

DISCUSSION PAPER:

Heavy Vehicle National Law

The Nationals WA are seeking input to develop policy on the Heavy Vehicle National Law framework



Summary:

Pressure is mounting from elements of the national transport industry for Western Australia to adopt Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL). If adopted, the road transport industry in WA would be regulated by a national framework, constraining the capacity of current heavy vehicle operation in our State by limiting vehicle mass, length and driving hours.

Background:

HVNL and regulation commenced in 2014 and the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) was set up to administer laws under the national framework.

At the time, the West Australian government chose to continue regulating heavy vehicle law independently due to the unique circumstances our industry operates in. Safe, efficient and sustainable heavy vehicle access to WA's road network is the responsibility of Main Roads WA's Heavy Vehicle Services unit. Heavy vehicle compliance is managed by Main Roads and WAPOL in conjunction with DAFWA (for special permit livestock transportation). This system has been successfully operating since 2002.

Policy Development:

The Nationals WA share industry concerns that a move to adopt HVNL in its current form in WA could negatively impact industry and ultimately consumers as tighter regulations drive freight rates up and productivity down. The requirement of road manager approvals for heavy vehicle movement permits under national laws adds red tape to existing arrangements in WA, especially for the mining and agriculture sectors. A reduction in vehicle mass, length and allowable consecutive driving hours to meet HVNL requirements would also increase the volume of trucks and truck movements on the road.

The absence of HVNL in our jurisdiction does raise compliance issues faced by businesses operating across borders between WA and other states (with the exception of the Northern Territory). The impact of maintaining the status quo needs to be taken into account.

We are also conscious of the need to maximise road safety, awareness and messaging. WA is at the low end of national heavy vehicle accident statistics and we want to continue to improve that trend.

The Nationals WA invite feedback on this policy discussion paper.

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THE NATIONALS
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