




Speech By  
**Hon. Stirling Hinchliffe**

**MEMBER FOR SANDGATE**

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Record of Proceedings, 1 December 2016

## **HEAVY VEHICLE NATIONAL LAW AND OTHER LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL**

 **Hon. SJ HINCHLIFFE** (Sandgate—ALP) (Minister for Transport and the Commonwealth Games) (8.31 pm), in reply: I would like to thank all members of this House who have contributed to the debate on this bill. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the thoughtful contributions of committee members, yet again building on the committee's inquiry work. While I note that the majority of debate on this bill has focused on the personalised transport aspect of the bill, I will take the opportunity that the member for Glass House has provided me to update the chamber on the activities of the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator.

I also wish to acknowledge the comments made by the member for Glass House, the member for Cleveland, the member for Chatsworth, the member for Burdekin and the member for Gympie highlighting the bipartisan nature of the National Heavy Vehicle Law. I look forward to the opposition's support for the introduction of the National Heavy Vehicle Registration Scheme and encourage those opposite to flag the importance of such a scheme with their interstate colleagues.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads is working closely with the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, better known as the NHVR, to improve heavy vehicle access, with a focus on permit efficiencies. In relation to Queensland's progress in facilitating improved road network access, the Department of Transport and Main Roads has worked closely with the NHVR to secure Queensland participation in a national notice for the movement of oversized loads. This national notice does away with the requirement for operators to apply for an individual permit for these movements up to 4.5 metres wide. TMR is continuing to explore options for improvements in this area.

Queensland has also extended period permits for heavy mobile cranes from 12 months to three years and has just signed up to a national notice for heavy two-axle cranes. This means that permits are no longer required for two-axle cranes. TMR is also engaged in ongoing dialogue with the heavy haulage industry to ensure the department is aware of industry's specific productivity needs to drive innovative solutions to assist industry.

TMR has also been proactive in dealing with the Queensland agricultural sector to develop two significant national notices for the movement of oversize agricultural machinery. These notices allow growers and contractors to legally move their machinery without the need for a permit, allowing a more responsive approach, particularly during harvest times.

There has been a 22 per cent improvement in approval response times for oversize and overmass permit approvals from 7.5 days to 5.8 days, between April and October 2016. New permit systems are being developed by the NHVR and TMR for deployment in 2017. They will significantly enhance the abilities of both the NHVR and TMR in permit approval response times for industry. Again, I acknowledge the work of the National Transport Commission, the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, and Transport and Main Roads which have assisted in implementing these reforms.

Given the content of debate, I will address my remaining remarks to comments regarding the Transport Operations (Passenger Transport) Act 1994. Amendments in this bill will also provide for the administration of financial assistance to the taxi and limousine industry in order to implement the \$100 million industry adjustment assistance package. This package is a critical part of the government's program for reform of the personalised transport industry, and I have committed to delivering this to industry as soon as possible to assist with the transition to the new regulatory framework.

Regarding comments made by the opposition about the timing of these payments, this government has been clear. As I noted in my second reading speech, a regulation will be progressed urgently following passage of this bill to detail a scheme for payment of transitional assistance. Subject to Governor in Council approval of this regulation, payments will be expedited. The intention is to send invitations to eligible licence holders for transitional assistance payments in December to enable payments shortly thereafter.

We undertook a review because we wanted to get these transitional payments right. In contrast to the parroted rhetoric of those opposite, we took steps to consult and listen. We took a considered approach to this legislation. We do not rush into policy decisions. This opposition talks a big game—but it is all slogans. The shadow minister criticised our plan, yet he failed to document any plan of his own. He wants a plan. He does not want to do any work on it. He does not know what it looks like, but he wants it yesterday. He wants to remove the cap on licences, but then he fails to say what the compensation would look like and how they would pay for it.

How does the LNP opposition intend to fund those payments? I note the member for Gaven's endorsement of a levy on rideshare and taxi users. It surprises me that more members opposite did not advocate the LNP's desire to impose a levy. I understand that the shadow minister needs to try to find a point of difference between us on this issue, but some of his hyperbole is too much to bear.

I also reflect on the many examples and stories shared by members from all sides of the debate. They reiterate the importance of the business advisory services that the industry assistance package provides. These services will provide specialist, honest and independent advice to operators—something that is very much needed in this issue—advice that will cut through the misinformation and deception being peddled by a range of people out there, including by many members who reflected on it.

I also point out the contribution made by the member for Buderim, who noted multinationals do not pay enough tax. I look forward to the day when his federal colleagues take action on this or perhaps his new friend Pauline Hanson. The member for Southport highlighted that the current regulatory environment is extremely prescriptive, restricting many elements of choice and flexibility. We have regulations that go so far as to detail how in-car cameras are screwed into cars. It is clear that these regulations are no longer fit for purpose in the current transport environment we operate in.

Stage 2 of these reforms will, as planned and as clearly outlined in the OPT review response, address many of the comments raised by those opposite. As the member for Logan noted, stage 2 will address many of the digital disruptions impacting industry. Further, it will tackle the matters of licensing and safety and provide a full review of the regulatory framework that facilitates personalised transport. It is this stage that is crucial to ensuring a level playing field for all personalised transport players. It should be a considered, thorough and holistic review. However, it appears the proposed amendments from the shadow minister may hasten and put in jeopardy their consideration.

I will continue to work with both the taxi and limousine industries and the industry reference group to ensure we establish the right mechanism for the distribution of hardship payments and, very importantly, deliver stage 2 of the reforms. I will continue to work with industry to ensure that we deliver on the commitment that this government made in response to the Transportation and Utilities Committee.

I remind members that in my second reading speech I noted that the stage 2 reforms would address outstanding concerns from the committee. It is funny to reflect on the rollcall of opposition members we have seen speak on the bill. Not one LNP member advocated innovation. Not one LNP member was in favour of less red tape. What we all heard was a rollcall of the old National Party straining at the bit to be let loose. Where was the former transport minister—the one who put the wall up for ridesharing and stubbornly defended it? Where was the opposition leader or his deputy? I note the contribution from the former assistant minister for public transport, the member for Chatsworth, who highlighted the former Newman government's inaction. I am sure the opposition leader's media advisors are looking to spin their way out of this, but the reality is that the LNP leadership team has failed to make any notable contribution. It is very mediocre.

In closing, I would like to again thank all my departmental officers and staff who have worked tirelessly on this bill as well as the key stakeholders who have been involved in this bill for their hard work, and that is both across the issues associated with personalised transport and the Heavy Vehicle National Law. I want to thank the member for Kallangur, in particular, for the great work that he did on the committee. I also want to thank the member for Logan for his kind words during this debate.

We want to do the right thing by the taxi industry—by the whole of the personalised transport industry. We want to do the right thing by Queenslanders who have worked hard, who have a strong work ethic and who have pride in what they do. I can assure the House that this government will continue to listen and I will continue to engage with industry. The industry assistance package strikes the right balance in acknowledging the challenges the industry faces while opening up Queensland's personalised transport playing field. I thank the House.