

NATIONAL ROAD FREIGHTERS ASSOCIATION



380 Alexandra St Rockhampton QLD 4870

Email info@nrfa.com.au Web www.nrfa.com.au



NEWSLETTER

July 2016

FROM THE PRESIDENTS DESK:



Well what a busy time it's been so far this year, with the introduction of the RSRT and then the hard work involved in having it abolished, attending the RSRT Tribunal meetings up to and over the Easter weekend, joined by Ken Wilkie Russ Martin and Steve Smith then off to join the Canberra Convoy in a joint effort to have the RSRT abolished which thankfully it was and hope will never return. We met some very passionate owner operators at the convoy who all had a great deal to lose if the RSRT was to stay implemented. The NRFA will fight to the death to keep this RSRT away and destroying owner operators.

I have also attended National Transport Commission meetings in Melbourne as part of their Industry Advisory Group. The current focus is on road user charges and we are fighting hard to get the best outcome for heavy vehicle operators in proposed reforms to the "mix" and levels of annual registration and fuel based fees.

I also remain in constant contact with senior bureaucrats from the NHVR and will be meeting personally with them again in the next couple of weeks to advise them on industry issues. We will have John Gilbert from NHVR attending our AGM in Townsville in September please come along and make your views heard. He is prepared to listen and act.

Please meet Laura Francis, Laura has been instrumental in attending anti RSRT rallies and attending meetings with politicians to put owner driver's input into the implications on them with implementation of RSRT.

Fuel Offer for National Road Freighters Association

Members:

6.25cpl discount on Diesel at Caltex NTN (National Truck Network) Sites Australia wide

2.5cpl discount on Diesel at all other Caltex locations Australia wide

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4cpl discount on Unleaded at all Caltex locations Australia wide

Card Fees - \$2.95 per card, per month (GST inclusive)

Credit terms - \$21 by direct debit by CC/EFT/direct debit.

If you already have a Star Card and are a financial member all you need to do is contact Caltex and let them know to get these discounts. If you don't have an account just simply apply for one now.

Just remember you must be a 2016 financial NRFA member to qualify.



Thank you to Laura Francis for her hard work assisting me with meetings leading up to the election.

President: Tony Hopkins.

VJCE PRESIDENTS REPORT:

Fellow NRFA members,

Sadly, we thought 2015 was a hard year. For those of us in the grain industry, especially and most reports I'm getting from general transport 2016 has started out as possibly one of the worst ever.

2016 has also been the busiest year for National Road Freighters since I have been on the board. The announcement in December last year of the impending introduction of the safe rates RSRO 2016 created so much uncertainty it threw this industry into absolute chaos and is I feel one of the prime reasons for quite a bit of the slow general freight movement. One only has to look around for a couple of hours at any truck stop to notice the large number of brand-new Toll outfits running around.

In response to a lot of work annoying the living crap out of politicians and writing letters President Acton of the RSRT called a hearing on March 14. This was attended by President Tony, who represented the Association on the bar, myself, Ken Wilkie, Steven Smith, Darryl Pedersen, Laura Francis, and at least three or four other NRFA members. From the outset it was apparent that this was a kangaroo court. The complete arrogance of the tribunal members who sat in another room in the Brisbane court was just incredible. The final ruling on that day as we know was for a mention on Thursday afternoon prior to Easter and then a decision to sit over 26, 27 and 28 of March, Easter Saturday, Sunday and Monday.

President Tony attended the mention the Friday where it became apparent there could be a railroad plan. This was a plan hatched by the union the IAG group, Toll and Linfox. The final upshot being the tribunal sat over Easter. Tony, Ken Wilkie, Neville Harrison and myself attended the Saturday sitting with Tony sitting on the bar. Myself and Neville Harrison supported Tony on the Sunday with Ken Wilkie taking my place on the Monday. I have never in all my life witnessed such a travesty of justice as with these hearings with this Tribunal. They dealt the Australian Industrial and Justice system an absolute insult. As we all

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know President Acton reserved her decision until 2 PM on the Friday prior to April 4 when she announced the RSTR was coming into full effect.

There has been one wonderful thing come out of this whole RSTR issue. That is members of all associations have stood together and fought United to get this extremely dangerous industrial Organisation and legislation repealed. Fellow members, I must confess, there have been numerous member's emails go out throughout this period, regarding the RSTR and if you do not have email or not had an up-to-date email address you will have missed out on. Things changed so rapidly it was impossible to communicate with people via mail to keep everyone informed.

Of course, as we know this all came to a head with a Sunday convoy from Yass to Canberra attended by some 210 trucks and sponsored by the NRFA and then the Monday convoy from the epic centre Canberra to Parliament with the repeal of the legislation being passed through both houses on that day.

Your Association is determined to do everything possible post RSTR to bring all associations together with the common interest of forming a coalition of industry group to come up with a working scheme for rates whereby everyone from the man behind the wheel, yes the driver, the owner operator or subcontractor thru to the major companies can all get a fair go out of the industry. This is going to be a job that is not easy and it will take some time to sort out.

