

Communique

Industry Reference Forum (IRF) #15 – 30 April 2018

The 15th meeting of the IRF was held at the NHVR offices, Brisbane on Friday, 30 April 2018.

ATTENDEES

Agforce/AIOG Chair	Crane Industry Council of Australia	Queensland Trucking Association
Australian Livestock and Rural Transporters Association	Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development and Cities	Road Freight NSW
Australian Logistics Council	Heavy Vehicle Industry Association	South Australia Road Transport Association
Australian Local Government Association	National Heavy Vehicle Regulator	Tasmanian Transport Association
Australia Trucking Association	National Farmers Federation	Transport Workers Union – Qld Branch
	National Road Freighters Association	Victorian Transport Association
	NatRoad	Western Roads Federation

APOLOGIES

Australia New Zealand Police	
Advisory Agency	NT Road Transport Association
Bus Industry Confederation	Russell Transport
Civil Contractors Federation	Transport Workers Union

OPENING – CHAIR

Raymond Hassall, Executive Director Business Services National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) opened the forum and welcomed members. Raymond noted the minutes of the previous meeting and no issues were raised by members.

AGENDA ITEM 1 – ACCREDITATION REVIEW UPDATE – PRESENTATION BY NHVR GUEST PETER MEDLOCK

NHVR conducted an independent review of heavy vehicle accreditation schemes in late 2017, with the final report presented to the Board in March 2018. NHVR provided the IRF with a presentation on the key elements. Members were advised accreditation schemes are having a beneficial impact on safety, efficiency and productivity. Members expressed concern in the multiplicity of challenges, including loss of regulatory benefits to operators and licensing if accreditation is moved to a mandatory system. NHVR acknowledged industry's concerns and SARTA recommended a group meeting to collectively work through the issues. NHVR agreed with the need to provide adequate time to discuss as a group. NHVR indicated enforcing current laws is a significant task, with an extensive consultation process to occur within industry and state jurisdictions over the next two months. The Commonwealth expressed strong support of the review and indicated the need for a detailed and comprehensive process before a mandatory position is reached. Peter Medlock indicated he would have further recommendations finalised by the end of the Financial Year and a report ready for presentation to TISOC in September.

Actions

It was agreed:

- The Chair indicated a desire to continue to have transparent discussions. Members indicated they would be happy to attend further group discussions, ensuring these discussions and member feedback occur prior to a final report being produced.
- Members provided strong support for a full and comprehensive review of the Heavy Vehicle National Law and emphasized the importance of not just doing a 'clause by clause' update.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – NATIONAL HEAVY VEHICLE REGISTRATION SCHEME - UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION - NATROAD

Natroad introduced discussion around current amendments to the National Heavy Vehicle Law (NHVL) and the removal of provisions related to the National Heavy Vehicle Registration Scheme, replacing them with provisions which will allow the NHVR to hold a database of registrations. Members noted this scheme is in line with heavy vehicle reforms that include a national registration system for heavy vehicles which will be open to all operators in all states and territories participating in the NHVL reforms, scheduled to commence on 1 July 2018.

Members sought clarification on NHVR's role and activities in relation to this scheme and expressed disappointment about where the scheme has ended up. Members were advised the industry benefits working groups was the appropriate channel with NHVR to provide continued discussion around reform. Members expressed they want to see industry representation on these groups. NHVR invited members to send any additional questions they may have to the working groups and the national communications team (via Tammy Wigg) for further discussion. Members expressed concern that the fact sheet needs to be something that enforcement officers take notice of and suggested the name of the scheme be changed to 'NHV Registration Plate'. NHVR endorsed comments that what is happening on 1 July is the first stage, and that what will be delivered 1 July is incremental, and provides a platform for future reforms.

Industry raised the need for identifiable Primary Producer Plate to distinguish primary producers that receive registration concessions from commercial freight carriers that pay full registration fees.

Actions

It was agreed:

- Registration Fact Sheet to be distributed to members for their review and feedback of same to tammy.wigg@nhvr.gov.au plus Information regarding industry representatives on the Heavy Vehicle Strategy Group and industry Benefits Working Group to be emailed to members. This action was completed 2 May 2018.
- Further group discussion to be held around the suggestion of a name change for the scheme to 'NHV Registration Plate'.

AGENDA ITEM 3 – HEAVY VEHICLE ACCESS PERMITS - NATROAD

IRF members raised the concern about permit approval processes, despite the NHVR's efforts to improve the system with the implementation of the Portal and education for road managers. Industry advised their members are seeking faster approval times, more transparency in decision making and independent appeal mechanisms. Members sought clarification around an AustRoads report *Local Road Access for High Productivity Freight Vehicles* that confirmed barriers associated with road access continue to impede the productivity of transport operators and NHVR's views. NHVR proposed the development of a freight network strategy that documents NHVR's attempt as the Regulator to articulate and address the issues as we know them. NHVR suggested preparation of a brief to Ministers that diagnoses issues with the permit access system. CICA advised they would like to be part of these discussions, this was noted by the Chair.

