



Transport Workers' Union of NSW

Richard Olsen State Secretary | P: 02 9912 0700 | F: 02 9891 4953 | E: info@twunsw.org.au | W: www.twunsw.org.au

ABN: 77 710 588 395

19 June 2017

David Hale
Committee Manager
StaySafe (Joint Standing Committee on Road Safety)
Parliament of New South Wales
Macquarie St
SYDNEY NSW 2000

By email: staysafe@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Mr Hale

Inquiry into driver education, training and road safety - questions on notice

I refer to your email of 5 June 2017 regarding questions taken on notice by the Transport Workers' Union of NSW (TWU) in the course of giving evidence before the abovementioned Inquiry on 29 May 2017.

The TWU provides the following responses to the questions taken on notice.

1 Road fatality statistics for heavy vehicle drivers

- 1.1 The Honourable Scott Farlow inquired during proceedings as to how the number of road fatalities for heavy vehicle drivers in New South Wales over the last year compared to figures for the same over the last 20 years [Transcript, page 10].
- 1.2 The evidence provided by the TWU in its submission at paragraphs 2.1(5) and (6) was that there had been an increase of 28 per cent in the number of total deaths between the 12 months to the end of September 2015 and the 12 months to the end of 2016 and that, during the month of January 2017 alone, there had been 2.5 per cent more fatalities involving heavy vehicles compared to the same month in 2016.
- 1.3 As to how those statistics compare to the statistics involving heavy vehicles over the past 20 years, the TWU was unable to find data dating back that far with respect to New South Wales specifically.
- 1.4 However, data for New South Wales from the past ten years was attainable and tended to show a downward trend in total annual deaths from crashes involving heavy vehicles.

AUSTRALIA'S STRONGEST UNION, GIVING TRANSPORT WORKERS A POWERFUL VOICE SINCE 1888

PARRAMATTA

31 Cowper Street,
Parramatta NSW 2150
PO Box 649 Parramatta NSW 2124

NEWCASTLE

5 Canavan Drive,
Beresfield NSW 2322
P: 02 4969 3900 F: 02 4962 2614

WOLLONGONG

59 Princes Highway,
West Wollongong NSW 2500
P: 02 4229 1753 F: 02 4228 5129



Transport Workers' Union of NSW

Richard Olsen State Secretary | P: 02 9912 0700 | F: 02 9891 4953 | E: info@twunsw.org.au | W: www.twunsw.org.au

ABN: 77 710 588 395

- 1.5 As is apparent from the following table taken from the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development Statistical Report entitled 'Road trauma involving heavy vehicles 2015 statistical summary'¹, total annual deaths from crashes involving heavy vehicles in New South Wales decreased, on average, by around 8 per cent per annum for articulated trucks and by 0.8 per cent per annum for heavy rigid trucks between the years of 2006 to 2015.

Table 1.2 Deaths from crashes involving heavy vehicles by state/territory

	NSW	Vic	Qld	SA	WA	Tas	NT	ACT	Australia
Articulated trucks									
2006	69	29	37	10	14	7	2	0	168
2007	59	47	41	7	20	5	2	0	181
2008	53	23	46	10	8	6	3	0	149
2009	47	20	40	11	12	11	2	2	145
2010	51	36	29	7	15	3	1	1	143
2011	47	23	39	13	13	2	3	0	140
2012	50	30	45	10	8	3	2	0	148
2013	32	14	35	11	11	2	4	0	109
2014	31	27	32	12	6	5	0	2	115
2015	34	20	29	15	12	3	0	1	114
<i>Ave. trend change p.a.(%)</i>									
- for last 10 calendar years	-7.7	-5.3	-2.8	5.1	-5.6	-10.0	-	-	-4.8
- for last 5 calendar years	-10.6	-3.8	-8.9	4.8	-4.4	14.1	-	-	-6.4
- for last 3 calendar years	3.1	19.5	-9.0	16.8	4.4	22.5	-	-	2.3
Heavy rigid trucks									
2006	30	15	16	5	9	3	1	1	80
2007	29	26	11	5	10	1	2	1	85
2008	12	23	24	9	19	2	2	0	91
2009	24	19	13	2	18	1	0	0	77
2010	24	21	15	2	13	5	0	1	81
2011	17	20	14	6	9	2	4	0	72
2012	23	15	27	7	19	4	1	1	97
2013	24	13	13	4	15	0	0	0	69
2014	21	29	9	15	11	3	0	0	88
2015	24	20	16	3	11	5	1	0	80
<i>Ave. trend change p.a.(%)</i>									
- for last 10 calendar years	-0.8	-0.2	-1.4	2.4	0.7	-	-	-	-0.3
- for last 5 calendar years	6.2	6.8	-8.0	-6.1	-1.4	-	-	-	1.1
- for last 3 calendar years	0.0	24.0	10.9	-13.4	-14.4	-	-	-	7.7

