



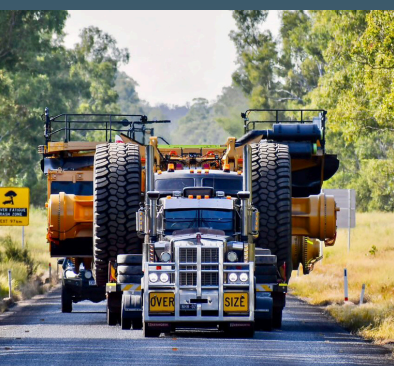
2024 State Election Blueprint



IT'S TIME TO GET QUEENSLAND MOVING



Road Freight: Carrying Queensland's Future



Prepared by the Queensland Trucking Association Ltd

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Executive Summary

The Qld State road system and key bridges are built for cars and trucks drive on them. It is critical the focus turns towards designing and building roads to accommodate trucks that cars can also use. Building road infrastructure without accommodating the largest vehicles on the road is shortsighted and can lead to increased safety hazards, inefficiencies in transport, and higher costs for infrastructure adjustments in the future. It is essential to design roads that ensure accessibility and safety for heavy vehicles to promote efficient transportation and economic growth.

The QTA 2024 Election Blueprint “It’s Time to Get Queensland Moving” recommends key economic investment priorities to inform all political parties and decision makers to make bold decisions to improve the resilience and growth potential of Queensland’s economy.

An energetic, innovative and competitive road freight industry is crucial to the prosperity and growth of our State – it stimulates employment opportunities and drives economic growth.

The road freight industry enables communities to function by providing consumers and businesses choice as it performs an efficient, yet often understated and invisible role to ensure fresh food is transported from farm to market to supermarket shelves, resources transported from mines to ports, and products are on site when required for manufacturing and construction projects.

The opportunity needs to be taken to improve road freight efficiencies for the benefit of our economy and international competitiveness. Investment reform is urgently needed to boost the supply side of the economy to improve productivity and raise living standards.

Access for safer high productivity vehicles on key freight routes in Queensland is significantly limited particularly by bridge infrastructure requiring upgrades throughout the State. Bridges are the fuses in the road system and are currently inhibiting productivity.

The industry requires the confidence to invest in high productivity combinations to increase efficiency. These combinations have proven safety and productivity benefits and will significantly reduce the number of truck journeys required to complete the task more efficiently. This will strengthen the viability of Queensland business with certainty of utilisation an essential ingredient to create business confidence.

This blueprint articulates a clear vision for the future road freight system of Queensland. It discusses the considerable social license of road freight operators who ensure that essential everyday goods are available for households and businesses throughout all regions of Queensland. The QTA acknowledges the sizeable investments made in the Queensland road system, however, we strongly urge the Queensland Government to direct more economic stimulus monies to essential key road assets to unlock and connect key freight routes to safer higher productivity vehicles.

The recommendations following in this section of the election blueprint form the key drivers for priorities that need to be actioned to improve the financial viability of road freight business in Queensland and lead to a surge in economic confidence.

As the leading peak industry body for road freight in Queensland, the QTA urges the next Queensland Government to give critical consideration to these key actions.

A future-shaping road freight investment plan is needed to cultivate business confidence and provide safer roads for all – It’s Time to Get Queensland Moving.



Gary Mahon
Chief Executive Officer
Queensland Trucking Association Ltd

Election Priorities Summary

INDUSTRY CALL 1 - Invest in roads built for trucks

The Government needs to invest in roads that are built for trucks to increase productivity and boost the economy

- Fix the Bruce
- Truck-Way freight corridor between Toowoomba to Port of Brisbane
- Continue to invest in the Inland Freight Route (IFR)
- Invest in rest areas every 200km along the Bruce Highway

INDUSTRY CALL 2 - Build bridges to connect freight networks

The Government needs to invest in bridge upgrades to connect key freight routes to open up access for high productivity truck combinations

- Direct more investment towards essential bridge upgrades

INDUSTRY CALL 3 - Invest in Industry led training

Direct funding into industry led training programs that lead to job outcomes

- Invest in workforce programs that support employers to train and grow their workforce by providing on-the-job mentored training subsidies
- Fully fund the Heavy Vehicle Driver Apprenticeship
- Establish a 'Trade Taster' program in Schools for Transport and Logistics

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Queensland Trucking Association

The Queensland Trucking Association (QTA) is the peak industry association for road freight operators in Queensland including owner drivers through to major transport and logistics companies.

