



2025

Election Policy Platform



© Australian Trucking Association 2025.

This work is copyright. Apart from uses permitted under the Copyright Act 1968, no part may be reproduced by any process without prior written permission from the ATA. Requests and inquiries concerning reproduction and rights should be addressed to the Communications Manager, Australian Trucking Association, Level 3, 25 National Circuit, Forrest ACT 2603 or ata@truck.net.au.

Introduction

The Australian Trucking Association (ATA) and our 11 industry association members collectively represent the 60,000 trucking businesses and 200,000 people working in the road freight sector.



Mark Parry
Chair

We are an essential industry, supporting Australians through fires, floods, cyclones and the global pandemic. In 2023-24, we delivered almost 250 billion tonne kilometres of road freight to homes, businesses, ports and communities.

Yet we face a challenging and uncertain future.

Road safety has taken a backwards step. After decades of incremental improvement, truck related road deaths spiked in 2022 and remain too high. Road freight productivity is stagnant, even despite its importance to entire supply chains.

While freight demand continues to increase, we are under immense pressure to reduce our carbon emissions. We are struggling to replace our aging workforce. Our outdated regulations cannot keep up with rapidly changing technology. And our road infrastructure is no longer fit for purpose.

The 2025 federal election is an opportunity to reassess our national road freight policy settings.

The proposals contained in this ATA election platform are aimed at delivering a safer, cleaner and fairer road freight sector. This can be achieved via ongoing and targeted investments in infrastructure, people and equipment, and by ensuring that regulations sensibly match and manage risk.

We must also recognise that safely facilitated productivity improvements are an essential part of advancing living standards. The ATA's proposals will not only help reduce the cost of living for everyone in Australia; they will enhance our international competitiveness.

The ATA has developed these proposals in close cooperation with our industry and members. We welcome any opportunity to collaborate with the next Australian Government, whoever that may be, to facilitate an efficient road freight sector that supports a thriving national economy.

Boosting truck safety

The trucking industry's safety has improved markedly over the decades, but the number of crashes will remain unacceptable until everyone who uses our roads gets home safely every day.

The ATA is lobbying state and territory governments to strengthen truck driver licensing. The training and infrastructure initiatives in this plan will also improve safety.

The next Australian Government should also—

- 1.** Resource the Australian Transport Safety Bureau (ATSB) to undertake **no-blame safety investigations into crashes involving trucks** where there are lessons to be learned.
- 2.** Work with the states to **improve safety at level crossings** that do not have boom gates or lights, including by requiring trains to have flashing beacons and side lights.
- 3.** Build **new and upgraded truck rest areas** under the \$140 million Heavy Vehicle Rest Area initiative over five years rather ten years. Better truck rest areas would improve safety and encourage more people to work in the industry.



Reducing the trucking industry's emissions

The science is in. The world's greenhouse gas emissions are changing the climate, and a global effort is needed to reduce emissions.

The technology needed to reduce freight emissions to zero does not exist, but the government can put in place measures that will make a difference.

That's why the next Australian Government should—

4. Encourage new truck purchasers to buy electric with a **voucher scheme covering half the price gap between comparable electric and conventional truck models**. The incentive would be available through dealerships to any truck purchaser, including small business buyers.
5. Offer incentives to **produce enough renewable diesel domestically** to meet 5 per cent of Australia's diesel needs before the end of the 2030s. Renewable diesel can be used to reduce emissions from trucking operations that cannot be electrified.
6. **Invest \$5 billion over ten years in targeted road upgrades** to support high productivity and zero and low tailpipe emission trucks, as well as making the road network more resilient through flood proofing and the creation of alternative routes.
7. **Repeal mandatory climate reporting**, which will burden hundreds of medium and large trucking businesses. It is essential to track Australia's greenhouse gas emissions, but the mandatory reporting requirement could be replaced with an ABS survey.



Building our workforce

Australia faces a shortage of truck drivers.

Truck driving is one of the top five occupations with a skill shortage; more than 26,000 positions are unfilled. There is no Australian Government support for people who want to train as a truck driver, even though driving operations is eligible to be a two-year apprenticeship.

The next Australian Government should change this and—

- 8.** Provide financial support to apprentices undertaking driving operations apprenticeships and their employers. Apprentices should receive **\$5,000 in support** over their two year apprenticeship. Employers should receive **\$2,000 after six months and a further \$3,000 after twelve months.**
- 9.** Pay a **completion bonus of \$1,500** to drivers who complete one of the short driver training courses run by registered training organisations and supported by state governments, trucking industry associations or major companies. These courses go beyond getting a licence to include other skills that drivers need to succeed. The driver's first employer should receive a **\$1,500 hiring bonus.**
- 10.** Launch a **national skills passport** to make it easier for drivers and other workers to demonstrate their skills and qualifications. A skills passport would also help businesses hire new staff with confidence.
- 11.** Add **articulated truck drivers and tanker drivers to the skilled occupation list** for migration to Australia, after overseas driver licensing is fixed.