¹ https://bitre.gov.au/publications/ongoing/files/9_HV_Annual_Report_2015III.pdf

AUSTRALIA'S STRONGEST UNION, GIVING TRANSPORT WORKERS A POWERFUL VOICE SINCE 1888

PARRAMATTA

31 Cowper Street,
Parramatta NSW 2150
PO Box 649 Parramatta NSW 2124

NEWCASTLE

5 Canavan Drive,
Beresfield NSW 2322
P: 02 4969 3900 F: 02 4962 2614

WOLLONGONG

59 Princes Highway,
West Wollongong NSW 2500
P: 02 4229 1753 F: 02 4228 5129



Transport Workers' Union of NSW

Richard Olsen State Secretary | P: 02 9912 0700 | F: 02 9891 4953 | E: info@twunsw.org.au | W: www.twunsw.org.au

ABN: 77 710 588 395

- 1.6 Older data was available with respect to fatal crashes involving articulated trucks nationally. As shown in the following table taken from the same Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development Statistical Report², total annual deaths from crashes involving articulated trucks in Australia decreased by around 45 per cent overall between 1995 and 2015.

Table 1.1 Deaths from crashes involving heavy vehicles

	<i>Articulated trucks</i>	<i>Heavy rigid trucks^a</i>	<i>Buses</i>	<i>Total^b</i>
1989	335	-	104	-
1990	263	-	46	-
1991	183	-	32	-
1992	181	-	39	-
1993	204	-	49	-
1994	179	-	40	-
1995	199	-	23	-
1996	194	-	38	-
1997	171	-	27	-
1998	179	-	29	-
1999	191	-	32	-
2000	208	-	24	-
2001	178	-	32	-
2002	200	-	36	-
2003	171	-	29	-
2004	151	108	30	281
2005	155	88	38	276
2006	168	80	19	263
2007	181	85	25	285
2008	149	91	21	258
2009	145	77	31	245
2010	143	81	21	234
2011	140	72	25	232
2012	148	97	18	255
2013	109	69	12	186
2014	115	88	20	221
2015	114	80	21	211
<i>Ave. trend change p.a. (%)</i>				
- for last 10 calendar years	-4.8	-0.3	-2.9	-3.2
- for last 5 calendar years	-6.4	1.1	-2.4	-3.3
- for last 3 calendar years	2.3	7.7	32.3	6.5

^a Only available from 2004.

^b Figures sum to more than the total because some crashes involved more than one type of heavy vehicle.

Source Australian Road Deaths Database

² https://bitre.gov.au/publications/ongoing/files/9_HV_Annual_Report_2015III.pdf

AUSTRALIA'S STRONGEST UNION, GIVING TRANSPORT WORKERS A POWERFUL VOICE SINCE 1888

PARRAMATTA

31 Cowper Street,
Parramatta NSW 2150
PO Box 649 Parramatta NSW 2124

NEWCASTLE

5 Canavan Drive,
Beresfield NSW 2322
P: 02 4969 3900 F: 02 4962 2614

WOLLONGONG

59 Princes Highway,
West Wollongong NSW 2500
P: 02 4229 1753 F: 02 4228 5129



Transport Workers' Union of NSW

Richard Olsen State Secretary | P: 02 9912 0700 | F: 02 9891 4953 | E: info@twunsw.org.au | W: www.twunsw.org.au