Representing the road freight industry since 1907, the QTA is the trusted industry association to advocate strongly on industry issues by engaging constructively with industry stakeholders and government to influence positive change in policy, regulation and law reform to support the operation of a profitable, efficient and safe industry.

Queensland road freight operators trust the Association to provide them with knowledge, insights and unbiased opinion on Government and Opposition policies relating to road freight operations and the economy as part of the forthcoming State Election.

The Importance of Queensland's Road Freight Industry

Queensland's road freight industry underpins major pillars of the economy and is a key driver of the economy in this growing state. It is the industry that provides services to enable the resources, construction, agriculture, tourism, low carbon energy sectors. It provides consumers choice by ensuring supermarket shelves are stocked, online shopping is delivered, hospital patients have essential medical supplies, construction materials are on site, agricultural produce from Queensland farms can be enjoyed locally and abroad, and advanced manufactured goods are delivered to markets.

Road freight is critical to the Queensland economy serving as the backbone of supply chains. The road freight industry's importance will only increase as the domestic freight task is forecast to grow by 26 per cent by 2030, a percentage increase above both population and economic growth.

Our Call to the Next Government

The 2024 State Election comes at a time that generations of Queenslanders are facing challenges they have not previously experienced. These unprecedented challenges also critically impact business. This is why the next Queensland Government must commit to shaping the future with investments that ensure the survivability of the freight business, enable the economy and rejuvenate the confidence of Queenslanders.

Efficient and productive supply chains underpin economic growth and are critical to servicing the needs of Queenslanders and reaching global markets. The next Queensland Government will need to significantly improve the Queensland road freight network productivity within a constrained funding environment and target investment where it will have the greatest impact. Investing in bridges is one critical area. Bridges are crucial infrastructure as each freight route is effectively only as good as the minimal rated bridge on that journey (**forcing significantly more truck trips**).

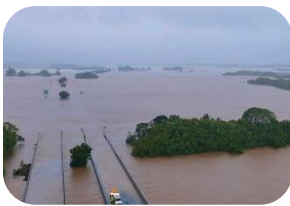
QTA urges the Queensland Government to direct more economic stimulus monies to essential road investment, most notably, key enabling assets such as bridges. This will unlock principal freight routes and open capacity for higher productivity vehicles to access markets for export and, strengthen the viability of Queensland business.

INDUSTRY CALL 1 - Invest in roads built for trucks

The Government need to invest in roads that are built for trucks to increase productivity and boost the economy

Road and bridge infrastructure perform a crucial role in enabling the freight delivery task. It is important that the State's infrastructure freight networks are built for the vehicles who carry the economy of the State.

Queensland is impacted by the most natural disasters in Australia in respect to duration, frequency, and intensity of events. Queensland has a population that is dispersed across a large geographical footprint and it is vitally important that supply chains are resilient to network interruptions, particularly during catastrophic environmental events.



Barron River



Cook Highway



Palmerston Highway



Kuranda Range

The ageing bridge stock needs priority investment that will directly impact the efficiency of the road freight industry daily. Queensland's publicly owned road network is a strategic asset, vital to our security, communities and livelihoods. The road freight industry requires efficient, safe and operational freight corridors, and bridges are the fuses within the road system. They are the crucial infrastructure as each transport route can only be as productive as the declared minimal rated bridge on that route.

Bold investment decisions are needed by the next Queensland Government to fund these identified key infrastructure projects to connect freight corridors and meet the demand in this expansive and decentralised State to energise economic growth.

To achieve this, the next Queensland Government must continue to lobby the Federal Government to restore the 80-20 funding split for Queensland – it is time for Queensland to get a fair go.

Fix the Bruce

We need a 10-year funding commitment from the State and Federal Governments to continue upgrading the Bruce Highway by widening narrow sections and bridges, installing more overtaking lanes, and installing decent truck rest areas every 200km.

The statistics revealed in the RACQ Bruce Highway Report reveal that the Bruce Highway features in 8/10 top accident hotspots in the State. This is just not good enough for a highway that forms part of the National highway network in Australia.

