



# THE URGENT CASE FOR TRANSPORT REFORM





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## MICHAEL KAINE

**TRANSPORT WORKERS' UNION  
NATIONAL SECRETARY**



Transport is beyond breaking point. We've lost 347 transport businesses in the last year and over 100 truck drivers killed in the last two years under the deadly strain of uncommercial contracts, untrammelled supply chain pressures and unfair competition from gig models like Amazon Flex. **Lifesaving transport reform is the answer, and Federal Parliament is being asked by the entire industry to pass it into law.**



## PETER ANDERSON

**ARTIO  
NATIONAL SECRETARY**



The industry has come together like never before because we have the same fears for the future of transport, and we know this reform committed by the Federal Government would unlock the industry's potential. **Our unity shows how critical it is for Federal Parliament to pass reform into law to give all industry participants a fighting chance.**



## WARREN CLARK

**NATIONAL ROAD TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION  
CEO**



We support small and large transport businesses. We are losing hundreds of businesses every year, and it's hardly surprising under these tough economic conditions. Operators sign up to 5-year contracts, invest in the equipment, recruit drivers, then the contract is terminated for someone cheaper. Our industry is at a critical point. **We need change that bolsters our viability, builds productivity and enhances safety for everyone.**



## ROD HANNIFEY

**NATIONAL ROAD FREIGHTER'S ASSOCIATION  
NATIONAL PRESIDENT**



We are standing side by side calling for action on the recommendations of the Senate Inquiry into a viable transport industry. Minimum standards will provide the safety net we need to work safely and sustainably. The pressure on all is growing. **We need to make sure drivers can come home safely at the end of every trip - that's why we need all of the Senate recommendations enacted without delay.**



# TRANSPORT INDUSTRY UNITED FOR REFORM

*The Federal Government is tabling legislation to lift standards in road transport – Australia’s deadliest industry. This reform is urgent and is supported by industry.*

*Supply chains are lacking accountability and rapidly declining in productivity. Commercial pressures and transport gig models are putting workers and other road users in danger.*

*The crisis has led to hundreds of businesses both small and large closing their doors, and workers leaving the industry, or worse, dying on our roads.*

*Transport workers and operators need your support. Read on to better understand the crisis in transport and why voting for this lifesaving reform is absolutely crucial.*

The upcoming legislation would enable the Fair Work Commission to set enforceable standards in transport, and is the result of comprehensive industry consultation, investigations and advocacy from transport experts. **It follows:**

- ▶ **A TWO-YEAR SENATE INQUIRY**  
which heard from 150 witnesses from the transport industry and gave 10 recommendations, including the establishment of a standard-setting body.
- ▶ **AN INDUSTRY ROUND TABLE**  
of supply chain clients, gig companies, major operators, employer associations, owner driver representatives, and workers unanimously endorsed principles for reform.
- ▶ **CHARTERS WITH GIG COMPANIES**  
Uber, DoorDash and Menulog have signed charters with the TWU all calling for reform to lift standards for transport gig workers.
- ▶ **NATIONWIDE CONVOYS**  
in July 2022 and August 2023 which involved over 1,000 workers and industry representatives calling for reform.



Read the full principles document here by scanning the QR code



# TRANSPORT: AN INDUSTRY IN CRISIS

Decades of research has shown a direct link between low pay and poor safety outcomes in transport. When money is tight, it puts deadly pressure on operators and drivers to:

- ▶ meet unrealistic deadlines
- ▶ stay on the road too long
- ▶ delay vital vehicle maintenance or repairs
- ▶ cut corners in safety to make ends meet

## AUSTRALIA'S DEADLIEST INDUSTRY

In the two years since the Senate Inquiry report was tabled:

**OVER 370**  
TRUCK CRASH DEATHS

**OVER 100**  
OF THOSE DEATHS WERE TRUCK DRIVERS

Since 2017:

**AT LEAST 15**

**GIG TRANSPORT WORKERS HAVE BEEN KILLED\***

*\*Underreporting indicates there are likely more.*



## UNVIABLE CONTRACTS

The lack of enforceable minimum standards has led to unviable contracts and unfair competition from the transport gig economy.

**In the last financial year:**

**347** transport companies have become insolvent



“ Each year **20%** of our membership leave the industry due to business pressure.”

**WARREN CLARK,**  
NATROAD

## COMMERCIAL PRESSURE KILLS

“ Scott’s Refrigerated Logistics went under because contracts with clients weren’t paying enough. We were under enormous pressure. Tragically, it killed my workmate.

JC got held up on a shift. When he’d reached his legal limit and was too fatigued to keep driving, he was told that if he didn’t keep going, the company would lose the contract.



**25 and a half hours after he started his shift, JC’s truck rolled, hit a tree and burst into flames. He was killed outright.”**

**JOHN WALTIS, FORMER**  
SCOTT’S REFRIGERATED  
LOGISTICS EMPLOYEE

# WORKER TESTIMONY BUSTS THE FLEXIBILITY MYTH



A McKell and TWU survey of over 1,000 transport gig workers showed flexibility is unattainable for workers without minimum standards in place.