ABN: 77 710 588 395

- 1.7 Despite the apparent downward trend in fatalities from heavy vehicle crashes illustrated by these statistics, it is important to note that the incidence of road deaths involving heavy vehicles has remained steady as a proportion of all road-user deaths, suggesting that the above statistics are a reflection of a general improvement in road safety across the board rather than any specific improvement in the heavy vehicle sector³.
- 1.8 The fact remains that heavy vehicles are overrepresented in crash statistics compared to the number of those vehicles on the roads. In 2012, for example, approximately 20 per cent of road crash fatalities involved heavy vehicles despite those vehicles making up only 2.2 per cent of motor vehicle registrations in New South Wales for that year⁴.
- 1.9 Further, the heavy vehicle industry tragically has the highest number of fatalities and serious injuries of any industry in Australia. Workers' compensation data reveals that fatalities resulting from work in and around trucks accounted for 30 per cent of all work-related fatalities in Australia between 2003 and 2012⁵.
- 1.10 Historically, and continuing, patterns of death and serious damage to heavy vehicle drivers and the consistently disproportionately high involvement of those vehicles in fatal crashes on New South Wales roads demonstrates the significant issue road safety has long presented and continues to present for the industry and highlights the urgent need to address road safety factors impacting the heavy vehicle industry.

2 Tertiary education of heavy vehicle drivers

- 2.1 Mr Adam Crouch MP referred during proceedings to the statement contained at paragraph 3.4(3) of the TWU's submission that *"only 44.4 per cent of all drivers (including owner drivers and employee drivers) reported having undergone formal tertiary driver training after the licencing process"* and inquired whether that statistic was a percentage of the TWU's membership [Transcript, page 13].

³ Australian Road Deaths Database 2016, http://bitre.gov.au/statistics/safety/fatal_road_crash_database.aspx; Thornthwaite L, Nov. 2016, Macquarie University, 'Evaluating Approaches to Regulating WHS in the Australian Road Freight Transport Industry' Final Report to the Transport Education, Audit and Compliance Health Organisation (TEACHO), p 16.

⁴ <http://roadsafety.transport.nsw.gov.au/downloads/heavy-truck-crash-data0114.pdf>

⁵ Thornthwaite L, Nov. 2016, Macquarie University, 'Evaluating Approaches to Regulating WHS in the Australian Road Freight Transport Industry' Final Report to the Transport Education, Audit and Compliance Health Organisation (TEACHO).

AUSTRALIA'S STRONGEST UNION, GIVING TRANSPORT WORKERS A POWERFUL VOICE SINCE 1888

PARRAMATTA

31 Cowper Street,
Parramatta NSW 2150
PO Box 649 Parramatta NSW 2124

NEWCASTLE

5 Canavan Drive,
Beresfield NSW 2322
P: 02 4969 3900 F: 02 4962 2614

WOLLONGONG

59 Princes Highway,
West Wollongong NSW 2500
P: 02 4229 1753 F: 02 4228 5129



Transport Workers' Union of NSW

Richard Olsen State Secretary | P: 02 9912 0700 | F: 02 9891 4953 | E: info@twunsw.org.au | W: www.twunsw.org.au

ABN: 77 710 588 395

- 2.2 The statistic was taken from a 2016 Macquarie University report entitled 'Evaluating Approaches to Regulating WHS in the Australian Road Freight Transport Industry'⁶.
- 2.3 We confirm that the sample used to determine that statistic was not confined to a sample of TWU members, nor was TWU membership a pre-requisite for participation in the study.
- 2.4 The authors of the Macquarie University report indicate that the sample used in that study included both TWU members (who received surveys which were distributed by the TWU) and other truck drivers (who may or may not be TWU members) surveyed randomly at various truck stops and service stations in New South Wales.
- 2.5 The data for that report was gained via surveys which were administered both as a structured interview in person and online using Qualtrics software.
- 2.6 Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 160 drivers at six truck stops/service stations and two distribution centres in New South Wales in December 2015. These locations included:
 - (1) Town Truck Stop, Tarcutta;
 - (2) Mobile Service Station, Tarcutta;
 - (3) BP service stations, Marulan – both southbound and northbound;
 - (4) Caltex M4 Twin Service Station (northbound), Eastern Creek, Sydney;
 - (5) Caltex Star Mart, Hume Highway, Yass;
 - (6) Woolworths Distribution Centre, Sargents Rd, Minchinbury; and
 - (7) Coles Distribution Centre, Eastern Creek.
- 2.7 An email inviting drivers to complete the survey and 70 paper copies were also forwarded by the TWU to its members, and a further 150 paper surveys were distributed through the Victorian Transport Association.
- 2.8 The online survey was open from 17 December 2015 to 20 February 2016.

