

**Submission
No 29**

INQUIRY INTO HEAVY VEHICLE SAFETY AND USE OF TECHNOLOGY TO IMPROVE ROAD SAFETY

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TRUCKRIGHT ABN 17426245866

TRUCKRIGHT Industry Vehicle **(TIV) 2018.**

Rod Hannifey, Road Transport and Road Safety Advocate, TIV Driver and Operator.

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TRUCKRIGHT Awarded Highly Commended, 3M ACRS Diamond Road Safety Awards 2015.

Finalist 3M ACRS Diamond Road Safety Awards 2016, Green Reflector Marking Informal Truck Bays.

Awarded Churchill Fellowship 2016.

Submission to NSW Staysafe Committee 2018.

Inquiry into heavy vehicle safety and use of technology to improve road safety

- a) **The management of heavy vehicle driver fatigue and other safety risks through in-vehicle technologies, including benefits, costs, availability and adoption by industry**

The management of heavy vehicle driver fatigue requires more than just technology. It requires suitable and sufficient rest areas that will allow a driver the opportunity to get good quality sleep. There must be separation available from other noisy vehicles and there must be shade and both of these requirements are severely lacking in many truck rest areas. Without this, any technology telling a driver he is tired or must take a break will be useless if there is nowhere for him to do so. Similarly, there needs to be enough flexibility for a driver to manage his or her fatigue, because simply being told by a logbook or EWD that they must stop, is not always the safest way to manage fatigue.

- b) **The development of connected and automated vehicle technologies specific for the heavy vehicle industry and opportunities for further development in this space**

This I agree can provide improved safety into the future and should be followed and encouraged.

- c) **The role of compliance and enforcement in maintaining the safety of heavy vehicles on our roads**

I fear the current regime of blitzs and sometimes overzealous enforcement of trucks, tends to do two things badly. It gives the public the impression that all truck drivers are bad, yet we are

responsible for a very small minority of traffic fatalities and whilst we are over represented in those numbers, too often we are deemed guilty before any crash examination has taken place and the kilometres we travel are never recognised in those figures. If a car driver does 20,000 per year and a truck driver 200,000, then our level of exposure to road incidents is TEN TIMES that of the average motorist, yet this is never recognised or taken into account, when statistics are used against us.

Secondly the penalties often do not reflect the minor nature of the offence. For example, a driver who moves across the white edge line near a Safe-T-Cam site to avoid roadkill or an oncoming car (and he cannot avoid the camera unless he is off the road completely) can incur a \$1200 fine and 4 demerit points. Can you please tell me if you can justify this?

I absolutely agree we need rules and we need enforcement, but not to the point that a driver can get a fine for 15 minutes overtime to access a roadhouse, parking bay, toilet or rest area that means he cannot feed his family or pay his bills. I would seek the committees fair and reasonable support for a review of some of the worst and least safety affecting penalties.

d) Heavy vehicle safety strategies implemented in other jurisdictions, both domestically and internationally

There is no doubt that many in our industry see the WA Fatigue rules as fairer and more flexible and this should be looked at in the context of, does it provide a better balance to allow drivers to safely manage their fatigue. I aim to look at overseas issues later this year as part of a Churchill Fellowship trip and would be happy to report back.

e) The road toll during the period commencing 1 December 2017 through to 31 January 2018.

I can only say again, that heavy vehicle drivers do not go to work to have crashes and we hope that others do not, yet we have done nothing over the last 20 years to teach younger drivers about sharing the road with trucks and I would again seek the committees help to rectify this for the future safety of all on the road.

I have spent the last 19 years working on the marking of informal truck bays with now green reflectors, a simple, cheap and effective road safety initiative and only now, due to sheer belligerence on my part, is the Newell Highway completely covered by this. If it takes that long to convince people that we need more rest areas, even if only a bit of dirt, what does that say for how we treat truck drivers?

