



Drive for truckies' minimum pay deal

By EMMA SHAW

TRUCK drivers in the Illawarra are campaigning for a national minimum rate of pay which they say will help prevent fatal accidents on the region's roads.

Transport Workers Union official Lee Lawler handed over a report on safety and rates of pay to Federal MP for Cunningham Sharon Bird yesterday.

The information was

drawn from the recent Safe Rates Summit and will now be used as part of a national campaign by the union.

Mr Lawler said legislation was needed for owner truck drivers to ensure they did not take on too much work, which might put themselves and other drivers at risk.

"We've been pushing the Safe Roads campaign now for a number of years," Mr

Lawler said.

"(Last year) 281 truck drivers died on our roads, 235 other people were killed as a result of those accidents and a large number more were injured. So it's really about giving these guys the opportunity to earn a minimum rate which means that they don't have to do excessive hours and they don't do that extra load

just to make ends meet."

Ms Bird said she would present the report to Parliament and support the truck drivers' campaign for industry regulation.

"We are a region, particularly having a major port and quite a bit of manufacturing industry, that actually has a lot of truck engagement on our roads," Ms Bird said.



On the record: Journalism students at the University of Wollongong listen to Transport Union Workers representative Lee Lawler at a press conference yesterday. The students attended as part of their degree.

Picture: ADAM McLEAN