



“Make a Mile to the Future”

The Livestock and Rural Transporters
Association of Queensland Inc.

INDUSTRY ACTION PLAN



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'The voice of the Livestock and Rural Transport industry'

- The Livestock and Rural Transporters Association of Queensland Inc. (LRTAQ) is the voice of the livestock and rural transport industry and is a peak body for the livestock industry and the road transport industry in Queensland.
- The association was formed in 1981 to give a united voice to livestock transport operators and comprises a committee made up of elected representatives drawn from 8 nominated regions. This Committee meets quarterly to discuss issues pertinent to each district, along with state wide and national matters.
- Recognising that many of the initiatives the Association introduced and the issues it deals with are shared with other transport operators in rural areas of Queensland in May 2011 we moved to represent all rural trucking interests and now welcome membership from all parts of rural road transport.

Big Opportunities

Our objectives we are seeking to achieve include:-

- To represent the livestock and rural transport industry to government, the business sector and the community
- To work collaboratively with government to deliver safer , effective and successful transport services
- To reduce red tape and administrative costs incurring on our businesses
- To provide good conditions and a safe working environment for our drivers and other employees
- To demonstrate to the community the positive and essential role that rural and livestock transport companies play in the economy and quality of life of all Australians

Big issues

- The LTAQ is represented on the Queensland Road Freight Industry Council and its sub committees (by Ministerial appointment) the Remote Area Consultative Group which is a national body dealing with issues suggested by its name and is involved with many other bodies devoted to the betterment of the transport industry.
- In achieving our objectives the association has developed expertise in and has input into issues such as:
 1. Better Animal Welfare arrangements
 2. Efficient and safe transport services through the Livestock Loading scheme
 3. Fatigue Management and improved Driving Hours regulation
 4. Delivering reasonable and fair A Trailer registration charges
 5. Upgrading and maintaining roads
 6. Flood Proofing our state
 7. B-Double and road-train route planning
 8. Rest areas and truck parking
 9. Safer and healthier working conditions for truck drivers
 10. Supporting the delivery of national reforms through the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) the National Transport Commission (NTC) and with the HVCI to ensure that rural and remote operators aren't paying for infrastructure that isn't available to them.
 11. The Truck Care animal welfare Accreditation System
 12. Addressing emerging industry issues and opportunities

The LRTAQ has national influence through its membership of the Australian Livestock and Rural Transporters Association (ALRTA), which has excellent working relationships with ministers at the Federal level. Further the LRTAQ supports the ALRTA in its efforts to achieve greater national consistency and efficient and effective national regulation.

The LRTAQ has established a senior level Policy Committee to assist in the association's response to government policy changes and to shape a strategic direction for the future.

Why do we need a plan?

“Without trucks Australia stops!!”

- Heavy transport is a big part of the success of our economy and our way of life but: the average person in the street has little understanding of how true this is
- Livestock transport operators are discovering and dealing with new restrictions, new and more regulation and from different government departments
- **Our world is more complex-**
 1. Inadequate funding for infrastructure upgrades and maintenance
 2. Roads becoming more congested
 3. The environment -climate, greenhouse gas emissions, noise and air quality
 4. Safety and welfare of travelling stock
 5. Cost of fuel, maintenance and insurance
 6. People concerned about the safety of large trucks
 7. Driver and workplace health and safety
 8. Attracting and retaining drivers
 9. Other road users lack of experience and understanding

What is the urgency?

- ❑ Change will happen!

Legislation, the Economy, Community Expectations

- We need to have a clear position
 - We need to be ready to put forward our aspirations and our issues
 - We need to ensure that within this climate of change, politicians and governments understand our concerns and objectives
- ❑ We now have at least three organisations creating road laws that we need to deal with
 - ❑ A clear action plan will provide a focus for the relationship with Transport and Main Roads (TMR), the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator and the NTC and with Department of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF)