⁶ Thornthwaite L, Nov. 2016, Macquarie University, 'Evaluating Approaches to Regulating WHS in the Australian Road Freight Transport Industry' Final Report to the Transport Education, Audit and Compliance Health Organisation (TEACHO), p 113.

AUSTRALIA'S STRONGEST UNION, GIVING TRANSPORT WORKERS A POWERFUL VOICE SINCE 1888

PARRAMATTA

31 Cowper Street,
Parramatta NSW 2150
PO Box 649 Parramatta NSW 2124

NEWCASTLE

5 Canavan Drive,
Beresfield NSW 2322
P: 02 4969 3900 F: 02 4962 2614

WOLLONGONG

59 Princes Highway,
West Wollongong NSW 2500
P: 02 4229 1753 F: 02 4228 5129



Transport Workers' Union of NSW

Richard Olsen State Secretary | P: 02 9912 0700 | F: 02 9891 4953 | E: info@twunsw.org.au | W: www.twunsw.org.au

ABN: 77 710 588 395

2.9 In order to elicit responses from owner drivers, advertisements were placed in the *Owner Driver* magazine and on the Owner Driver website for the month of August/September 2016. These advertisements provided a link to an online version of the survey which was open from 1 August 2016 to 14 October 2016.

2.10 The final sample forming the basis of the statistics used in the Macquarie University report consisted of 559 survey responses completed by 118 (21 per cent) owner drivers and 440 (79 per cent) employee drivers⁷.

3 Training by vehicle manufacturers

3.1 Mr Adam Crouch MP inquired during proceedings as to the number of heavy vehicle drivers who receive vehicle education upon the purchase of their vehicle from the vehicle manufacturer [Transcript, page 13].

3.2 A further related question was raised by Mr Crouch as to whether vehicle manufacturers had been involved in any discussions regarding their potential involvement in driver education and training as part of the ongoing costs-to-coverage ratio [Transcript, page 14].

3.3 Whilst basic training dealing with the particular specifications of a vehicle may be available to drivers from vehicle manufacturers at the time of purchase, the TWU is not aware of any ongoing driver training or education currently offered by vehicle manufacturers.

3.4 Further, the TWU could not find any evidence of any discussions being held with vehicle manufacturers with respect to what role, if any, they may play in ongoing driver education and training in the heavy vehicle sector.

3.5 Whilst there may be some role for vehicle manufacturers to play in improving safety on the roads for heavy vehicle drivers, the TWU's view is that the vast majority of heavy vehicle crashes are caused because of client pressures and not due to a lack of training from heavy vehicle manufacturers.

3.6 The heavy vehicle industry is a highly competitive one, characterised by large numbers of operators, ranging in size from single owner drivers and small family businesses to national and multi-national companies.

3.7 It is also an industry with low entry barriers and one that continues to grow.

3.8 Health and safety has long been a significant issue for the industry. There is a

⁷ Ibid, at pg 13.

AUSTRALIA'S STRONGEST UNION, GIVING TRANSPORT WORKERS A POWERFUL VOICE SINCE 1888

PARRAMATTA

31 Cowper Street,
Parramatta NSW 2150
PO Box 649 Parramatta NSW 2124

NEWCASTLE

5 Canavan Drive,
Beresfield NSW 2322
P: 02 4969 3900 F: 02 4962 2614

WOLLONGONG

59 Princes Highway,
West Wollongong NSW 2500
P: 02 4229 1753 F: 02 4228 5129



Transport Workers' Union of NSW

Richard Olsen State Secretary | P: 02 9912 0700 | F: 02 9891 4953 | E: info@twunsw.org.au | W: www.twunsw.org.au

ABN: 77 710 588 395

continually and historically high rate of serious injury, illness and fatalities in the heavy vehicle industry relative to other industries.

