MEDIA RELEASE

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TRUCKING INDUSTRY SLASHES GREENHOUSE EMISSIONS

- **New report shows the industry's greenhouse gas emissions fell 35 per cent per billion tonne kilometres between 1990 and 2011.**
- **Particulate emissions from new engines fell 92 per cent between 1996 and 2010.**
- **Further environmental gains possible with larger trucks, action on aerodynamics and tyres.**

The trucking industry's greenhouse gas emissions have fallen by 35 per cent per billion tonne kilometres since 1990, the Chairman of the Australian Trucking Association, David Simon, said today.

Mr Simon was releasing a Centre for International Economics report on the environmental credentials of the trucking industry. The report was commissioned by the ATA to look at the industry's track record on the environment and how it could reduce its environmental impact even further. It was funded by the ATA Trust.

Greenhouse gas emissions

Mr Simon said the trucking industry's striking improvement in emissions performance was due to the increased use of larger truck combinations such as B-doubles and advances in engine technology.

"It takes 77 three-axle rigid trucks to move a thousand tonnes of freight, but only 26 B-doubles. In moving the freight, these 26 B-doubles would produce 25 per cent less greenhouse gas emissions than the vast fleet of smaller trucks needed to do the job.

"On an industry wide scale, using larger, safer truck combinations reduces the congestion on the roads and reduces greenhouse gas emissions – as the industry has shown over the last twenty years," Mr Simon said.

Nitrogen oxides and particulates

"The nitrogen oxide and particulate matter emissions from new trucks and engines are also falling dramatically.

"The most recent design rules for truck diesel engines, introduced in 2010, require a 75 per cent reduction in nitrogen oxide emissions compared to trucks manufactured in 1996, and a 92 per cent reduction in particulates," Mr Simon said.

"Trucking businesses have made an enormous investment in upgrading their fleets, with the newest trucks working the long interstate routes and demanding urban tasks. As it continues to develop its environmental policies, the Government will need to recognise the investment the industry has made in meeting Australia's tightening emission standards."

The report contrasts the trucking industry's performance with the rail industry, which is not subject to emission controls.

Australia's freight locomotives are, on average, 36 years old and some use diesel engines up to 40 years old. Compared to leading edge locomotive technology used in the United States, these 40 year old locomotive engines are estimated to emit:

- more than six times the level of carbon monoxide;
- about four times the level of particulates;
- double the nitrogen oxides; and
- 20 to 30 per cent more carbon dioxide per tonne kilometre.

"Many policymakers talk about the environmental benefits of increasing the use of rail. Their first step should be to impose emission standards on the diesel engines used in railway locomotives," Mr Simon said.

Future environmental gains

The report shows the industry could achieve further environmental gains by continuing its move towards using larger, more efficient and safer trucks. The main impediments to getting these environmental gains are regulatory, such as access issues and high registration charges, but the potential gains are immense.

"By switching to B-triples, a single trucking operator with a fleet of 60 B-doubles and semitrailers on inter-capital routes would be able to save 2 million litres of diesel a year and reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 5,900 tonnes," Mr Simon said.

"The report also argues that further research into the aerodynamic performance of trucks and tyre resistance could provide some of the greatest improvements in fuel efficiency across the truck fleet.

"Aerodynamic drag and tyre resistance account for between 75 and 85 per cent of the total engine power use in semitrailers and B-doubles, so any gains in this area would deliver reductions in fuel use, fuel costs and emissions. There will also need to be regulatory changes so we can get new technologies like ultra-wide single tyres on the road.

"The report also examines the role of alternative fuels, and the importance of eco-drive training as a low cost way that businesses can achieve fuel efficiency improvements of up to 10 per cent," Mr Simon said.

Possible introduction of a carbon tax

The report warns that increases in fuel prices due to the introduction of a carbon tax would pose a major challenge for transport operators, especially if regulatory restrictions stop them from responding in the most efficient way.

"The main way operators can reduce their fuel consumption and carbon emissions is to use larger, safer trucks. The Government is yet to announce the details of its plan, but it's clear from the report that the cost of a carbon tax on the trucking industry will be much greater if the road transport regulations or the charging system prevent operators from using the most fuel-efficient trucks for the job," Mr Simon said.

The full report is available at www.atatruck.net.au/publications.html

About the ATA: The Australian Trucking Association is the peak body that represents the trucking industry. Its members include state and sector trucking associations, major logistics companies and operators and suppliers with leading expertise in truck technology.

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