

# MEDIA RELEASE



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## PROPOSED TRUCKING INDUSTRY SHUTDOWNS

The Australian Trucking Association (ATA) does not support the trucking industry shutdowns that some people are proposing for the two weeks from 28 July 2008.

The ATA is the trucking industry's peak body. It is completely funded by the industry and its suppliers. Its General Council includes elected representatives of small fleet operators and owner drivers.

The Chairman of the ATA, Trevor Martyn, said he understood the hardships that many in the industry were going through, but warned that shutdowns were not the answer.

"Many owner drivers and small trucking companies are in crisis because of the spiralling price of diesel, which has gone up 50 cents per litre since last October. Many people in the trucking industry are now watching their life's work collapse around them," Mr Martyn said.

"But going on strike and standing around truck stops for two weeks isn't the answer. The price of diesel is going up across the world because of China's massive demand for fuel. Holding a two-week strike in Australia will have no effect on prices at all.

"Instead of going on strike, I urge every owner-driver and trucking operator to think through how their business can deal with the rising price of fuel. They need to:

- understand their costs and review them regularly: not once a quarter or once a year, but every week;
- negotiate with their customers to increase their freight rates or impose a fuel surcharge. Some companies will need to increase their freight rates by more than 20 per cent; and
- most importantly, refuse to accept jobs that do not pay enough to cover their costs.

"Another great step would be to join one of the ATA's member organisations. They are a source of expert advice and provide their members with tools like downloadable cost calculators to make the job easier.

"The ATA's member organisations include state associations, sector associations and the Transport Workers Union, so there's an organisation that's right for everyone in the industry.

"In contrast, some of the people leading the calls for shutdowns are associated with a fringe political group centred on north Queensland, the Southern Cross Party," Mr Martyn said.

Mr Martyn said the trucking industry was desperately concerned about the introduction of the new fatigue management laws in September.

"The new laws will be an absolute fiasco, because the state and territory governments are out of control and have ignored the industry's need for consistency across the state borders," Mr Martyn said.

“None of the states have rest areas that meet the national guidelines, even though they all promised to bring them up to standard by the end of 2008.

“The only solution is for the Australian Government to take over heavy vehicle regulation. The states have had their chance and failed; we need national regulation with strong involvement from the industry.

“We want everyone in the industry to get involved, and the best way that people can have their say is to join one of the ATA’s member organisations,” Mr Martyn said.

**To find out more about the ATA’s member organisations, visit**  
[http://www.atatruck.net.au/member\\_org.html](http://www.atatruck.net.au/member_org.html)

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