



Safe Rates – Unworkable, Un-costed and Unnecessary

'Safe Rates' legislation will be introduced into the House of Representatives this week despite the fact it has not been demonstrated it can deliver improved safety outcomes across the freight logistics industry, according to the Australian Logistics Council (ALC).

"Safety is industry's top priority and all our members are deeply committed to safety in their own organisations, and that of their customers and suppliers," said ALC Managing Director, Michael Kilgariff.

"However, the proposed Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal is an unnecessary extra layer of regulation when there are already a range of regulatory and non-regulatory schemes in place that adequately deal with driver safety.

"ALC calls on all stakeholders to focus on some key facts that have been overlooked in this debate and which require serious consideration before this legislation is introduced into the parliament.

"A clearer statement is required on why further statutory intervention is needed and how it will deliver benefits not already likely to be achieved by other national and comprehensive laws dealing with safety.

"These include the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (which will include national Chain of Responsibility legislation) and the National Work Health & Safety Act, which will impose a duty on transport and logistics participants to eliminate or minimise, so far as is reasonably practicable, health and safety risks.

"Government should concentrate less on imposing another layer of regulation in the form of pay setting, which will be unworkable, is un-costed and ultimately unnecessary.

"Rather, it should focus on ways to improve driver safety by working with industry on initiatives that can be implemented now and will have an immediate positive safety impact, such as encouraging the adoption of industry safety codes and new on-board safety technologies.

"A Regulatory Impact Statement and Cost Benefit Analysis must also be provided that articulates the cost to industry involved in implementing the new scheme and why current statutory schemes are insufficient to protect worker safety."

Mr Kilgariff said an unintended consequence of the legislation is that it would erode the ability of trained safety experts within transport organisations to manage their safety affairs in a way that is efficient, safe and strategically appropriate.

"ALC queries how the new scheme can be implemented in practice, when millions of trips are carried out each year across countless routes; in a myriad of conditions and in an array of vehicles carrying so many different loads," he said.

"Given these supply chain complexities, industry requires greater certainty about how 'Safe Rates' will operate in the real world."

Mr Kilgariff said it was important for all stakeholders to remain focussed on the facts of the 'Safe Rates' debate and to not be distracted by an emotive campaign being run by the Transport Workers Union.

"'Safe Rates' as articulated by the TWU is little more than a marketing slogan that will not achieve the objectives being sought," Mr Kilgariff said.

"ALC is calling for the Bill to be referred to a Senate Inquiry, should it be passed by the House of Representatives, to determine the extent to which it will add anything to safety in the industry, beyond the measures which have already been adopted", he said.

Note: ALC's policy on Safe Rates is available at <http://austlogistics.com.au/media-centre/policies/>

Tuesday 22 November 2011

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