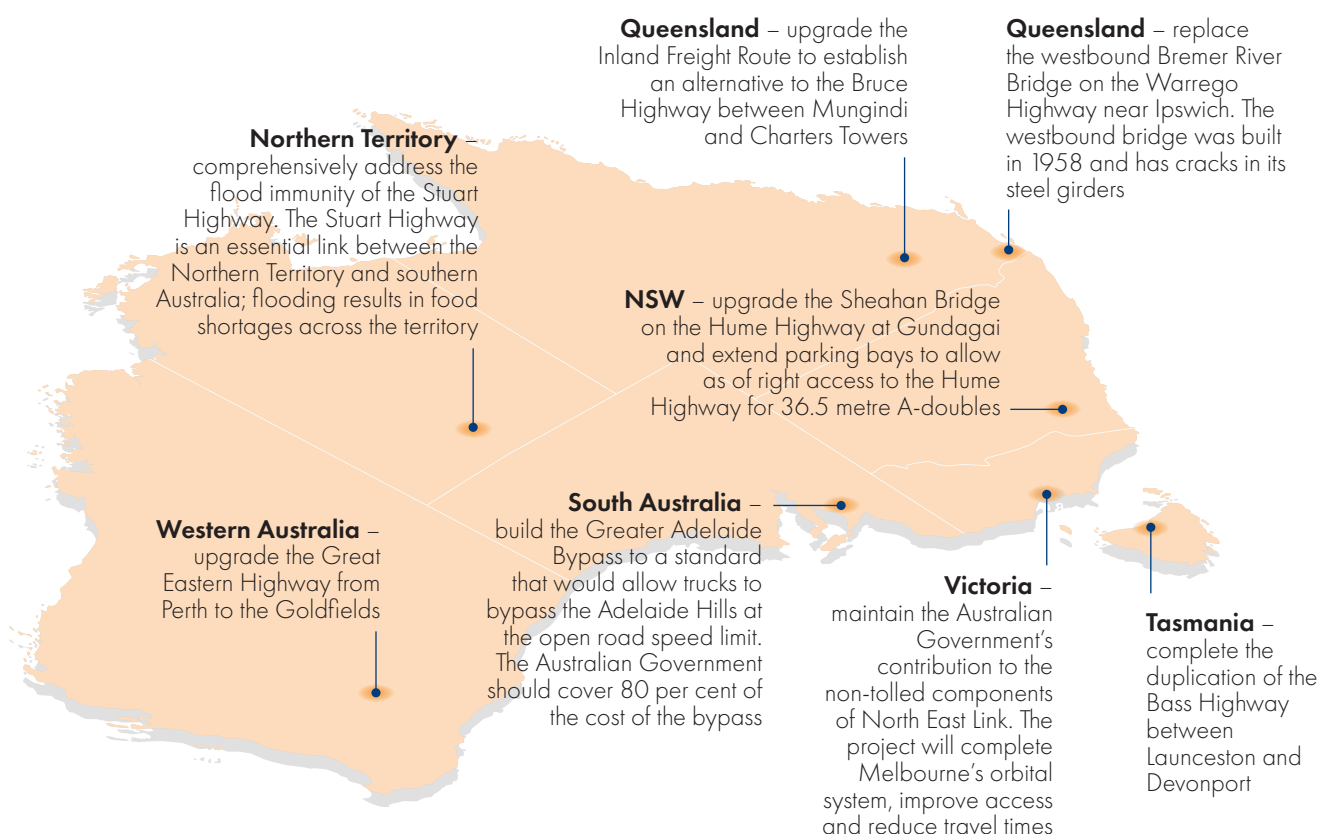


Building better roads – and paying for them fairly

The Australian Government will spend more than \$120 billion on land transport infrastructure over ten years, but the investments do not always add to our productivity. The system focuses on new projects rather than basic maintenance; fuel tax collections are declining as a share of total revenue as more people buy electric vehicles.

The next Australian Government should—

- 12. Fund the following road projects** to boost the industry’s productivity and the resilience of the road network—



- 13. Develop minimum national service and maintenance standards** for the National Land Transport Network and reallocate funding to ensure these critical freight roads are maintained properly.
- 14. Develop a distance-based road user charging system for electric vehicles**, to come into force once electric vehicles make up 30 per cent of new vehicle sales. The distance-based system should not replace the existing registration and fuel-based charging system for diesel heavy vehicles, but the operators of these vehicles should be able to opt in.



Authorised by Mathew Munro, Australian Trucking Association,
25 National Circuit, Canberra.