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## Why is the Friday Facts late?

As you may have noticed, the Friday Facts is late. This was due to an internet issue that has now been resolved.

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## Screen truck drivers for depression, ATA says



Truck drivers should be screened for depression as part of the medical checks for their driver's licence, TruckSafe or fatigue accreditation, ATA Chairman Trevor Martyn said today.

The call for depression screening is a key recommendation in the ATA's submission to the National Transport Commission's review of the medical standards used to carry out the checks.

Trevor said that depression is a common medical

condition, with about one million Australians affected each year.

“Statistics show that drivers with mild depression are more than twice as likely to have an accident or near miss as drivers who do not have depression. Drivers with very severe depression are almost six times more likely to have an accident or near miss,” Trevor said.

“Given the accident risk associated with depression, the ATA believes it would be appropriate to add a screening tool to the patient questionnaire filled in by truck drivers before they undertake their medicals, such as the K10 questionnaire used in the medical standard for safety critical rail workers.

“The K10 questionnaire asks ten questions about the patient’s feelings over the last four months. It can be incorporated into the questionnaire that drivers are already asked to fill out; no extra tests or costs are required.

“Truck drivers whose questionnaire results indicate depression should then be referred for help. Because of the limitations of any screening tool, drivers referred for help should continue to hold their licence without restrictions, unless those are warranted on clinical grounds,” he said.

Trevor urged trucking companies to develop health and support programs for their staff, including on mental health issues.

“For our part, the ATA is putting plans together with the national depression initiative, *beyondblue*, to raise the industry’s awareness of anxiety and depression and to educate people about the importance of getting help early,” he said.

The ATA submission also recommended that:

- the standards should require practitioners to map out a treatment and review program for commercial drivers with a blood pressure of less than 200/110 but greater than 150/95 unless the driver is already receiving treatment.
- practitioners should receive more guidance on identifying and assessing the safety risks of hypoglycaemic unawareness; that is, when a person does not recognise they are suffering the early symptoms of a diabetic attack.
- the commercial standard for diabetes controlled by diet alone should require practitioners to ensure that diabetic drivers understand the critical importance of having regular meals and managing their fatigue, and that they understand how to manage their meals and fatigue under the trucking industry’s operating conditions.
- the sleep apnoea standard for commercial drivers should require practitioners to assess their physical measurements, such as their neck circumference, as well as the results of the questionnaire they fill in. Commercial drivers whose physical measurements indicate a high likelihood of sleep apnoea should be referred for further investigation.

The rules for when truck drivers need to have medical checks varies from state to state; however, drivers in the ATA's TruckSafe accreditation program are required to have regular medicals, as are drivers accredited under the Basic or Advanced Fatigue Management schemes.

 **You can read the full submission by [clicking here](#).**

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## Local government representatives to see high productivity vehicles in action



Thirty-seven local government and RTA representatives will meet in Narrandera next Friday to evaluate the benefits of high productivity vehicles and see them in action on a 92 kilometre circuit.

The event has been organised jointly by the Narrandera Shire Council and the ATA Industry Technical Council, with the support of ATA NSW and individual operators, including members of NatRoad and ALTA.

The ATA's National Policy Manager, David Coonan, said the event would give local government representatives and RTA officers the chance to see high productivity vehicles in action and talk through their characteristics with industry experts.

“The local government representatives who attend the event will leave with the knowledge and expertise to make informed decisions when they consider applications from operators to use high productivity vehicles,” David said.

After a welcome from the Mayor of Narrandera, Graham Eipper, the participants will hear presentations from David; the father of the B-double and higher mass limits, Bob Pearson; and from Queensland Transport about the state's success with the early adoption of high productivity vehicles.

The participants will then be able to examine a series of high productivity vehicles, including a B-triple, an AB-triple, a BAB-quad, as well as PBS innovations such as a pocket road train tanker configuration that meets the PBS level 2 requirements.

The high productivity vehicles will then travel around a 92 kilometre local road circuit, under special permits issued by the Narrandera Shire Council and the RTA. The circuit has been selected by industry experts to showcase a wide variety of road surfaces, gradients and corners, including some that approach the limitations of the vehicles.

“The participants will be able to watch the vehicles and ride in their cabs as they travel through the circuit's key points, which will give them vital practical insights into what they can and cannot do,” David said.

David said the Narrandera Shire Council, local police, and regional RTA officers had worked hard to issue the permits needed for the vehicles to operate on the road circuit.

“Their commonsense and local knowledge has been invaluable, and I want to thank them for getting behind the concept of this event. I also want to thank the operators who are generously making their equipment available: Day’s Transport, Paterson’s Transport, Milbrae Quarries, Kelvin Baxter Transport, Fonterra Milk, and Herb Blanchard Transport,” he said.

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### **Australian Government calls for truck rest area submissions**



The Australian Government has called for submissions seeking funding for new truck rest areas, technology trials and route upgrades under the final round of its Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program.

The Minister for Infrastructure and Transport, Anthony Albanese, said the Government was committed to building more rest stops and investing in cutting-edge technology to make highways safer for truck drivers and the motorists sharing the roads with them.

“The program was developed in consultation with the trucking industry to provide a safer environment for drivers delivering products and produce across the nation,” Mr Albanese said.

“We are seeking projects from state and territory governments and the trucking industry that can help cut the number of speed and fatigue related fatalities involving heavy vehicles on our roads.”

