

MEDIA RELEASE



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FORREST ACT 2603
Tel: (02) 6253 6900
www.truck.net.au

ATA WELCOMES STRONG APPROACH TO HEAVY VEHICLE MAINTENANCE LAWS

The Australian Trucking Association (ATA) has welcomed the decision by transport ministers today to make trucking businesses and their executives legally accountable for heavy vehicle maintenance.

The ATA has been lobbying for the extension of these 'chain of responsibility' laws since 2013.

ATA Chief Executive Officer Christopher Melham said the decision would have strong safety outcomes for the industry and the community.

"Maintenance levels are generally very good in our industry. As operators, we put a great deal of effort into making sure our equipment is safe," Mr Melham said.

"However, some businesses may feel pressured to skimp on maintenance in order to save money and time.

"At present, company directors and executives can be held to account under the chain of responsibility legislation if their business does not take all reasonable steps to prevent fatigue and speed breaches. But there are no similar requirements for maintenance.

"Extending the chain of responsibility concept to heavy vehicle maintenance will compel businesses and their senior managers to take all reasonable steps to make sure maintenance staff can do their jobs properly – for example, by delivering adequate budgets, resources and training.

"The ATA has been campaigning to have the chain of responsibility concept extended to maintenance since 2013. We applaud this decision by Australia's transport and infrastructure ministers.

"We also welcome the continued progress on developing a new, national forward road expenditure plan and heavy vehicle road asset service standards, as part of the ongoing heavy vehicle road reform program.

"Before our industry can even consider the long-discussed idea of direct road pricing, it's essential that governments know what they own. They must have forward expenditure plans that we can rely on, and must have service standards so the infrastructure they expect us to buy is fit for purpose."

Media contact:

Kathleen Horne

02 6253 6900 / 0409 524 120