



Speech by

Hon. Rachel Nolan

MEMBER FOR IPSWICH

Hansard Thursday, 25 February 2010

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

TruckWeek

Hon. RG NOLAN (Ipswich—ALP) (Minister for Transport) (9.53 am): Members may not be aware but this week is the first national TruckWeek. It is an opportunity to showcase trucking's contribution to the economy and the community. Almost 75 per cent of freight in Australia is carried by trucks, including every item we see on our supermarket shelves.

Mr Rickuss: Are you coming to Lights on the Hill on Saturday night? You're invited.

Ms NOLAN: Thank you. The number of freight vehicles in Queensland has grown by 23 per cent in the last four years alone, and is expected to triple by 2050. As the industry says, without trucks Australia stops.

One of the biggest challenges this industry faces is inconsistent regulation between jurisdictions. Trucks do not know borders and even little differences in rules and paperwork can add big costs to doing business. This also adds to the price that you and I pay for goods at the checkout. Queensland has for some time been recognised as a leader in the field of heavy vehicle regulation. After a long campaign championed by the TWU's Hughie Williams, this state became the first to introduce chain of responsibility legislation for driver fatigue. This ensures everyone—from big corporations down to depot managers—have a responsibility not to force truckies to drive while they are tired.

I am pleased to announce today that Queensland will again lead the way on heavy vehicle reform. As everyone knows, the Rudd Labor government has been pursuing the goal of creating a seamless national economy. In the transport area, this includes proposals for national regulation of rail, heavy vehicles and maritime. Transport ministers have agreed to national heavy vehicle regulation, but have not agreed which jurisdiction would host the regulator. Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland were all in the running, but I am pleased to report to the House today that Queensland has won out. This is a fantastic outcome.

We will be the headquarters for the new CEO and regulator that will boost productivity and improve safety in this critical industry. It recognises that, as the most decentralised state, we have the diversity of experience to lead sensible, nationally consistent economic and safety regulation. We know the challenges associated with moving cattle thousands of kilometres on outback highways. We understand the impact a growing region has on meeting delivery times in urban areas. We have a strong history of working collaboratively and productively with industry to deliver win-wins.

I want to particularly acknowledge the good work of industry leaders Hughie Williams from the Transport Workers Union and Peter Garske from the Queensland Trucking Association. I know they will be pleased with this announcement. I wish them, as I wish all members, a happy TruckWeek.