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# MP throws support behind truck drivers

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Maitland MP Frank Terenzini has promised to put his full support behind a report on safety and rates of pay for the transport industry after a meeting on Friday.

Hunter Valley truck drivers handed the report to Mr Terenzini with the request it be considered as part of a national campaign from the Transport Workers Union (TWU).

The union held a Safe Rates Summit in Sydney on July 29 where a number of transport operators said there was a need for change in the industry.

Union Newcastle and Northern sub-branch secretary Mick Forbes said the Hunter Valley had a large number of truck drivers

and transport workers living and working in the Hunter Valley and it was appropriate that politicians took up the case on behalf of their constituents.

"The TWU has been working for some time with governments at all levels in order to ensure there is a federal determination with minimum rates of pay for truck drivers," Mr Forbes said.

"With 281 people being killed in our industry each year, it is important that drivers have full cost recovery, including pay for waiting times and fuel costs, so they are not forced into doing 'one more load' to make ends meet."

Mr Terenzini agreed and said there was a definite connection

between rate of pay and safety on the roads.

"I recognise the link between rate of pay and driver behaviour, and it's not only the findings of the report, but of judge and coroners who have said the link is there," Mr Terenzini said.

"Lower rates of pay can lead to drivers doing more hours, which leads to unsafe conditions on the roads and more accidents.

"The problem is not just for truck drivers but all people on the roads too."

Mr Terenzini added that proper legislation was needed to raise the rate of pay for drivers, especially in the Maitland area which he described as soon becoming the hub of truck movement in the State.



**SAFER ROADS:** TWU Newcastle and Northern sub-branch secretary Mick Forbes, Maitland MP Frank Terenzini with truck driver Grant Waters.