

Michael McCormack
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development

By email: michael.mccormack.mp@aph.gov.au

July 30, 2020

Dear Minister

We write to you urgently regarding developments for truck drivers operating across borders amid the pandemic.

We have grave concerns about drivers' ability as essential workers to carry out their jobs and the detrimental effect on transport supply chains.

Truck drivers are still permitted to cross closed state boundaries to deliver food, fuel, medicines and other goods. State systems allowing drivers to continue their vital work have not always been easy, with conflicting messages in particular for drivers entering the NSW border from Victoria. New requirements are announced arbitrarily without consultation and can be vague in nature. Drivers right now are faced with different systems at each state borders, with different testing requirements and permits needed upon entry. This is causing confusion and delays for drivers and is disrupting supply chains.

We understand that you are examining introducing a freight movement code and would urge you to address our concerns and include our solutions in this code. Drivers must be part of this process and we would ask you to consult with us to ensure their views and experiences are taken into account.

We ask that you:

- Co-ordinate a system across the states to standardise testing and permit requirements for drivers so they can be clear on how they can comply with rules more easily.
- Examine the impact on transport supply chains and the drop-off in freight movement which is having a major effect on income for operators and owner drivers. We urge a targeted financial assistance programme for drivers and operators experiencing a fall in income.
- Ensure that major retailers and manufacturers do not cut their contract rates during the pandemic, which will further apply pressure on trucking businesses resulting in cuts to safety which will impact on the risk of infection and spread
- Ensure that truck drivers as essential workers have access to paid pandemic leave so they can self-isolate if required to.

- Ensure that truck drivers do not bear the brunt of fines associated with violations of pandemic restrictions which have been caused because of poor systems implemented by their employer or the client whose goods they are transporting.

We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,



John Berger
Vic/Tas Branch Secretary



Richard Olsen
NSW Branch Secretary



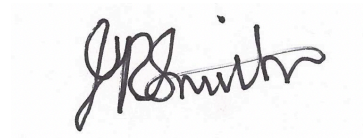
Michael Kaine
National Secretary



Peter Biagini
QLD Branch Secretary



Tim Dawson
WA Branch Secretary



Ian Smith
SA/NT Branch Secretary

c.c.
Jacinta Allan
Victorian Minister for Transport Infrastructure

Andrew Constance
NSW Minister for Transport and Roads

Mark Bailey
Qld Minister for Transport and Main Roads

Rita Saffioti
WA Minister for Transport and Planning.

Eva Dina Lawler MLA
NT Minister for Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics

Corey Wingard
SA Minister for Transport and Infrastructure

Catherine King
Shadow Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development