In 2024, we have 1,398 kilometres of the Bruce Highway (from Gympie to Cairns) that is still single-lane and undivided, leading to an average 'per kilometre travelled' crash rate three times higher than rural sections of the Pacific Highway and five times higher than rural sections of the Hume Highway.

The Bruce Highway serves as the backbone of this State, and a supposed National Highway, but compared to the Pacific or Hume, it's substandard.

We need a 10 year funding commitment from the State and Federal Governments to accelerate the capital program to widen narrow sections and bridges, install more overtaking lanes, remediate floodways and progressively duplicate to a dual carriageway to match the Hume and Pacific National Highways.



Truck Way connecting Queensland to the Port of Brisbane

Further invest in the Toowoomba to Port of Brisbane freight corridor to maximise utilisation of the Toowoomba Bypass, unlock potential capacity and improve supply chain efficiency.

The upgrade of the Toowoomba Second Range Crossing (Toowoomba Bypass) as a key freight corridor between Toowoomba and Port of Brisbane has unlocked a large part of the enormous economic potential of both the South East and South West of Queensland that will deliver regional prosperity and support jobs.

However, the Bremer River Bridge is impeding productivity progress in Queensland. The current planned remediation of the bridge will only restore it to a 2014 load limit capacity.

A future-thinking solution is needed beyond the proposed rail corridor to connect Inland Rail to the Port of Brisbane. The preservation and, ultimately, construction of a dedicated freight rail corridor would allow a small percentage of road freight movements to be removed from the road network. This will make a minimal impact to alleviating congestion.

The QTA contends that this corridor (Toowoomba/Port Link) represents an opportunity to establish a complementary dedicated **Truck-Way to the Port of Brisbane**. A Truck-Way is a controlled environment that offers a unique opportunity to utilise future heavy vehicle technology improvements such as automation, electric powered, hydrogen and other alternatives, specialised prime movers in multi-trailer combinations in a fully controlled and dedicated environment. These options offer a reduced footprint in emissions, substantially quieter operations, and significant flexibility, as well as creating a safer, more efficient, and productive freight route.

Currently there are four million truck movements, and this is forecast to increase to 13 million by 2050. Rail is unlikely to be able to fulfil anywhere near this future demand.

Modal choice is determined by a variety of factors including reliability, price, timeliness, type of goods, geographic circumstance and other economic and social factors.

A Truck-Way would seek to improve connectivity between the Port of Brisbane and freight terminals in the Brisbane region through preserving and, ultimately, delivering a dedicated corridor. This would aim to supplement and meet the projected increase in freight volumes, while facilitating neutrality, choice, and competition between transport modes.

The Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd (PBPL) is the third largest, and one of the fastest growing container Ports in Australia, handling product worth around \$50 billion each year. This represents approximately 15 per cent of Queensland's Gross State Product (GSP) and approximately 50 percent of Queensland's international trade by value.

Further to this, PBPL handles over 95 percent of Queensland's import and export containers and 50 percent of Queensland's agricultural exports and 95% of its motor vehicles and containers. PBPL handles over 450 commodities making it the most diverse multi-cargo port in Australia.



Much of this freight movement is directly facilitated by the key freight corridor between Toowoomba and Port of Brisbane and at more than 6,000 heavy vehicles per day, is the second-highest trafficked rural national highway outside South East Queensland after the Bruce Highway. This section is also 140km of dual lane carriageway without a traffic light.

This freight task will continue to grow into the future, from 1.56 million TEUs in 2022-23 (Port of Brisbane FYy23 Sustainability Report, 2023) to over 5 million TEUs by 2050, requiring almost 13 million truck movements annually. Most importantly 97.5 per cent of containerised import and export freight movements are currently moved by trucks on the road network to the port.

The A-Double combination at 30 metres in length is the optimal combination carrying two 40-foot containers (four TEUs on one vehicle combination). These safer innovative vehicle combinations and two-trailer livestock combinations cannot currently be fully utilised on this corridor forcing significantly more truck trips.



More specifically, the corridor supports a range of intrastate, interstate and local economic functions, including:

- connecting primary producers and industries in southern Queensland and central New South Wales to the Port of Brisbane and Dinmore abattoir;
- serving as the east-west spine of southern Queensland's road network, providing connections to key north-south interstate routes to Sydney, Melbourne and Darwin, and intrastate routes to Rockhampton and Townsville;
- serving as the principal freight route to the emerging Surat Basin energy resource province;
- connecting produce growers of the Lockyer Valley to domestic markets in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria;

The vital role this key corridor performs in transporting road freight between and around the southern region as part of the National Land Transport Network and the National Land Freight Network must be acknowledged.