In conclusion, I would like to offer any members of the committee a trip with me in the TRUCKRIGHT Industry Vehicle to see and feel things from a truck drivers perspective, if this will help you to better understand our issues. I would also ask that consideration be given to support of a national road standard to see our roads, my workplace, provide me with safety and surety instead of the uneven and inconsistent roads available in some places and that fatigue management requires flexibility and suitable and sufficient rest areas, or nothing else will matter. Thank you, Rod Hannifey. TRUCKRIGHT.

ROD HANNIFEY

Road Transport and Road Safety Advocate

Graduate Certificate, Road Safety, QUT. Winner: Queensland Road Safety Awards 2005 for "Blue Reflector Marking of Informal Truck Rest Areas". Phone: [REDACTED]

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Australian Trucking Association National Professional Driver of the Year 2001.

Columnist, Owner Driver and Caravan World Magazines.

Overnight Express spot 0120 Tuesday Mornings on the CBAA Network.

Solving the Truck Rest Area Problem. Rollout of Blue Reflector Marking of Informal Truck Rest Areas and Use of Stockpile Sites and Old Roads as Truck Rest Areas as an interim measure.

It is widely agreed that there are not enough truck rest areas and any truck driver on any road knows the difficulty of finding a suitable spot when he is tired, let alone getting into some bays which are often full on major routes. The Blue Reflector Marking of Informal Truck Rest Areas is one initiative aimed at providing a short term interim improvement to this situation, as all parties are aware of the lack of funding available for immediate rectification of the issue through construction of sufficient rest areas to alleviate this problem entirely. Also this cannot be done overnight, with planning and environmental issues on top of the funding shortfall.

The Blue Reflector Marking of Informal Truck Rest Areas is a simple, cheap and effective way to mark informal sites and won the Industry Award at the Queensland Road Safety Awards 2005. As per the recommendation from the National Road Safety Inquiry, 2004, "Eyes on the Road Ahead", I believe there should be an immediate rollout of this simple, cheap and effective road safety initiative.

Recommendation 31 114

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government request the Australian Transport Council to:

- devise standards for truck rest areas;
- establish a program of works based on those standards; and
- immediately commence a program for establishing temporary truck rest areas based on interim measures such as standardised coloured reflector stops.

The Federal Government is yet to respond to any of the recommendations from this inquiry and has let down all motorists, truck drivers included and could be said to be responsible for some road deaths and injuries, in launching an inquiry and then doing nothing.

There are also other ideas worth pursuing and which will cost little. There are many roadside stockpile sites which are only used for a short period each year or only every second or third year whilst resurfacing work is carried out in that area. These sites are mostly hardstand, having had machinery using them and also are again often left with spoils or unused stone. This stone is left on site for years and leaves roadsides looking untidy and unkempt. Another overlooked bonus of these sites is that they sometimes have suitable shade for trucks, as they have been cleared and used up to a treeline and shade is a major deficiency of current truck rest areas and rest area designs across Australia.

I believe that with some forward planning of any new stockpile sites so that they are both suitably placed for use of road crews, but also for use by truckdrivers when such roadworks are not being undertaken, that these sites could be much better utilised and further supplement current truck rest areas to provide more additional rest areas at very little cost. Older sites which are no longer required, which have been replaced by another site and or, which are not required for the next six to twelve months, could be targeted first. This could be another interim measure until such properly designed and funded rest areas were constructed.

For current stockpile sites, some clean up and minor works to entry and or exit areas may be required and not all sites will be suitable for trucks, either by size constraints, drainage issues or line of site for safe entry and or exit. Blue Reflectors could be used for marking these sites, thus again reducing costs of installing permanent signage and the Blue Reflectors removed when the site is in use for road resurfacing. This is another benefit of the simplicity of the Blue Reflector strategy.