Actions

It was agreed:

- NHVR to develop a freight network strategy that addresses current access permit issues.
- NHVR to prepare a brief for presentation to Ministers in November 2018 on issues and recommendations.
- Applicants to add photos of the combinations to help Road Managers understand the type of vehicle that will be accessing their networks. NHVR to include information sheet on how to attach pictures to applications in the near future.

AGENDA ITEM 4– TRANSITIONING TO RISK BASED SAFETY FOCUSED ENFORCEMENT - SARTA

SARTA welcomed the NHVR's adoption of more appropriate risk-based safety-focused enforcement and proposed that a strategy was needed to transition enforcement by police to adopt the same risk-based approach. Discussion was held around Police in general continuing to apply an ineffective law enforcement approach which results in technical enforcement not focused on safety outcomes. Members raised the need for an enforcement focus that has a risk-based approach and suggested a strategy which reaches an agreement for the implementation of same. Natroad questioned whether NHVR have a National Enforcement Policy, which NHVR responded affirmative but as yet unpublished, and discussions were held around NHVR working towards being a risk-based Regulator. SARTA noted that TISOC have agreed in principle to the points raised.

Actions

It was agreed: NHVR agreed on the importance of continuing with group discussion on how to better engage with police enforcement to NHVR's risk-based model and requested members send any feedback to NHVR. It was also agreed that industry would raise their concerns with Ministers responsible for Transport and for Police.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – NHVR SAFETY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM GUIDANCE PROJECT – PRESENTATION BY GREG FILL

NHVR raised discussion and provided an update to members regarding the new Heavy Vehicle Safety Duty and Chain of Responsibility (COR) laws scheduled to come into force later in 2018, including its recommendation that all industry participants adopt Safety Management Systems (SMS) within their businesses to help them meet the new legislative requirements. NHVR advised the establishment of a new Safety Industry Operator Group (IOG), and its national promotional campaign which will include SMS guidance materials and tool kits. Industry raised the question around whether the packages would include advice regarding third party audits, which NHVR affirmed. NHVR advised the material will be available electronically from 10 May 2018 on the NHVR Portal and can be downloaded.

Actions

It was agreed: Tanya McDonald to arrange for this information to be sent out to IRF members electronically. SMS Guidance material has now been released (10 May) as advised, and is available for download on the NHVR website.

AGENDA ITEM 6 –NHVR REGISTRATION SYSTEM DEMONSTRATION - PRESENTATION BY TAMMY WIGG

NHVR gave a demonstration of the Operator Portal and advised from 1 October 2018, heavy vehicle operators will be able to access details of their register assets on the free NHVR Portal. NHVR will provide this read-only information – including the status, expiry date and jurisdiction of each registration – to the NHVR. Northern Territory vehicle details will not be available through the Portal for the time being. Operators will be able to confirm that details recorded by the jurisdiction align with their own records, check registration changes and transfers have been processed correctly, forecast registration renewals and costs, and download or print vehicle records to provide to other parties in the supply chain. Industry reflected positive feedback from some of their members after testing. NHVR confirmed officers will have access to the database from the side

of the road. Primary producer concessions were raised again and asked whether the plate syntax would indicate if a vehicle was participating in a concession again. NHVR advised that primary producer concession syntaxes were not agreed to by the jurisdictions and would not be implemented as part of the National Heavy Vehicle plates from 1 July 2018. NHVR advised that it does not have a role in relation to state based concessions and that encouraged members to continue to raise this issue with ministers and jurisdictions. NHVR roadside enforcement officers are trained in all facets of enforcement and will have access to concession information on roadside.

Actions

It was agreed: Further discussion around bringing a solution to the communication challenge on the roadside, access to the right services for operators and drivers, including key phone numbers on a card. Members to share feedback with NHVR.

AGENDA ITEM 7 - OTHER BUSINESS

NHVR gave an update at member request on Harmonisation, including discussion on the development with AgForce, the agreement to join with the jurisdictions and hold further discussions in order to move forward on conditions and the level of access. NHVR advised the need for a more detailed communique to industry, and for industry to be NHVR's best advocates, to stand up and communicate the obstacles and provide recommendations for their removal.

NEXT MEETING

The Chair noted the next Industry Reference Forum is to be held on 10 August 2018 and is a Joint IRF/NOSPAG meeting. The Chair thanked all for their collaboration and engagement. Meeting finished at 1.55pm.