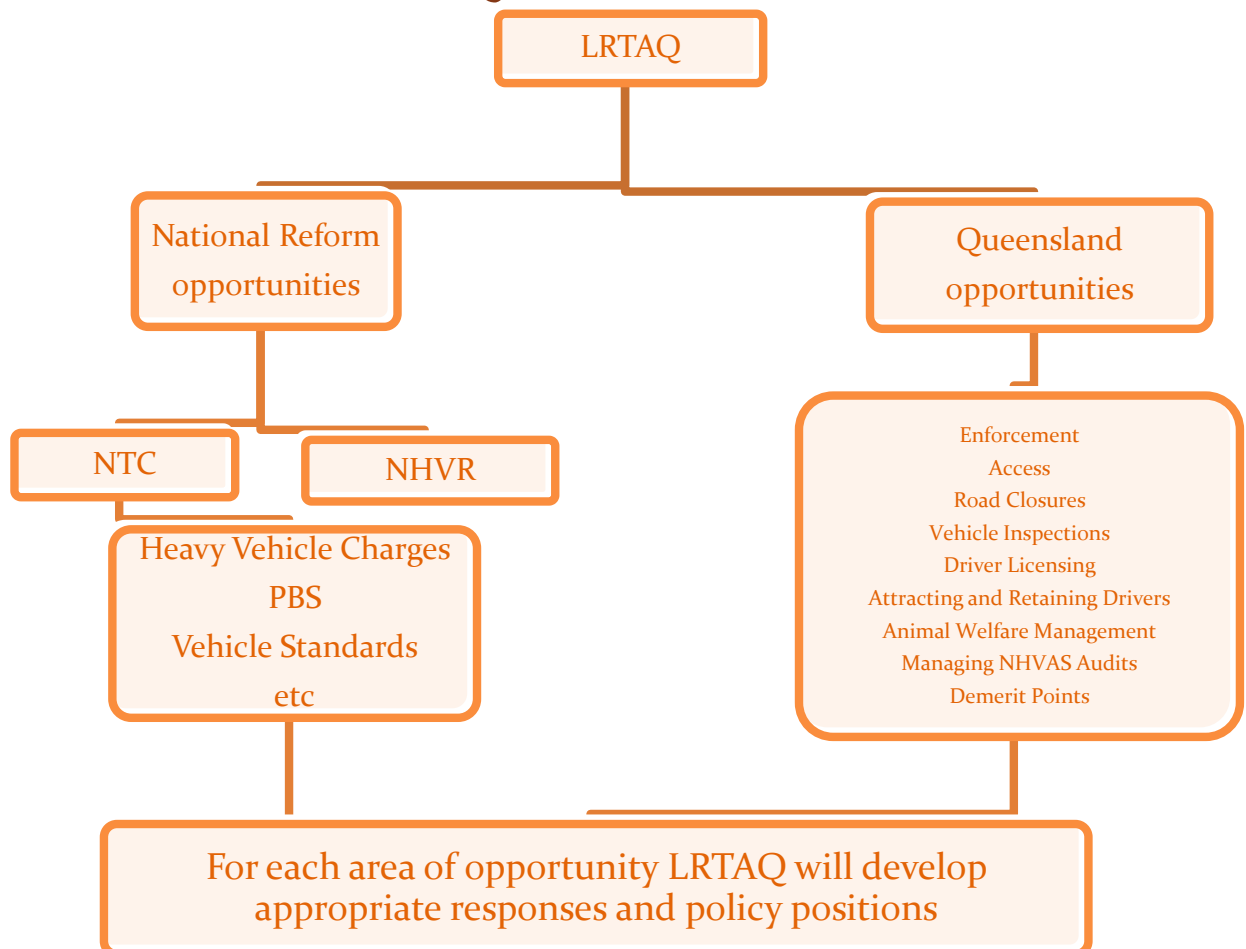
Context

- According to a report published by the Department of Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry (DAFF) Queensland is a major producer of cattle with 48% of the Australian cattle herd located in Queensland (12.5 million head) produced for both domestic and export markets. Queensland has a large processing capacity and exports 60% of beef produced. Less than 2% of Queensland cattle, about 60000, are exported as live animals and this represents only 8% of Australian live exports.
- The beef industry represented 32% of the total value of Queensland agricultural production for 2011-12 and is the biggest individual agricultural sector in Queensland. It is an important industry for the economy of rural and regional Queensland and employs 32 000 people.
- In 2010-11, Queensland exported beef and veal to 71 countries with a value of about \$2.8 billion. The top three export destinations were Japan (about 42%), the United States (about 15%) and South Korea (about 15%). Queensland beef exports to these top three destinations were valued at approximately \$2.1 billion.
- Almost all cattle movements are now provided by truck as rail services have been wound down in recent years.
- Transport of cattle is only one part of the livestock transport story with sheep, horses, goats and other animals adding significantly to these numbers

We care about safety.