Old roads are another avenue of quickly addressing the shortage of truck rest areas. When a new alignment is built there is often the original road left either unused or it is ripped up and again in older areas, these roads can be much closer to trees and shade than current road design allows. Not all will be suitable

for truck rest areas due to bridges or other issues, but there are dozens of these sites across Australia that with little cost and effort could be utilised for interim truck rest area sites and some in time, of both the stockpile and old road sites, may be suitable for upgrading to permanent truck rest area sites as funding is made available and if they prove popular and become well used. Building new sites that do not suit schedules or provide suitable facilities such as shade, will see money wasted and neither truckies nor authorities can afford this.

Simple cheap marking, eg Blue Reflectors will keep costs down, but old roads could be more permanently marked. Some of these old roads have been utilised in some areas, but with the current shortage more need to be made available. Both of these types of sites, where suitable, are all ready used by some drivers, (particularly those in frig vans and stockcrates where noise etc can affect other drivers) who travel the same road and who have some known marker point for night time location. It is the driver who is tired, who does not know the road or where the next parking bay is, that needs some marking of these sites to allow them to use such sites when they are fatigued. If you do not know a site is useable, you are reluctant to drive into it, let alone in a b-double in case you then cannot get out etc and this applies to marked sites as well as unmarked.

The freight task in Australia is increasing and road transport will take up much of this. With increasing awareness of duty of care, both of employers and also road authorities and the road safety effects of driving when fatigued more than being just tired drivers, but a contributing factor in many road crashes and deaths, something must be done now!

Any major highway could be audited and a plan drawn up filling in any large gaps with one or other of the suggestions above, then any minor work carried out and the rest area problem fixed in the short term, in a matter of weeks or at most months, not years. There must be some truckdriver input into sites chosen etc. No offence is meant to any road authority personnel here, but they do not have to use these sites and our current situation, whilst not of their doing, has carried on for far too long without resolution and too many have not made it to the next official rest area. I offer my services to assist in this effort, but whoever is chosen or available will need to be paid for their efforts and again, if one life or crash is prevented by this initiative, every other one saved or prevented is at relatively no cost. The cost benefit ratio of this initiative could be one of the highest available in the road safety area.

The next step then is better design of rest areas to suit both cars and trucks together, where currently toilets and tables and chairs are not provided for truckies to encourage them to get out of the truck in an area conducive to same. Car sites with all these facilities are all empty at night with "NO TRUCKS" signs and truckies have no little or no facilities available. Better utilisation of these sites by designing for use of both trucks and cars, will give better return on cost with less outlay in building separate sites for cars and trucks.

I ask for your commitment to addressing this issue with all or any of the three suggestions offered here and commit to do all I can to assist and participate in such efforts. This is not a long term fix, only more suitably designed and constructed truck rest areas will fix the problem once and for all, but these suggestions can fix the problem in the short term and save lives and money. I will be contacting every state road authority and sending this letter to industry publications for support. Would you please respond at your earliest convenience?

Thank you, Rod Hannifey, Road Transport and Road Safety Advocate.

ROD HANNIFEY

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Green REFLECTOR MARKING OF INFORMAL TRUCK BAYS.

It is generally recognised that there are insufficient truck rest areas and insufficient money available to fix the problem immediately. There are many informal spots used by truck drivers where there is either not enough capacity in current truck bays, or where the spacing, location and or lack of facilities, particularly shade in the daytime, sees trucks pulling up on wide road shoulders etc for legal breaks, load checking and of course sleep.

A driver who travels a road each night or regularly, most often knows where these informal spots are and can locate and use them if needed at night to allow them to manage their fatigue. A driver who travels many roads or who is all ready fatigued may not know where these informal sites are and can end up being forced to drive on to a properly signed and recognised bay, which may be 10 minutes, but could be an hour away, especially when many formal sites are not signed more than 2 kilometres in advance. This is changing with signs showing the next 3 rest areas, but is no good to you if you need a site now.