Low pay and the fear of instant job loss through 'deactivation' by the algorithm puts pressure on workers to work long hours, work during peak times and rush or take dangerous risks on the road.

## LOW PAY



# 2/3

of full-time gig workers earn less than minimum wage



# 45%

have struggled to afford groceries and household bills.

## SAFETY ISSUES



# 56%

of food delivery riders have felt **pressured to rush or take risks** to earn enough and avoid deactivation



# 55%

have faced threatening or abusive behaviour

## YAVUZ, UNCLE OF FOOD DELIVERY RIDER KILLED



“

My nephew Burak was an engineer graduate, living in Sydney to improve his English and working as a food delivery rider.

**Burak went under a truck at 12:51. He'd received a food delivery job request at 12:51—most likely he was looking at it, or attempting to accept.**

He was sent a reminder at 12:53 while he lay dying on the road. But the gig company said he wasn't working at the time, so the family didn't get any compensation. We had to wrap him up to keep his body together to send him home to his parents in Turkey. Burak's family don't want money, they just want justice.



## NABIN, FOOD DELIVERY WORKER

“ We're paid per delivery and have no say over the pay, and given 'bonuses' which push us to do more and more trips in a shorter time.

My friend was told to do 480 deliveries in four days. That is so unsafe.

**Gig companies pay whatever they want and terminate us when we don't accept low-paying jobs. They keep saying it's flexible - but flexible for whom?**



## ROSALINA, RIDESHARE DRIVER

“ I cancelled a trip once because I was waiting for over 20 minutes for a passenger. As I cancelled the customer got in the car. I said I couldn't take him.

**He grabbed my phone and held it out the window, saying I had to drive him or he'd throw it away.**

For a rideshare driver, you need your phone so you can work. I was terrified but I took him to his destination. He threw some cash on the seat and threatened to give me a one-star rating and report me for accepting cash - which you're not supposed to do - if I reported what he did.



## Food delivery cyclist injuries going under-reported, Sydney study finds

## DEACTIVATION

 **1 in 4**

have had one of their accounts 'deactivated' - half said deactivation was one of their top 3 concerns

## SUPPORT FOR REFORM

 **95%**

support government regulation of the gig economy

## LACK OF FLEXIBILITY

 **46%**  
say flexibility is a priority

**BUT:**

 **3/4**  
have to work long hours to make enough money

 **69%**  
feel compelled to **work in peak times** to make enough money

A Macquarie University study found that delivery riders are **13 times more likely** than recreational cyclists to present to hospital with injuries between 8pm and midnight, during the peak rush.

# TRUCKING CRISIS

A 2021 survey of 1,100 truck drivers revealed shocking pressures drivers face which force them to cut corners on safety and drive to exhaustion.



**1 in 4**

drivers said they've experienced pressure to drive past legal hours and skip rest breaks



**1 in 5**

drivers said they've experienced pressure to speed to meet deadlines



**1 in 5**

drivers said they've experienced pressure to falsify logbooks

“

I've watched a truck **completely burn** in front of me with a **co-worker trapped inside**. Another close co-worker rolled his truck 2 years ago, seriously injuring himself.

”

## FRANK, OWNER DRIVER



“ We're dealing with astronomical fuel costs that see no sign of slowing, not to mention mortgage rate rises and the cost of groceries. Many of us are trying to make ends meet.

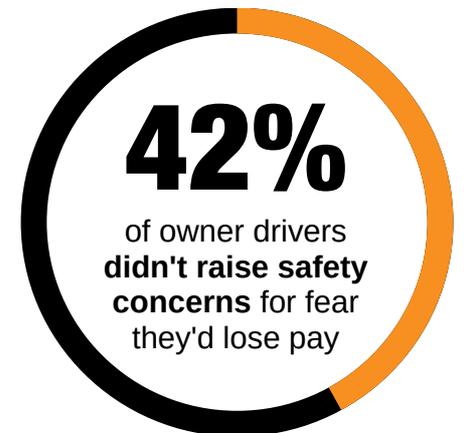
It's all because of a “take it or leave it” attitude from clients who refuse to pay enough to make a business sustainable.

Trucking isn't an industry where you can cut corners and have things be fine. We deserve pay and conditions that allow us to do our jobs safely and still be able to make a decent living.



**75%**

of owner drivers have done a run that made them **no profit**



**55%**

of owner drivers have **delayed truck maintenance** because they couldn't afford it

# TRANSPORT OPERATOR COLLAPSE SHOWS URGENT NEED FOR REFORM

In February this year, Australia's largest cold chain logistics operator, Scott's Refrigerated Logistics, collapsed.

Administrators said a key reason was: "uncommercial customer arrangements as a result of intense market competition."

With no regulation in place to ensure clients at the top of transport supply chains are accountable for fair and sustainable contracts, operators and drivers are struggling to survive.

When an operator is making a \$31 million loss on half a billion dollars in revenue (FY22), its margins were clearly not viable.