A Truck-Way would significantly improve connectivity between the Port of Brisbane and freight terminals in the Brisbane region through preserving and, ultimately, delivering a dedicated corridor. This would aim to supplement and meet the projected increase in freight volumes, while facilitating neutrality, choice, and competition between transport modes.

Accordingly, the next Queensland Government needs to commit to a further upgrade of assets across the corridor to unlock capacity and allow increased access for the use of high productivity combinations.

Continue to Invest in the Inland Freight Route (IFR)

Queensland's freight task is growing and evolving. The increased rate of freight volumes, coupled with the growth in population, employment and tourism, safety and capacity issues will be exacerbated on the road network, resulting in nationally significant productivity losses.

As the Federal and Queensland Governments seek to increase economic performance of Northern Australia, the need to continue to fund a viable alternative to the Bruce Highway remains critical to Queensland.

The funding already committed to the IFR by both State and Federal Government has instilled confidence in the regions that their voice is being heard.

There are a series of highways and developmental roads that connect north-south to provide a viable alternative to the Bruce Highway. The location of these inland routes are also closer to major economic supply chains for agricultural and horticultural production and the resources sector.

These key inland Highways include:

- Castlereagh Highway;
- Carnarvon Highway;
- Dawson Highway;
- Gregory Highway;
- Gregory Developmental Road; and
- Flinders Highway.



The advantages of continued investment in the IFR will lead to other economic benefits including:

- Enabling forecast growth in the agriculture and resource sector through increased productivity in supply chains that efficiently link production to markets.
- Providing benefits to regional towns along the IFR where road freight operators require support from services industries and amenities including fuel, maintenance support, rest stops, food and, potentially, accommodation.
- Value-adding to regional production and distribution through logistics hub nodal activity for the growth sectors located adjacent to the IFR which would have flow on benefits to regional economies.
- Benefit to destinations such as ports, airports and domestic processing and logistics hubs through connecting to more efficient export supply chains and allow access for Higher Productivity Vehicle's (HPV's) to encourage usage of more productive multi-combination and reducing the more inefficient combinations.



The QTA urges the next Queensland Government to continue to invest in transformative road and bridge upgrades that would activate northern Australia via an alternative IFR and encourage establishment of processing and value-adding facilities and logistics hubs in the regions.

INDUSTRY CALL 2 - Build bridges to connect freight networks

Bridges are key to opening access for high productivity multi-combinations in Queensland.

Economic and productivity benefits of moving freight in some sectors necessitate the movement of large indivisible loads that exceed legal load or dimension limits. The ability to move these loads is inhibited by road and bridge capacities that greatly impact the profitability of a road freight business. The Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) is responsible for the management of approximately 2,900 bridges and 4,000 major culverts that must be considered when assessing the movement of heavy loads.



The road network built over the last century, is limited by bridge capacities governed by age, the design standard prevailing at the time of design, strength of materials used, quality of construction, aggressive environments, loading spectrum and standard of maintenance. The gross replacement value of state-controlled bridges and major culverts has been estimated by the TMR to exceed \$11 billion. As a result, replacement at the current rate of the weaker components will take many decades.

TMR manages its bridge assets to protect their anticipated lifespan. In an environment where it is proven the movement of freight in a safe, efficient and productive way can be undertaken by increases in axle loads and gross weights of the heavy vehicles, there needs to be a shift in the mindset of TMR to enable this to occur. Currently, prescriptive controls are required to protect assets operating at the lower end of the performance spectrum. Accordingly, the maximum permissible load on a particular road link will generally be determined by the capacity of the weakest structures.

Currently major export markets in the South Burnett, Central Highlands, Atherton Tableland, Gladstone and Mackay Port cannot be accessed with the safest higher productivity vehicle combinations due to bridges requiring upgrades. These key freight routes cannot currently be accessed by high productivity vehicles which are safer and reduce truck traffic in the order of 25% for the same freight task.

The various bridge design classes and their respective frequencies of occurrence are currently acting as both a regulatory barrier but also, and more importantly, a constraint on capacity, therefore efficiency. The capacities of specific bridges must support access for higher productivity vehicles to unlock capacity on key freight corridors.