Because such informal sites are not normally marked in any way and are too easily passed before they can be recognised as a safe place to stop, regular black skidmarks often attest to this problem, where a truck has had to brake savagely to attempt to access such a site, seen at the last second and where to go on is not the best or safest thing to do.

In 2012 following continuing representations to Vicroads and having the marking of informal truck bays included in their rest area strategy document, I was told that following the major bushfires, blue would not be a suitable colour and they suggested green. Since that time a trial has been conducted in Queensland by the Main Roads office at Warwick and green was deemed to be as effective and so towards having this as a national program, we have moved to green reflectors.

Marking of these informal sites with Blue Reflectors (which was the usual colour used for Truck Rest Area signage) on guide posts, was initially trialled on the Newell Highway starting in December 1999 from Parkes to Peak Hill and then expanded on to Gilgandra in April 2000. Sites which were all ready seen to be used, were checked and those suitable were chosen and marked by RTA staff

with due regard to line of site for both safe entry and exit into traffic, of large trucks.

Subject to the spacing of current guideposts, the set up consists of fitting three now, green reflectors (with a reflector spacing between the normal red reflector and each of the green ones) to a guide post approximately 300 to 400 metres from the chosen site, two green reflectors on the next or subsequent guidepost (minimum spacing is to be 100 metres) and a single green reflector to the last guidepost immediately prior or adjacent to, the informal truck rest area. The three green reflectors together are easily seen from 300 to 400 metres away on low beam and visible well in excess of 500 metres on high beam, giving a minimum of 600 metres warning of the site. In using guideposts which are all ready in place, the only cost is the green reflectors and fitting of same.

I am still in contact with all other states and am ever hopeful of further expansion of this road safety initiative. Cars can, if needed often just pull up on a bit of dirt, but loaded b-doubles and road trains, need more room than this to park safely and there is no denying that fatigue can happen at any time and must be managed safely, both for the driver and for other road users. Awareness of the marking of these informal bays will not be aimed at the general public so as not to see these places used by cars. Using Green Reflectors for marking of informal bays is intended to be an interim measure until suitable and sufficient formal truck rest areas are funded and built throughout Australia.

If only one fatigue truck crash is prevented, the cost of installing and maintaining Green Reflector Marking of Informal Truck Rest Areas across Australia will be worthwhile and every subsequent fatigue crash prevention, will be a major road safety benefit with the possible saving of lives.

Blue Reflector Marking of Informal Truck Rest Areas was entered into the Queensland Road Safety Awards 2005 and won the Industry Category. The Blue Reflector Marking of Informal Truck Rest Areas was also included in my written and oral submissions to the House of Representatives National Inquiry into Road Safety, Eyes on the Road Ahead, June 2004.

As per the recommendation below it was adopted and the inquiry suggested an immediate roll out of this road safety initiative.

Recommendation 31114

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government request the Australian Transport Council to:

