




Speech By
Shane Knuth

MEMBER FOR DALRYMPLE

**TRANSPORT AND OTHER LEGISLATION (HEAVY VEHICLE NATIONAL LAW)
AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Mr KNUTH** (Dalrymple—KAP) (12.36 pm): I rise to speak to the Transport and Other Legislation (Heavy Vehicle National Law) Amendment Bill. This bill relates to what has developed here in Queensland and, likewise, in New South Wales. No doubt there are many issues regarding transport operations in the transport industry and a combination of different factors—including licensing, cost of registration, fatigue management and annual approved inspections—is detailed in the bill. The member for Gregory spoke earlier about vehicle inspections being conducted in rural and regional Queensland. A lot of these truckies are trying to book in their vehicles for a vehicle inspection and sometimes cannot do that within the required time frame. They then commit an offence in driving a non-inspected vehicle due to the massive backlog of vehicle inspections. Somewhere along the line local garages—and I believe this is being worked on currently—in rural and regional areas must be able to participate in the vehicle inspections.

With regard to fatigue management, we have seen that over the years it has been overly policed to the point that it has become a virtual dictatorship. Everywhere we looked we would see transport operators pulling over truckies, checking their logbooks and checking that the t's were crossed and the i's were dotted. There was one particular incident which was very disturbing. A landowner in the Einasleigh area had 200 heifers in the yard that were to be trucked to Hughenden that afternoon. The truck driver was picked up and inspected at Charters Towers. By the time he reached Forty Mile Scrub he was picked up and inspected again after previously also being picked up and inspected at the Lynd Junction roadhouse. He was picked up three times before he was able to get to the destination. By the time he got to the destination he had exceeded his fatigue management limits and he could not move those cattle to Hughenden. That is something that needs to be looked at. It is overly policed.

One of the most important things in terms of the heavy vehicle national law amendments is the need to ensure our truckies have good roads and good access. For example, after Cyclone Yasi the Bruce Highway was cut for 10 days. Vehicles could not get through and could not provide supply—neither north nor south. Once people realised there was an inland route available between Charters Towers and Mount Garnet on the Atherton Tablelands, there was a convoy of vehicles on that road. It is important that we upgrade inland highways. I refer to areas such as Fletcher Creek and Snake Creek. The bridge over the Clarke River needs to be upgraded. It is great that the bridge at Innot Hot Springs is receiving attention at present. If we want to relieve traffic congestion and reduce traffic accidents along the coast, we need to ensure we have inland highways. When we have a cyclone or a natural disaster, transport operators need to be able to move goods without any delays or hiccups.

If we want to save money, the best way is to take pressure off only one area and distribute the load equally across other areas. I mentioned Fletcher Creek and Clarke River. If the bridges over Basalt River, Sandy Creek and Stockyard Creek are upgraded, an inland highway will be created. This is about nation building in the area of transport infrastructure.