- 3.9 Competitive pressures have resulted in an increasing disparity between rising costs and freight transport rates.
- 3.10 The intensification of competition in the industry encourages cost minimisation. Given that labour constitutes a significant proportion of variable cost, this burden tends to fall disproportionately on drivers.
- 3.11 Competitive pressures have been further exacerbated by the increasing outsourcing of freight transport to contractors and sub-contractors. Elaborate supply chains can include load owners such as suppliers (e.g. manufacturers) or customers (e.g. supermarket chains), receivers, dispatchers, consignors, brokers, freight forwarders, and any number of large fleets, small fleets and owner-drivers. Meanwhile powerful clients at the top of the supply chain have significant influence over rates paid whilst small freight transport providers at the bottom of the supply chain are left in an extremely weak position, with little or no power to negotiate rates paid or timeframes for delivery, particularly after other supply chain parties have taken their portion of the profits⁸.
- 3.12 Research has repeatedly demonstrated the material influence of economic pressures on truck driver safety. It is not surprising that truck drivers may compromise their health and safety, and that of other road users, to meet the delivery requirements of powerful clients.
- 3.13 Further, as a result of these economic pressures, industry participants ranging from large transport companies to owner drivers are less able and likely to invest in ongoing driver education and training.
- 3.14 In any event, whilst ongoing driver education and training are linked to increased safety outcomes in the heavy vehicle industry, education and training is not a silver bullet whether or not heavy vehicle manufacturers are involved. Rather, unless and until the risk factors which are endemic in the transport industry are addressed, the TWU does not believe any meaningful change to the disproportionately high number of fatalities and serious accidents involving heavy vehicles will occur.

4 Statistics re heavy vehicles involved in small crashes

- 4.1 Mr Adam Crouch MP raised during proceedings a question as to whether there existed data comparing statistics regarding heavy vehicle crashes resulting in fatalities with

⁸ Ibid at pg 9.

AUSTRALIA'S STRONGEST UNION, GIVING TRANSPORT WORKERS A POWERFUL VOICE SINCE 1888

PARRAMATTA

31 Cowper Street,
Parramatta NSW 2150
PO Box 649 Parramatta NSW 2124

NEWCASTLE

5 Canavan Drive,
Beresfield NSW 2322
P: 02 4969 3900 F: 02 4962 2614

WOLLONGONG

59 Princes Highway,
West Wollongong NSW 2500
P: 02 4229 1753 F: 02 4228 5129



Transport Workers' Union of NSW

Richard Olsen State Secretary | P: 02 9912 0700 | F: 02 9891 4953 | E: info@twunsw.org.au | W: www.twunsw.org.au

ABN: 77 710 588 395

smaller heavy vehicle crashes which do not involve a fatality and which may not be reported to police [Transcript, p 13].

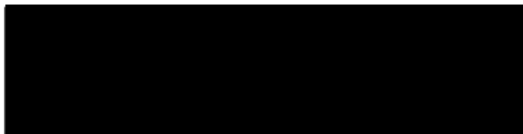
- 4.2 In preparing its submission, the TWU drew for its statistics on publicly available resources including the Transport for NSW Centre for Road Safety and the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development – Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics.
- 4.3 The TWU has not worked independently or in conjunction with the insurance industry to ascertain additional data in this respect and is unaware of any data on this particular sub-set of less serious, non-fatal crashes.

Yours faithfully,

Nick McIntosh

Assistant State Secretary

Transport Workers' Union of NSW



AUSTRALIA'S STRONGEST UNION, GIVING TRANSPORT WORKERS A POWERFUL VOICE SINCE 1888

PARRAMATTA

31 Cowper Street,
Parramatta NSW 2150
PO Box 649 Parramatta NSW 2124

NEWCASTLE

5 Canavan Drive,
Beresfield NSW 2322
P: 02 4969 3900 F: 02 4962 2614

WOLLONGONG

59 Princes Highway,
West Wollongong NSW 2500
P: 02 4229 1753 F: 02 4228 5129