

**Submission
No 12**

**INQUIRY INTO PRESSURES ON HEAVY VEHICLE
DRIVERS AND THEIR IMPACT IN NEW SOUTH WALES**

Organisation: Australian National

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Pressures on heavy vehicle drivers and their impact in New South Wales

Submission to the Parliamentary Committee

As a multi mode transport operation, I can see some similarities that could make the road transport sector safer without more regulation, and in fact less by creating “buffer zones” that will allow drivers to take evasive action to prevent delays and unsafe practices.

The one main feature that I see is the ongoing logbook issues where it has been confirmed by a number of drivers that they have been fined for a simple spelling mistake, which has absolutely nothing to do with road safety, this MUST be stopped immediately. None of us are spelling geniuses, and simply over zealous actions that do nothing to assist with good relations between operators, drivers and officers.

Rest areas are vital for driver safety of which any existing and recently built must be maintained to an acceptable health standard. Health and hygiene are very important factors in reducing fatigue in long haul drivers. With this in mind, there must be a regulated “buffer zone” of up to 1 hour allowed on the log book if a driver finds him or herself stuck between rest areas and out of driving hours. This will allow drivers not to become stressed trying to find a suitable rest area when they are close to or run out of driving hours.

Pressures by Companies to force drivers to make a destination by a certain time must be legislated as illegal particularly when it is the loading Company’s fault loading has taken overtime and the driver departs later than scheduled, their working time should be legislated to start when the truck is loaded and paperwork completed. The same with time slots at distribution centres, when a time slot is booked and the unloading Company is more than 30mins overtime, then a financial penalty paid as part of the drivers wage has to be legislated for time waiting. A Government legislated regulation to the loading and unloading Companies would see time frames done near to time. This is done in the Rail Industry and there is no reason it cannot be applied equally to the Road Sector.

Overheight vehicles: the existing penalties can remain IF... The warning signs and lights need to be moved further back near a safe area to pull over. A lot of the delays are caused by the warning lights too close to say a tunnel entrance, and no safe area to pull off the road and allow the normal traffic to keep flowing, the offending truck can only stop blocking the main lanes thus causing big delays. Should the driver be aware of their height?, yes of course and there is no excuse for driving past the warning lights particularly if they are of a greater distance together with an immediate pull off area OR close to an exit road where the driver can then take an alternative route, or both. This would solve a lot of unnecessary

delays. If the driver then ignores the warning lights, then absolutely they must answer to the full force of the law.

Thankyou for your time to receive this submission.

Paul Crollick
General Manager