- Livestock transport strives to provide a high level of performance in on road safety.
- Heavy trucks and buses make up three per cent of registered vehicles and articulated trucks (the type most commonly used in livestock and rural transport) account for about three per cent of the vehicle-kilometres travelled (VKT) on Australia's roads.
- Livestock carrying trucks have seen a significant reduction in crashes compared to other trucks representing more than 10% of all heavy vehicle crashes in 2005 but reducing to approximately 6% in 2011. Of some concern, other freight vehicles used for mining have seen an increased percentage in the same period.
- It is worth noting that based on research conducted by NTI in multi vehicle crashes which included a heavy vehicle the heavy vehicle driver was found to be at fault in zero cases during 2011.
- Despite these good results our industry needs to continue to deliver improvements in these road safety results.

The New LRTAQ World



LRTAQ ACTION PLAN

- Based on issues and opportunities identified at the 2012 conference subsequent research and meetings with members and the delegates an LRTAQ Action Plan has been prepared incorporating five major areas for attention.
- This plan sets out the priorities for attention and practical action that can be taken now to address issues and create opportunities. The action plan calls upon government to take action on the matters that it has unique control over and to work collaboratively with industry on those matters where responsibility is shared. It also makes a commitment on behalf of LRTAQ to seek solutions on those issues which are uniquely the responsibility of industry members.
- The action plan which will become the basis of our representational efforts to government at Local, State and National level.

Driver Recruitment Training and Retention

Issues

- The graduated drivers licence laws make it hard for young people to join our industry.
- How can we achieve hands on experience, mentoring and training for younger drivers within the framework of these laws?
- Examine Long service leave payments within 3 years rather than 6-7 years which would provide a positive incentive
- How can we create a family friendly work environment?
- There are a number of areas where better education could improve outcomes for our industry
 - Stock agents setting 'reasonable' schedules
 - Driver experience of cattle handling and animal husbandry
 - Part of school education should be work experience/traineeships
 - Share of information top down in stock agents
- How can we achieve better education and training?
- Examine options for a better insurance scheme for younger drivers
- Licence age- needs reasonable restriction solution
- Driving trucks is not seen as an attractive career choice –how can we change the community view?

Analysis

The problem of driver recruitment, training and retention is universal in the industry but the nature of the problem changes in different parts of the state. These problems include:-

- Competition with mining
- Licensed drivers available but inadequate experience
- Ageing population and workforce
- Conditions seen as poor (e.g. harassment by enforcement officers)

The problem is widespread across road transport. According to the TLWAG Qld annual report the shortage of drivers is the result of several factors:

1. 48 per cent of the industry is aged 45 or over compared to the national average of 38 per cent.
2. As more drivers retire, there are insufficient numbers coming into the sector from the younger demographic.
3. The occupation still suffers from an outdated image of the older Caucasian male working long shifts with physically demanding responsibilities. This can make recruiting from non-traditional groups such as women more difficult.
4. Licensing requirements and waiting periods restrict the ability to create a viable career pathway for school leavers.
5. Recruiting and retaining drivers with higher licensing classes and dangerous goods accreditation is difficult due to the extra time requirements to gain these qualifications, and the additional difficulty of obtaining appropriate insurance for young drivers.

6. Competition for skilled drivers from the mining industry continues to be a major challenge. Employers cannot compete with the wages and conditions offered by many resource companies.

Some LRTAQ members reported expecting to continue to hire overseas drivers. Others felt that the industry needs a traineeship approach where younger inexperienced drivers can gain experience under the care of an experienced driver. Transform (Transport Industry Skills body) have advised that there are traineeship schemes available which may be suitable for building driving experience.

Actions

1. Request TMR to allocate resources to review driver recruitment training and retention issues within livestock transport.
2. Investigate possible traineeship schemes and consider how these might be applied in livestock and rural transport.
3. Consider establishing an LRTAQ register of overseas drivers with suitable experience and good driver performance.

