

AUSTRALIAN ROAD TRANSPORT INDUSTRY



RACT SUBMISSION
RRAT REFERENCES
COMMITTEE

OCTOBER 2019

THE ROYAL AUTOMOBILE CLUB OF TASMANIA

RACT enjoys a trusted position and extensive market penetration in the community. More than 190,000 Tasmanians are RACT members.

Formed in 1923, RACT is an apolitical and independent transport, infrastructure, road safety, tourism and mobility advocate.

It is committed to supporting and furthering the interests of Tasmanians and does this through a comprehensive program of consultation, education, awareness and public advocacy.

RACT is represented in a number of stakeholder reference organisations in Tasmania and undertakes liaison with government and other groups. It also has three regional advocacy committees which are made up of local volunteers and other relevant stakeholders.

RACT's advocacy activity is defined by a series of public policy documents developed and endorsed by RACT's Advocacy Committee and Board.

These policies have been informed by history, experience, statistical analysis, consultation, industry knowledge and, most importantly, our members.

Nationally, RACT is a constituent member of the Australian Automobile Association (AAA) which represents some 8 million Australian motorists.

Internationally, RACT has joined with other Australian motoring organisations as a member of the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA) to work on road safety and related issues at a global level.

RACT'S MOBILITY STRATEGY

The RACT Mobility Strategy contains three key pillars, which include road safety, future mobility and sustainability, with an underlying theme of representing Tasmanian road users. Within each key pillar sits a series of vision statements. The statement most applicable to the Australian Road Transport Industry submission is as follows:

Road safety vision

- Improve Tasmanian roads so that they are rated no less than three stars under the AusRAP scheme by 2030.
- Reduce our road toll and lower the impact of serious injury in line with the National Road Safety Strategy and the Tasmanian Road Safety Strategy.
- Lower the average age of the Tasmanian vehicle fleet from 12.8 years to at least the national average by 2030.

AUSTRALIAN ROAD TRANSPORT INDUSTRY SUBMISSION

BACKGROUND

In September 2019, the Senate referred the importance of a viable, safe, sustainable and efficient road transport industry matter to the Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport References Committee for inquiry and report by April 2020. The areas of interest in this inquiry to RACT include:

1. The development and maintenance of road transport infrastructure to ensure a safe and efficient road transport industry.
2. The training and career pathways to support, develop and sustain the road transport industry.
3. The social and economic impact of road-related injury, trauma and death.
4. The impact of new technologies and advancements in freight distribution, vehicle design, road safety and alternative fuels.

EVIDENCE

- Heavy vehicles are involved in, on average, 7% of crashes that result in serious injuries or fatalities on Tasmanian roads per year (Department of State Growth, 2018).
- Electronic stability control systems will be compulsory for new heavy vehicle trailers from July 2019 and for new heavy trucks and buses from November 2020 (Department of Infrastructure, Regional Development and Cities, 2018).

POSITION

1. Safe and efficient transport network

RACT

- Urges the Tasmanian and Australian governments to maintain adequate infrastructure to support high productivity vehicles (HPVs).
- Urges the Tasmanian and Australian governments to increase investment in Tasmania's key freight highways to ensure they achieve a 3-star AusRAP rating. This includes the following:
 - Investment into the Bass Highway, particularly from Wynyard to Marrawah, and continued investment into the Midland Highway 10-year plan.
 - The consideration of funding for freight routes through City Deals, as exhibited through the Bridgewater Bridge funding. Particular attention should be given to freight routes around working ports such as Hobart, Launceston, Devonport and Burnie through City Deals.
- Believes the Tasmanian community must be properly consulted and kept fully aware of any proposals to allow the introduction of larger-scale road freight trucks onto Tasmanian roads.
- Believes the Tasmanian approved B-double Route Network should be observed at all times and enforced appropriately. Where possible, the approved route network should not allow travel through town centres and high density residential areas.
- Believes, where possible, heavy freight vehicle operators should avoid peak commuter travel times in urban centres and unsociable hours in residential areas.
- Encourages rail freight to be an effective partner to the transport network in the task of freight carriage in Tasmania.
- Urges the Tasmanian and Australian governments to conduct extensive safety audits prior to considering any heavily pedestrianised locations for freight transport. RACT is concerned about the relationship between passenger vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists and heavy freight transport vehicles in populated areas.
- Urges the Tasmanian and Australian governments to develop a long-term plan to enable a strategic approach to achieving an effective, efficient and cost-competitive distribution of freight in the State.
- Believes heavy vehicles should pay taxation reflecting the extra wear and tear on the road network imposed by these vehicles.

2. Training and career pathways

RACT

- Encourages the Tasmanian and Australian governments to ensure that appropriate checks, education and testing are in place for the licensing of heavy vehicle drivers.
- Supports the National Heavy Vehicle Driver Competency Framework pathway as a means of assessing drivers' capabilities while driving heavy vehicles.
 - Assessment through this pathway must be rigorous and include defensive driving courses, safety features, heavy vehicle speed limits and co-existence with other road users (vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians).

- Strongly encourages the Tasmanian and Australian governments to develop and promote educational programs dedicated to improving the safety of heavy vehicle drivers.

3. Road-related injury, trauma and death

RACT

- Urges the Tasmanian and Australian governments to ensure adequate resources are provided in the Vehicle Standards Branch to administer vehicle compliance standards.
- Believes heavy vehicles should be subject to similar enforcement regimes as motorists. In addition, specific regulations relating to trucks, such as speed limiting, should be made known, and should be regularly enforced and infringement levels monitored.

4. Technologies and advancements:

RACT

- Supports the mandatory fitting of electronic stability control, which incorporates anti-lock braking and traction control, on all new heavy vehicles (trucks and buses) in Tasmania.
- Urges the Tasmanian and Australian governments to implement laws that dictate the mandatory fitting of:
 - Autonomous emergency braking on new all new heavy vehicles (trucks and buses) in Tasmania.
 - Seatbelts on all new buses in Tasmania.
- Supports the mandatory fitting of electronic stability control, which incorporates anti-lock braking and traction control, on all new heavy vehicles (trucks and buses) in Tasmania.
- Urges Tasmanians to purchase heavy vehicles fitted with the latest crash protection and crash avoidance features as they become available.
- Urges the Tasmanian and Australian governments to refurbish and regularly operate all existing truck weight checking stations together with identifying and building new ones where required on key road freight routes, such as on the Midland Highway between the Brighton Transport Hub and Launceston north-bound.