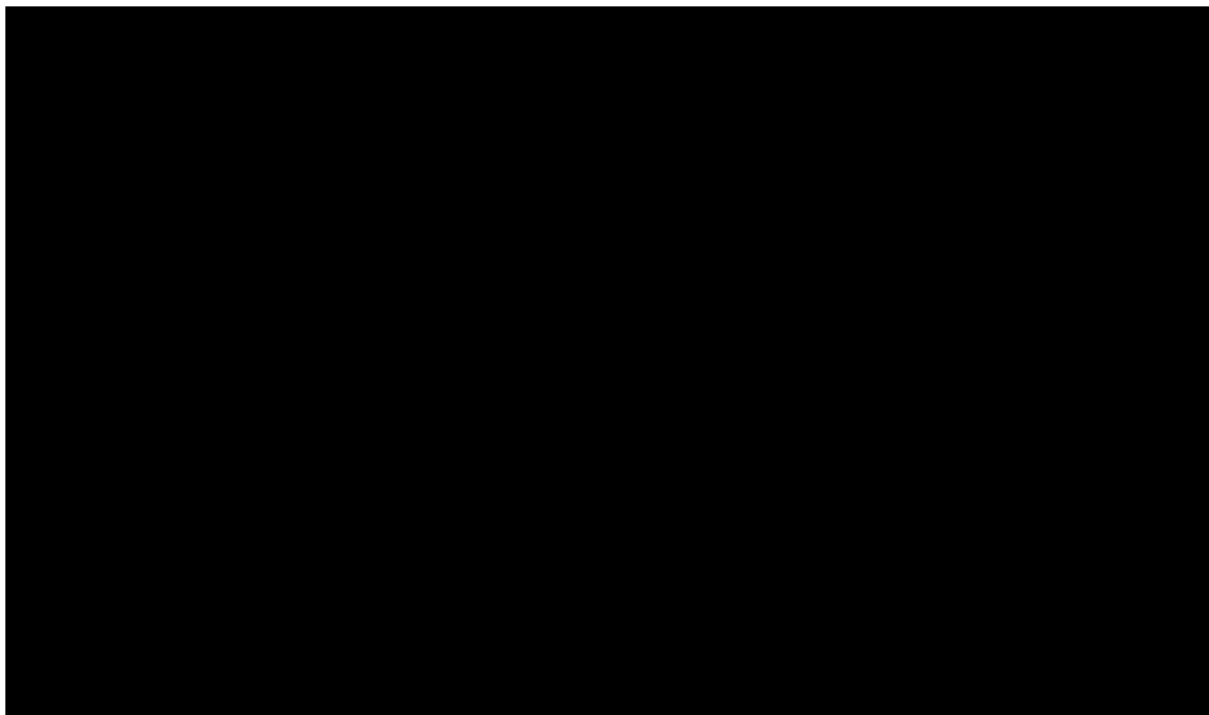
- devise standards for truck rest areas;
- establish a program of works based on those standards; and
- immediately commence a program for establishing temporary truck rest areas based on interim measures such as standardised coloured reflector stops.

The following are emails of support for the Blue Reflectors.

1. NTI sent this email in support and it was printed in Owner Driver Magazine. Refer 'Look Out for Blue Reflectors' O/D February 8th 2002.

In liaison with Rod Hannifey, NTI's risk management unit - NTI Resources has reviewed the potential safety outcomes relating to this initiative. NTI strongly supports the push to extend the trial to major highways and commends Hannifey for his commitment to driver safety. This initiative will undoubtedly save lives.

Owen Driscoll NTI National Development Manager – Transport



Both RMS NSW and TMR Queensland, now have formal guidelines for the marking of green reflector, informal truck bays.

The Newell Highway from Melbourne to Brisbane, both via the Olympic Way through Wagga Wagga and Route 39 through Jerilderie and both the Cunningham and Gore Highways into Brisbane, is very nearly completed with green reflectors. My aim is to have this as the first highway completely covered by green reflectors by the end of this year.

I will continue to seek this initiative be rolled out until such times as there are suitable and sufficient truck rest areas across Australia. Fifteen years on I am still pushing to see this across Australia. As of this year, the Newell Highway is finally nearly done from end to end and some funding has been won to do six highways in the North West of NSW.

Thank you, Rod Hannifey.

Addendum. The funding awarded to NSW in the 5th Heavy Vehicle Safety Fundings was for green reflector sites on the Kidman Way (Cobar to Moree),

Kamillaroi Hwy (Bourke to Narrabri), Gwydir Hwy (Walgett to Moree) and Mitchell Hwy (Nyngan to Barrington) and was due to be completed in late 2017. Vicroads was awarded funding in the 6th round, but I am still to hear from them that anything has been done. I gained funding from the NHVR in the 7th round for completion of the Newell and designing and putting up posters along the Newell. The markings are done, except for any recent post strikes or damage and I am currently working on the posters for distribution in the first half of 2018.