




Speech By
Hon. Mark Ryan

MEMBER FOR MORAYFIELD

Record of Proceedings, 5 September 2018

HEAVY VEHICLE NATIONAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL

 **Hon. MT RYAN** (Morayfield—ALP) (Minister for Police and Minister for Corrective Services) (2.10 pm): I rise to support the Heavy Vehicle National Law Amendment Bill 2018 and make a short contribution in support of the bill. As we have already heard, the heavy vehicle national law regulates matters about the operation of heavy vehicles such as their mass and dimensions, vehicle safety standards, fatigue management, heavy vehicle accreditation, speed compliance and the use of intelligent transport systems. The heavy vehicle national law also includes chain-of-responsibility offences, enforcement powers and administrative provisions. The bill before the House proposes to amend the heavy vehicle national law to implement a number of nationally agreed reforms.

It is important for this bill to pass because, as we have heard, Queensland has the host legislation for the heavy vehicle national law, and the legislation must be passed in this parliament first before it can be passed in other jurisdictions. The nationally agreed reforms which are picked up in this amendment bill seek to: strengthen investigative and enforcement powers for authorised officers; allow increased freight volumes where mass is not a constraint; transfer load restraint performance standards from guidance material to the heavy vehicle national law; and make a range of minor maintenance amendments to ensure the heavy vehicle national law remains contemporary and fit for purpose. It also makes an amendment specific to Queensland with respect to the election of a Magistrates Court location, which I will come back to in a couple of moments.

As many people in this chamber have already said, safe roads are productive and efficient roads. When you think about it, when you prioritise safety on the roads you also prioritise the productiveness and efficiency of those roads. Unsafe roads create inefficiencies; unsafe roads are less productive. Having a heavy vehicle national law regime which focuses on safety is not only about those involved in the industry being safe but about making our roads as productive and efficient as possible. I want to pay tribute to the work that is done by people within my agency, the Queensland Police Service, with respect to the heavy vehicle national law and the work they do alongside the heavy vehicle regulator. They work alongside the regulator with respect to the movement of heavy vehicles on our roads. They assist with heavy load escorts and compliance activity. It is important to acknowledge not only the work done by the regulator but also the work done by the Queensland Police Service and the Department of Transport and Main Roads in prioritising safety on our roads.

The bill before the House does not just reflect nationally agreed reforms. There is significant consultation that goes on behind and in front of the scenes to ensure this regime provides the best safety framework possible for heavy vehicles and all roads users, for that matter. I want to note the extensive consultation process that was undertaken with respect to the development of this bill. There was consultation with the National Transport Commission, the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator, the Heavy Vehicle National Law Maintenance Advisory Group and the industry advisory group.

The industry advisory group includes the Australian Trucking Association, the National Farmers' Federation, the Transport Workers Union and the Australian Logistics Council, as well as vehicle manufacturers, suppliers, transport operators and transport training industry members. The Heavy

Vehicle National Law Maintenance Advisory Group also has wide membership which includes policing agencies, key industry groups, the Local Government Association of Queensland, Transport Certification Australia, Toll Group and Heavy Vehicle Industry Australia. I say this because it reflects the hard work that has been done to bring this bill before the House. It also reflects the consensus building that has occurred. This is about all people in the sector and all people in the industry having a key focus: to enhance safety on our roads. They are to be commended for their collaboration with respect to these reforms and also more broadly in supporting a national heavy vehicle regime.

I said that I would come back to the Queensland specific amendment, and that is about the election of a court location for fatigue related offences. There is an inefficiency, an unnecessary burden, in the law as it currently stands, and this bill will seek to address that inefficiency, that unnecessary burden, by ensuring that drivers of heavy vehicles who have to respond to similar offences across different Magistrates Court locations only have to come before the one Magistrates Court. The inefficiency, the unnecessary burden, that exists now—as I am sure other speakers would have discussed—requires a driver to appear in each Magistrates Court district throughout the state. We had a situation where a driver who had to appear in six Magistrates Courts had to pay court fees in each Magistrates Court, and then he had warrants issued for his arrest because he failed to appear in two of the courts. This is really an inefficient way of ensuring compliance with the national law and supporting compliance with respect to safe driving.

Road safety is everyone's business. The message that is consistently promoted by all members of this House, members of our community, the Department of Transport and Main Roads and the Queensland Police Service is that we have to make good choices when we get behind the wheel of a vehicle. Whether it is a heavy vehicle, a car or a pushbike, everyone has to make good choices. We have to make sure that we do not just consider our own safety when we operate those vehicles but the safety of others. I am really proud that Queensland is the host jurisdiction for this legislation because it is about safety on our roads. It is about promoting good choices on our roads. All members of this House should be very proud that we are the host jurisdiction. I look forward to seeing the bill passed by the House and other jurisdictions adopting these reforms.