Fatigue/Driving Hours

Issues

- Investigate options for an Advanced Fatigue Management system in line with template for livestock
- Above all the industry needs flexibility –Need to look at 12 day cycle, 6 hours consecutive rest- 10pm > 2am –or similar (6 consecutive)
- Loading and unloading time remains a key issue for managing Livestock driver fatigue– there is a need to review how this affects drivers and to consider options for how it is managed and whether it should remain defined as work.
- Finding the most effective way to ensure drivers are healthy for example are 12 month medicals and health education programs the most effective way?
- Industry needs to investigate improvements for Driver Comfort (e.g. Ice pack and cab coolers)
- The impact of Agents-grazier-buyers-making inappropriate decisions about short notice of loads or changes to loading needs to be addressed.
- Impact of Chain of Responsibility is not well understood across the rural industry sector,
- Could GPS tracking be used to ensure compliance with rest periods?

Analysis

- Most companies continue to see fatigue management and driving hours as a major issue for the industry.
- Operators reported problems with log book enforcement as a major reason for drivers leaving the industry.

- While LRTAQ has been successful in having Queensland industry specific schemes put in place these schemes remain prescription based rather than performance based. Policy makers need to understand that the issue of Fatigue Management and Driving Hours enforcement remain a major millstone working against a more productive industry.
- Balancing this the current prescriptive regimes do little to deliver better safety outcomes. A practical performance based approach based on delivering less fatigued drivers would result in lower crash levels in our view.
- Addressing and delivering a better fatigue management regime must be a priority for the NHVR.

Actions

1. LTAQ to seek from the NHVR a clear commitment to review fatigue laws and introduce practical performance based schemes collaboratively with industry
2. LRTAQ Policy Committee to develop a preferred model for fatigue management within the livestock transport industry.
3. The Policy Committee to also document the industry and safety benefits of any NHVR proposals to help deliver the Queensland Transport Minister's support for the proposed changes.

NHVAS and Accreditation

Issues

- Provides benefits but lacks accountability of paperwork vs. equipment reflecting an imbalance in the process i.e. does paperwork reflect actual equipment -similarly audit process needs more vehicle compliance
- Auditors and Transport Inspectors need to show greater consistency in the inspection process. This issue seems to reflect a need for better training of Inspectors and greater attention by TMR to establishing clear and practical standards.
- There is a need for government officials to take a more collaborative approach. Enforcement is seen as too heavy handed with significant fines being issued which are sometimes too harsh and not reflecting the nature of the breach
- Fines issued in many cases seem to target administrative efficiency rather than tackle real safety issues. The attitude of Auditors and Transport Inspectors towards compliance and fines is seen as driving operators away from accreditation schemes. Government compliance and industry safety is best served by encouraging operators to be involved in these schemes not to put in place strong disincentives.
- There needs to be a new collaborative approach implemented which focuses on:-
 - Advise and educate
 - Warning
 - Breach

This approach should particularly be taken for where there is no safety risk involved.

- For industry to see accreditation as worthwhile there should be visible increased on road enforcement of operators who are not part of the accreditation scheme. At present members report that the opposite is true and that they feel targeted for on road attention because they are in an accreditation scheme.

Analysis

Universally members do not believe that belonging to an accreditation scheme provides them with any benefits on the road. Most however did acknowledge that it helped them to run a better business.

There are serious problems with the various accreditation schemes. These include:-

1. Lack of understanding by members as to how (and why) the accreditation schemes work.
2. Lack of recognition by enforcement officers (police and transport inspectors) of accreditation schemes.
3. Inconsistent treatment by enforcement officers. (Notably QPS)
4. Poor audit practices by government auditors including duplication, inconsistent approaches and unfair enforcement which has been described as bullying by some operators.

