



Transport Workers' Union of NSW

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Supplementary Question #1 – Transport Workers' Union of NSW

Unions are responsible for providing specialised training to workers in their respective industries. In the case of energy infrastructure jobs, unions such as the Electrical Trades Union (ETU) and the Plumbing and Pipe Trades Employees Union (PPTEU) provide training and extended practical coursework to apprentice electricians and hydrogen-exposed workers.

These are the very same workers who will be servicing and working on electric vehicles, and where applicable, hydrogen in the case of alternative-fuel source vehicles. Unions often have specialised coursework, and particular resources and partnerships relevant to the education of workers in their industries. This allows unions to deliver education to its members in a supportive and effective manner. For example, the PPTEU is heavily involved in the partnership behind the Plumbing Industry Climate Action Centre (PICAC) – an organisation that, in collaboration with the NSW Government, are working on establishing the Hydrogen Centre of Excellence in Glenwood, where world-class training will be provided to apprentices for the future.

In the case of Transport, the TWU works closely with the Transport Education Audit Compliance Health Organisation (TEACHO). TEACHO is dedicated to creating stronger career pathways and ongoing professionalisation for workers in the transport industry – a cause that the TWU has long been a vocal advocate for. TEACHO administers the *BlueCard Training Skills Passport System* (BlueCard) – a system that has been designed in response to the challenges faced by industry in incorporating national competency standards within the transport and logistics industry. The BlueCard documents the qualifications acquired by the card holder.

Currently, there is no ongoing professionalisation that is mandated for truck drivers in the transport industry, which is a shortcoming that would be best addressed ahead of widespread industry adoption of modern high-productivity vehicles. The NSW Government should consider consulting with the TWU and TEACHO on how the BlueCard may serve to incentivise further professionalisation amongst truck drivers in the transport industry, and its potential as

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a mandated standard for training in the industry. The TWU is especially enthusiastic about its future potential amongst the continuous facilitation of modern high productivity vehicles in the transport industry.

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Supplementary Question #2 – Transport Workers' Union of NSW

Heavy vehicle drivers are typically averse towards technologies that are associated (but not mutually exclusive) with electric trucks. The technologies in question include, but are not limited to, inward facing cabin cameras, seat-shaking technology and microphones.

Truck drivers are not necessarily averse to *all* telematics systems and technology. Cameras that face the road and telematics that consider external factors are generally well-received and accepted by truck drivers.

However, aversion to “invasive” telematics technology is present for numerous reasons. In the case of inward facing cameras, many drivers feel uncomfortable due to excessive surveillance. Anecdotally, the TWU hears from its members that their management advises that such technologies do not monitor conversations or audio, but truck drivers do not agree with this based on certain interactions they have had with their management. Furthermore, there have been instances where transport operators have installed cabin telematics in their vehicles overnight, without consulting its workers – in one such instance, a duly elected Health and Safety Representative (HSR) issued a direction to other workers to cease unsafe work over the sudden, unannounced appearance of telematics technology in their vehicles. In this case, the HSR called upon the Regulator to send an inspector, who then determined that the HSR was completely justified in their direction, and that the company had failed to perform their duties.

There exist on-board systems that are claimed to combat fatigue, such as seat-shaking technology that is purposed to physically alert the driver if it senses certain elements of fatigue or inattention. Anecdotally, some TWU members find this to be “too much”, or even “abrupt” in its methodology. However, the primary issue with such technology is that it does not address the root cause of fatigue – it is hardly analogous to even a band-aid.

The root cause of fatigue is the downward economic pressure faced by truck drivers in the transport industry. It is the razor-thin margins that truck drivers have been subject to historically,

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as price-takers, that have an overarching and deadly contribution to safety outcomes on our roads. Shaking the driver's seat will not change this, and it will not influence broader on-road behaviour and the need to work harder, faster and for longer to fulfill the requirements of their contracts and to simply make ends meet. In failing to address the root cause of the problem, truck drivers struggle to perceive invasive telematics as a good-faith measure in the pursuit of safety, particularly when there is a lack of transparency from some transport operators.

The TWU argues that this is not an issue of attitude on part of truck drivers, but rather that invasive telematics do not have a place in trucks, and that there should be a limit on what can and can't be monitored. In addition to on-road measures and other "practical" means, anti-fatigue measures should be concentrated at a policy level, where the power of wealthy clients at the head of supply chains can be influenced.

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