Unlike Coles and Woolworths, Aldi has refused to sign a charter with the TWU to lift standards in its supply chain. We need regulation to ensure responsible clients can remain competitive, removing incentives for deadly cost-cutting in transport.

## IMPACT ON WORKERS AND SMALL BUSINESSES



### JOHN, FORMER SCOTT'S REFRIGERATED LOGISTICS EMPLOYEE

"The trucks never stopped running at Scott's Refrigerated Logistics. We were always busy.

Operators are going broke because the rates they have to accept just to get the work are too low.

They have to cut wages, delay maintenance, push workers to stay on the road longer or speed to make unrealistic deadlines, and **that's how people get killed.**"

### JASWINDER, FORMER SCOTT'S REFRIGERATED LOGISTICS SUB-CONTRACTOR / SMALL BUSINESS OWNER

"I run a small business with seven trucks and eight drivers. We're **owed roughly \$200,000** for work that had been done for Scott's Refrigerated Logistics in the weeks before it collapsed.

I had two trucks off the road for maintenance but **I had to tell the mechanic to stop working because I could no longer afford the bills.**"



# SENATE INQUIRY INTO ROAD TRANSPORT FINDS SHARED INDUSTRY CONCERNS

The Senate Inquiry into the road transport industry, chaired by Senator Glenn Sterle, conducted a two-year deep dive into the crisis in the industry, involving:

- 11** ▶ public hearings
- 128** ▶ submissions
- 150** ▶ witnesses, including
  - **37** truck drivers
  - **13** transport organisations



Noel Blue gave evidence to the Inquiry of his 29 year-career as an armoured driver, including colleagues held at gunpoint, shot at and killed.

## THE NEED FOR A STANDARD-SETTING BODY

The Inquiry made 10 recommendations, including urgent reform in trucking to protect workers, businesses and road users.

The Senate Select Committee called for a powerful standard-setting body that can:

- Set fair standards
- Hold clients to account to ensure fairer and safer contracts
- Ensure payments are made on time
- Protect the rights of all drivers (owner and employee)
- Ensure voices of all drivers are heard



# IT'S TIME TO ACT.

# TRANSPORT INDUSTRY CONVOYS FOR REFORM DRAW 1000+



On Saturday 5 August, over 1,000 transport workers, industry representatives and politicians joined nationwide convoys in support of reform to make transport safer, fairer and more sustainable.

Hundreds of trucks of all types, courier vans, rideshare cars and buses convoyed around Australia's capital cities: Melbourne, Brisbane, Perth, Adelaide, Darwin and from Sydney to Parliament House, Canberra.



## THE INDUSTRY CONVOYS WERE SUPPORTED BY:

**Workers:** employee drivers, owner driver small businesses, transport gig workers

**Employers:** Team Global Express, Toll, Linfox, Bevchain, ACFS, FBT Transwest and others

**Industry groups:** National Road Transport Association (NatRoad), Australian Road Transport Industrial Organisation (ARTIO), and National Road Freighters Association (NRFA)



### GORDON MACKINLAY, FORMER OWNER DRIVER AND NRFA BOARD MEMBER

In 2016, I was one of the owner drivers leading a convoy to Canberra to get the Road Safety Remuneration Tribunal abolished. Since then, our industry has been overlooked and things have got worse. I have experienced firsthand what the lack of standards in transport can do to an owner operator. In 2019, I had to sell my trucks and went back to being a mechanic because I couldn't make a decent living being an owner driver.

**We are in desperate need of legislation to make this industry viable again.**

# WHAT YOU CAN DO, NOW

Transport workers, small businesses, transport operators and the public who share the roads need your support to ensure lifesaving transport reform is passed by Federal Parliament. Here's how you can help:

## 1 SUPPORT LIFESAVING ROAD TRANSPORT REFORM



The recommendations from the Senate Inquiry into the road transport industry provide a blueprint to save trucking jobs, businesses and lives.

First and foremost, Federal Parliament is being asked to pass reform to allow the Fair Work Commission to set fair, safe and viable standards for the transport industry.

The transport industry is asking Federal Parliament to pass this reform into law to end the crisis in transport and the slaughter on our roads.

## 2 SHARE YOUR PUBLIC SUPPORT

Truck drivers need to know that you support a safer, fairer road transport industry. You can do that by:

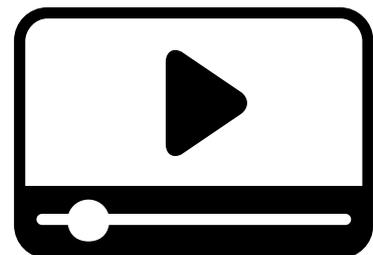
- ▶ **Hashtag**  
Use the hashtag #TransportReform or #FairerSaferTransport now on social media to share your support



- ▶ **Sharing a photo**  
Download solidarity signs and other resources by scanning the QR code below



- ▶ **Posting a video**  
Road transport is an industry in crisis. Post a video to your social media channels in support of transport reform to save lives on our roads.





**I SUPPORT  
TRANSPORT  
REFORM**