Action:

1. LRTAQ will seek a commitment from TMR to conduct a joint industry/ government review of accreditation schemes.
2. TMR should immediately adjust accreditation audit and on road enforcement practices to refocus on a more collaborative approach with industry and refocus on road enforcement on non accredited fleets.
3. TMR and the Police Service should provide expanded training for enforcement officers in relation to accreditation.
4. LRTAQ will examine in detail causes of accidents involving livestock and rural transport vehicles and prepare an industry road safety plan

Access

Issues

- Time frame for type 2 access from Mitchell to Roma
- Network of B triple approved routes (not through PBS)
- Road train routes on major highways need to be opened up for 5 deck units i.e. A-B Triple type vehicles
- Better access regime from Toowoomba to Dinmore
- Inland freight corridor (all weather) –Roma to Clermont upgraded for type 2's could be promoted as a dedicated freight corridor
- Deliver improvements from Gracemere to Rocky abattoirs

Analysis

The critical access issues raised with me related to type 2 access from Mitchell to Roma and road access to Lakes Creek from Gracemere.

While the LTAQ has access priorities it appears these are being promoted locally with TMR engineers rather than at a Ministerial whole of state level. We need to settle on the priorities and then formally request the government to outline their timetable for addressing these.

The government has made it clear that infrastructure funding will be reduced in the near future. Given the political pressure in SEQ it is likely that 'our roads' will suffer the major cuts.

We need to do more work to identify the economic and safety benefits which accrue from better access arrangements.

We also need to consider alternative arrangements if these routes cannot be funded within a reasonable timeframe. For example what type of curfew arrangement might be suitable to allow type 2 access to Roma?

We also support the decision by the federal government to move towards a national standard for loading ramps at livestock transport facilities. This will improve efficient access and improve safety in this process.

Actions

1. Support the urgent completion and adoption by the government of the TMR Heavy Vehicle Action Plan
2. Ensure that the joint TMR/DAFF Agricultural Transport Blueprint gives appropriate priority to efficiency and infrastructure issues in agricultural road transport and push for its early adoption by the government.
3. Document LRTAQ access priorities throughout Queensland and interstate and communicate these to government agencies
4. Outline priorities to the Government and request a greater commitment to these upgrades.
5. Consider alternative arrangements for better access and make appropriate submissions to government.

Enforcement

Issues

- Industry participants have very serious concerns about the way they are treated in on road enforcement and seek a different approach by enforcement officers.
- Collaboration and a sense of partnership needs to be built/reinstated between police, transport inspectors and industry

- We need to promote accreditation as a cost effective incentive for industry outlining the economic and road safety benefits e.g. such as delivered through a changed approach to periodic inspections
- As individual states implement NHVR changes to state vehicle standards there will be a need for significantly improved communication of these changes- this has remained a major problem for industry in the past when major changes have occurred. Education about changes needs to extend to policy officers, enforcement officers and industry personnel.
- Inconsistent enforcement standards for heavy vehicles by police and transport agencies need to be addressed
- NHVR needs to set up nationally consistent practices for all law enforcement agencies

Analysis

The positive working relationship that existed between Transport and QPS during the 90's and up to about 2003 has lost its momentum in recent years. This collaborative approach delivered very significant improvements at low cost. An investment in rebuilding this relationship would be very worthwhile.

The NHVR needs to achieve greater control over enforcement approaches.

There could be value in developing an enforcement code of practice which sets out the obligations and responsibilities of enforcement officers and transport professionals.

Industry feels that many of the problems which exist in on road enforcement stem from overlap and duplication between transport inspectors and police.

Actions

1. Seek commitments from Minister for Transport and Minister for Police to develop an enforcement code of practice.
2. Establish an industry/agency working group to examine how collaboration and the working relationship between industry and enforcement officers can be improved.
3. Seek government support for Police to be assigned to manage on road safety enforcement (e.g. speeding, drink driving and traffic law breaches and assign Transport Inspectors to manage transport regulation enforcement.,

Other Opportunities

LRTAQ and the Community

1. LRTAQ will develop a public education program to promote the positive roll of Livestock and Rural Transport professionals in the community

LRTAQ profile with Government

1. We will continue to actively participate in the Road Freight Industry Council and other special project committees.

2. We will engage with the NHVR and the NTC in the development and implementation of national reform and national laws.
3. The LRTAQ Delegates Committee will use this action plan to promote its issues and initiatives with government.

Information to Members

1. A review of the association's web site will be completed by the end of 2013.
2. The information available to members will be upgraded and up dated.

Notes
