



NSW MINISTER FOR ROADS
MICHAEL DALEY MP

NEWS RELEASE

NEW HEAVY VEHICLE LAWS TO STAMP OUT FATIGUE

State Plan Priority S7: Safer Roads

Friday 26th September 2008

Minister for Roads Michael Daley announced today new heavy vehicle laws will be introduced on Monday to help reduce the number of fatigue and speed related deaths and injuries on NSW roads.

Mr Daley said the new laws are part of a national package developed by the National Transport Commission to improve the management of fatigue and speed across the heavy vehicle industry.

“Fatigue is one of the biggest causes of crashes for heavy vehicle drivers and these new regulations are about making our roads safer and driving down the road toll.

“Between 2005 and 2007 there were around 3000 recorded heavy vehicle crashes which included 86 fatal accidents and 1211 injury crashes,” he said.

The regulations will apply to heavy trucks or truck and trailer combinations over 12 tonnes and buses that seat over 12 adults including the driver.

The industry will have a choice of operating under three fatigue management schemes:

- A standard hour option with a maximum driving hours of 12 hours in any period of 24 hours with specific limits on work and rest,
- A basic fatigue management option which allows flexibility within a set minimum rest and maximum work hours (14 hours work in any 24 hour period); and
- An advanced fatigue management option based on a risk management approach with operating and outer limits of 15 hours work in any 24 hour period in NSW.

“I’ve listened to the concerns of people in the industry over these new regulations and will introduce a number of exemptions,” Mr Daley said.

“I’ll be exempting emergency services vehicles completely from the new regulations. Our RFS volunteers don’t need to be worrying about a log book on their way to save homes,” he said.

Mr Daley said in addition he will **introduce other exemptions for 12 months** to give him time to consult with the industry and primary producers. The exemptions include:

- Exempting **primary producers** from filling out the work diary if they travel less than 160km from home; and
- Exempting **truck drivers** from filling in the work diary if they don’t travel more than 100km from base.

"I'm putting these exemptions in place for 12 months so that I have plenty of time to talk to people in the industry about making sure these laws aren't unduly onerous," Mr Daley said.

"Under the regulations Government contract buses will also be exempt from the work diary requirement, along with all **bus and coach drivers** who travel within 100km of their depot.

"Drivers need to be aware that although they may not be required to carry a work diary the new hours and rest break regimes will still apply to them from Monday.

"These exemptions will bring NSW broadly in line with the other Eastern States, who also exempt some drivers from the work diary requirement.

"Nobody wants drivers of heavy vehicles on the roads with drivers that are fatigued to the point they can't operate properly.

"We wouldn't accept drivers affected by alcohol on our roads, and we shouldn't be willing to accept drivers who are simply too tired to drive these big trucks and buses.

"These laws are about getting people off the roads who are dangerous - whether you are a farmer or a bus driver, if you're too tired to be on the roads you shouldn't be driving," he said.

For more information log onto the RTA website www.rta.nsw.gov.au or phone 13 22 13.

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