The projects eligible for funding include:

- the construction of more heavy vehicle rest stops and parking areas along highways and on the outskirts of major cities;
- trials of technologies that electronically monitor a truck driver's work hours and vehicle speed - for example, using an onboard 'black box', electronic log, or the Global Positioning System (GPS); and
- upgrades to bridges and freight routes to allow them to carry bigger loads.

The Government established the program last year with \$70 million in funding. The program only went ahead, however, after the Senate passed the Government’s truck charges legislation with amendments sought by the ATA and the trucking industry. The Government funded 150 projects earlier this year; its final round funding call is for the \$40 million remaining in the program.

Submissions close on 30 September 2009.

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## TLISC unveils online transport education library



The Transport and Logistics Industry Skills Council (TLISC) this week unveiled its online transport education library, [www.transportlibrary.com.au](http://www.transportlibrary.com.au), which contains hundreds of reports about transport and logistics, skills and vocational education and training.

The library's features include advanced searches, the ability to email results and an alert system for users.

Using the library is free. To sign up, [click here](#).

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## Racing champion to open 2009 TMC



Aussie V8 champion, Steve Richards will open the 2009 Technical and Maintenance Conference for workshop professionals, fleet managers and industry suppliers.

Steve will explore the relationship a driver has with his workshop team and suppliers in the development of his car and on race day.

How do they communicate their problems efficiently and effectively? How do they implement new ideas and how does the chain of feedback work?

Major sponsor Castrol is sponsoring Steve's visit to the opening session of the 2009 TMC on Sunday 15 November, where delegates will have the opportunity to put their own questions to the Ford Performance Racing Team star.

The 2009 Technical and Maintenance Conference is the only annual gathering open to all professionals employed in trucking workshops, fleet managers and suppliers to the road transport industry.

The conference provides useful information through good presentations and demonstrations that are applicable to trucking businesses.

It has a strong maintenance focus. Sessions are designed with the following in mind – safety, productivity, environment and cost.

The Silverwater Resort at the gateway to Phillip Island, is a self contained 'live in' conference facility.

An important aspect of the conference is after session interaction between people who rarely get the chance. A 'village' environment will create excellent group interaction - operator to operator; and operator to supplier.

For more information on the 2009 Technical and Maintenance Conference visit [www.ataevents.net.au](http://www.ataevents.net.au).

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### **Sponsor of the week: MaxiTRANS**



*MaxiTRANS finance specialists, Rohan Ford and Don Leale at MaxiTRANS' Derrimut headquarters.*

MaxiTRANS Australia is a supporter of the ATA's 'The Road Ahead' touring exhibition trailer, a project on behalf of the entire road transport sector to promote shared road behaviours and careers in the industry.

MaxiTRANS supplied walls for the trailer from its famous Peki subsidiary. It also provided access to its unique catalogue of historic Australian trucking photographs.

The company has established MaxiTRANS Finance. The program offers all Freighter, Maxi-CUBE and Lusty EMS buyers access to competitive leasing and financing programs from specialists with extensive knowledge and experience in heavy equipment finance across a range of industries.

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## **Industry events calendar**

### [Freight Week 2009](#)

Monday 7 - Friday 11 September 2009  
Melbourne Tennis Centre, VIC

### [QTA Annual Queensland Trucking Industry Awards Gala Dinner](#)

31st October 2009

Brisbane Hilton

Contact [admin@qta.com.au](mailto:admin@qta.com.au) or phone 07 3394 4388 for further information.

### [2009 Technical and Maintenance Conference](#)

Sunday 15 - Tuesday 17 November 2009

Silverwater Resort, Phillip Island, VIC

To have your event listed in the Friday Facts just send an email to [bauched@atatruck.net.au](mailto:bauched@atatruck.net.au).

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## **Subscribe to the Friday Facts**

Do you know someone who would like to subscribe to the Friday Facts? Are you tired of forwarding it to 20 people in your organisation?

Here's how your colleagues can subscribe to the Friday Facts too and get the benefits of the latest trucking industry news and information.

Just ask them to send an email to David Bauche: [bauched@atatruck.net.au](mailto:bauched@atatruck.net.au).

The Friday Facts is free. You can unsubscribe at any time by sending us an email to the address above, or by clicking the automatic unsubscribe link at the bottom of this email.

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## **Join your state, sector or employee member organisation**

The ATA's member organisations provide vital member services, advice and industry updates. There's a member organisation to suit everyone in the industry, whether you are an operator or employee.

The contact details for all ATA member organisations are listed below. Or you can click [here](#) and follow the links to their individual websites.

## ATA Member Association Contact Details

Australian Furniture Removers Association	PH: (02) 9659 5300
Australian Livestock Transporters Association	PH: (02) 6247 5434
ATA NSW	PH: (02) 9571 8600
ATA NT	PH: (08) 8947 7161
NatRoad ( <i>incorporating Australian Road Train Association</i> )	PH: (02) 6295 3000
Queensland Trucking Association	PH: (07) 3394 4388
South Australian Road Transport Association	PH: (08) 8445 8177
Transport Forum WA	PH: (08) 9355 3022
Transport Women Australia	PH: (02) 6041 6244
Transport Workers Union	PH: (02) 9912 0788
Victorian Transport Association	PH: (03) 9646 8590

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