Another issue of note this year has been dropping fuel prices and is one of the reasons we are hearing multinationals and freight forwarders have been dropping rates. Over the last few weeks fuel prices of gone crazy with a few weeks ago the Caltex in Emerald displaying 99.9 cents per litre while in Toowoomba diesel was \$1.099 per litre. Seven or eight days later Emerald has risen to \$1.049 per litre while in Toowoomba it has risen to \$1.199 per litre yet go 95 K further West and Dalby fuel as recent as this Sunday 22nd May was \$1.099 per litre. Me thinks Caltex is playing games.

The NTC have recently called for a review of the Road User charges and how this is implemented.

"The nine options identified in the discussion paper seek to resolve some of the limitations of the current 'pay as you go' (PAYGO) system for heavy vehicle charges," Mr Retter said.

"We welcome stakeholders' views on the options, their compatibility with each other and the criteria for each of them."

The proposed options include:

- changing the methodology used to calculate the heavy vehicle cost base
- ring-fencing of revenue from heavy vehicle charges
- moving to independent price regulation.

The link to the NTC's discussion paper follows.

<http://www.ntc.gov.au/current-projects/options-to-improve-paygo>

We ask all members to urgently read through this discussion paper and advise Tony Hopkins, George Birkbeck, myself, or one of the board members of your thoughts. Submissions to the NTC close on this discussion on 27th July. Time is therefore of the essence as we only have one board meeting between now and then and we need your input.

The National Road Freighters AGM this year will be held in Townsville on 10th September. The venue is the Oaks Metropole on Palmer. We would recommend that everyone planning on attending checkout rates on the various online booking organisations for accommodation at the venue.

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We would like to ask all members to please update their contact details. Particularly we need correct email addresses. Could we also ask all members who pay memberships online to please email a deposit slip as the ANZ bank is notorious for limited information on electronic deposits.

I do hope as many as possible can endeavour to join us in Townsville at this year's AGM. We will have an interesting group of speakers which we hope will include the head of the NHVR and the chairman of Commissioners at the NTC.

Until next time take care and I do hope things improve for each and every one of you.

Best regards,
Russ Martin

QLD DELEGATE:

I recently had a neighbour come to me and explain about a fatigue breach that he had received from Operation Austrans. The person is a linesman for one of the electricity suppliers and was asked to take some equipment to Rockhampton, he had a truck license but really had not driven a truck for quite a number of years in fact the last log book he had purchased was in 2012, and not knowing anything about the strict rules these days and so when he was pulled over by the law enforcement officer and breached for fatigue issues when he in fact had recorded his hours in accordance with the regulation but in a superseded book. So instead of telling the driver what was wrong and he needed a new book proceeded to breach him for \$630. To me this is a gross overzealous and a fine example of the treatment of operators face today by law enforcement. Did this ridiculous breach go into the stats as a major fatigue breach? This is why I'm calling for the 'truth in breach reporting' so the stats are reported correctly as with the truth in reporting real causes of truck accidents for too long the facts have not been forthcoming. And I am pushing this to every politician that I come in contact with.

What a piece of dishonest deliberately distorted anti truck driver journalism. ABC news report Wednesday evening of 22/06. And that grossly dishonest TWU commentator using the unbalanced biased report to sell the flawed and not researched suggestion that those accused of drug taking did so because they were under paid. The segment should make those involved hang their heads in shame.

That won't happen because we live in a society that has no compunction about lying to better a position. I could not object if such as the ATA were to demand every motorist be treated in the same manner. Those stupid people are so dishonest themselves they cannot see the injustice and indignity of the current mess. And I see Bryce Bruce in his NHVR role is still fixated with electronic log books. Talk about being a puppet of technology to promote flawed and poorly considered regulation. How will we ever get appropriate legislation when so many of those with influence within society are content to lie and deceive for personal gain. Note two recent interviews by ATN staff the get an indication of the true fatigue picture. Scum with attitude. As the Australian of the year said, the standard one walks past is the one you accept or to that effect.

Bloody disgusted
Ken Wilkie

QLD Director:

Been a pretty active time with meetings with politicians to voice our opposition to the implementation of RSRT. Myself and Ken Wilkie attended a meeting with the Opposition State Transport Minister Andrew Powell, member for Glass House, John Krause member for Beaudesert and Mark Boothman member for

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Albert talking about fatigue issues, driver education and truckie persecution by law enforcement and enlightening them in general of some of the everyday issues facing the Transport Industry.

I am advocating for a special board meeting to discuss ways to improve the fatigue laws and ask for input from you so we can compile something to put to Government. Please think about it and give us some feedback

Steve Smith

National Road Freighters Association Board on behalf of the member would like to thank Gordon MacKinlay for his tireless work he put into organising the recent convoy to Canberra in protest of the RSRT and the ultimate abolishing of it. Thank you Gordon much appreciated.

AGM time is looming fast and this year it's in Townsville on the 10th September, held at the Metropole Hotel (managed by THE OAKS) on Palmer. 81 Palmer St Townsville QLD 4810.

Flyer attached.

Also attached is a form to be filled out and sent back so we can update any change in address or email address. We seem to have mail going missing so if you could kindly update please do.

Also attached is the flyer for the AGM, please consider coming along and joining us and listening to key note speakers. Hope to see you there.



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National Road Freighters Association Inc.