

Ground-breaking road transport laws clear first legislative hurdle

15-02-2013

The most significant road transport reform Australia has ever undertaken has cleared its first legislative hurdle.

Overnight, the Queensland Government passed the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) Amendment Bill 2012, paving the way for one national rule book for Australia's heavy vehicle industry.

The HVNL will be administered by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR), which opened for business earlier this year.

The NHVR Board Chair, the Hon. Bruce Baird AM, today welcomed the Bill's passing as a tremendous milestone more than five years in the making.

"This Bill is an extraordinary achievement for industry and all levels of government across Australia," Mr Baird said.

"I'm pleased to see this collaborative effort reflected in the Queensland Parliament, where the HVNL Amendment Bill received strong bipartisan support.

"The legislative wheels are now rolling and we're looking forward to delivering real safety, productivity and efficiency improvements for the heavy vehicle industry."

The HVNL consolidates eight different sets of state and territory road transport laws into one national rule book, meaning reduced red tape for industry and reduced transport costs that should flow on to all operators, large and small.

Currently an operator carrying a truckload of bananas travelling from Far North Queensland to Melbourne must comply with three different sets of laws, a huge administrative burden on the 85 percent of operators that are small, family-operated enterprises.

"The benefits of one national rule book are substantial - it's been estimated to unlock productivity gains for the heavy vehicle industry of up to \$12.4 billion over the next 20 years, which also means savings all along the supply chain, right through to consumers.

"When you consider that delivery costs account for an estimated 43 per cent of the cost of a loaf of bread, the potential for hip-pocket savings is very real."

Mr Baird today thanked Queensland Transport Minister Scott Emerson for his strong support and said he looks forward to the adoption of the HVNL by participating states and territories later in 2013.

Once the HVNL is adopted nationally, the NHVR will deliver a wide range of services in a one-stop-shop for key heavy vehicle road transport business with government.

The NHVR opened for business on 21 January and currently manages the National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme and design and vehicle approvals for the Performance-Based Standards Scheme.

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