Licensing Standard criteria).</p>
21½ years	<p>Completion of Certificate III in Driving Operations, including the embedded driving units under the enhanced licensing standard competency delivery to MC level.</p>

Overseas Experience & Examples:

Australia is not alone in considering schemes to address heavy vehicle driver skills attainment or to help to attract younger people into the road transport industry.

In 2004, a “Young Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) Driver Scheme” was implemented in England, Wales and Scotland designed to provide structured training and development of young people between the 16 and 21 years of age who wished to pursue a career in the road transport industry. Membership of the LGV Driver Scheme was open to young people between their 16th and 21st birthdays who were employed by a company with a licence to operate LGVs in the UK, or an employment agency that specialized in transport.

By following the Scheme, it was possible for young people in the UK to obtain and use an LGV Category C licence (equivalent to Australia’s Heavy Rigid (HR) category licence) at 18 years of age and to progress to a LGV Category C&E (equivalent to Australia’s Heavy Combination (HC) licence) before their 19th birthday.

In addition to comprehensive driver training (similar to the Enhanced Licensing Standard proposal), the Scheme required completion of a Level 2 qualification in Driving Goods Vehicles (i.e. a national vocational qualification similar to the Certificate qualifications in driving operations being implemented in Australia). The Scheme was administered by the UK Department of Transport, and all trainees were required to be linked to an accredited training organisation and be registered with the UK’s equivalent Skills Council (“Skills for Logistics”).

While the Young LGV Driver Scheme has been superseded by the Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) regime in the UK from September 2009, Modern and Advanced Apprenticeships in Driving Goods Vehicles are eligible for younger people to enter, which still cater for the attainment of large goods vehicle licences from 18 years of age.

CONCLUSION:

Transport Ministers and Licensing Authorities have a historic opportunity to align heavy vehicle licensing with competency-based training and assessment in such a way as to remove many barriers to the attraction, retention and vocational qualifications attainment which bedevil the road freight transport industry currently.

The Australian Trucking Association (ATA) agrees with development of the national heavy vehicle driver competency framework as proposed by the National Heavy Vehicle Driver Competency Working Group.

However, we urge governments, Federal and State, to adopt and implement the Enhanced Licensing Standard regime as proposed in this submission to be administered in addition to the Base Licensing Standard for heavy vehicle licence categories.

National consistency in the implementation of the driver competency framework is paramount, and the ATA is prepared to work with Licensing Authorities and all Governments to achieve the timely implementation of the framework from 2010.

References

- (1) "Workforce Challenges in Road Transport" – Truck Driver Recruitment, Retention and Retirement Research Project – Globe Workplace (January 2007)
- (2) "Workforce planning issues in the freight industry", Kazalac L., Ramsay E., Morris, J., Department of Transport, Victoria for the 31st Australian Transport Research Forum 2008.
- (3) ATA submission "Skilling Australia for the Future Discussion Paper" April, 2008"
- (4) Major Accident Investigation Report 2009". Owen Driscoll. National Transport Insurance 2009