Bridges need priority investment that will directly impact the efficiency of the road freight industry. Queensland's publicly owned road network is a strategic asset, vital to our security, communities and livelihoods. The road freight industry requires efficient, safe and operational freight corridors, and bridges are the fuses that connect the road system. They are the crucial infrastructure as each transport route can only be as productive as the declared minimal rated bridge on that route.

For our economy, the practical impact of not investing in bridges on time represents:

- higher costs of doing business.
- higher cost of living

- decreased efficiency and productivity
- reduced access to existing markets
- an inability to expand into new and emerging markets
- vulnerability to seasonal weather events
- delayed business expansion activities; and
- the reduction in the liveability of a region and, in turn, its workforce.

The next Queensland Government needs to Direct more investment towards essential bridge upgrades to increase the economic carry of the road freight network.

INDUSTRY CALL 3 - Invest in Industry led training

Direct funding into industry led training programs that lead to job outcomes.

Road Transport Industry training and its benefit to productivity is of profound importance to both Queensland's and Australia's economy and living standards. It has the direct capacity to positively influence crucial challenges - both higher wages and lower inflation.

Factors that can affect labour productivity include workers' skills, technological change, management practices and changes in other inputs (such as capital). All of these are greatly influenced by industry training.

Productivity growth is important for maintaining the economic welfare, and prosperity of all Queenslanders' productivity growth can contribute to one or a combination of the following including higher wages, lower wages and higher profits.

QTA understands the influence its Industry's workers' capabilities have on productivity. A worker's personal productivity is largely determined by their training, skills and experience. As a result, QTA recognises the potential for productivity growth from training that has greater relevance, flexibility and connectedness with transport industry needs.



However, QTA research indicates that Queensland labour productivity across the past ten years has fallen to 1.3% compared to 1.6% a decade earlier. A similar trend is evident for Australian labour productivity (0.9% compared to 2.0% a decade earlier) and for Australian transport industry productivity (1.2% compared to 2.2% a decade earlier). Accordingly, efforts to boost productivity are vitally needed and training is a key area where this can occur.

Training provides benefits to the industry and the broader Queensland economy through the dissemination of skills and development of new technology, and benefits government in the form of reduced welfare payments and higher taxation receipts.

We urge the next Queensland Government to support the QTA workforce programs including the Get in2 Transport and Logistics Career Awareness Program, Driving Townsville's Future Program and Heavy Vehicle Safe Driver Program. These programs form the foundation of the QTA Workforce Strategy to ensure the industry has the people to fill jobs to meet the growing freight task into the future.

Invest in workforce programs that provide employers with training subsidies

The road freight industry is in urgent need of funding to address an ongoing truck driver shortage. The QTA's "Job Ready Program" is a model that supports employers to safely train inexperienced drivers in a mentored supervised environment.

The aim is to produce competency based, safe, skilled heavy vehicle drivers to a standard that will satisfy employers and enhance road safety outcomes. The program includes a pre and post training practical driving assessment by an independent driver trainer and up to 160 hours of supervised on-road driving with a driving mentor. The point of difference with this program is that it takes place in the employment setting so the skills can be demonstrated and verified while performing the freight task. This environment ensures the participant can learn the practical skills and knowledge associated with situational awareness, hazard perception, risk avoidance, resilience and problem solving and compliance with the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL).

Employers who participate in the program must have suitably experienced senior drivers who can mentor an inexperienced driver. Employers can enrol newly employed drivers or drivers who are undergoing license upgrades. Participants complete the normal employment induction and checks required by that employer. At the successful completion of the program, employers are paid a wage subsidy to offset the cost of the training provided by the driving mentor. The wage subsidy is much needed and welcomed by employers, as unlike other trades where an offsider can be costed into a job, only one driver's wage is generally included in the freight costing.

The QTA is currently facilitating a pilot program using this model to train 50 drivers in Queensland. The Heavy Vehicle Safe Driver Program is being funded by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator's (NHVR) Heavy Vehicle Safety Initiative (HVSII), supported by the Australian Government.

There are a multitude of benefits for both the employer and the employee using an on-the-job training approach for heavy vehicle driving including:

- **Higher Employee Retention:** Employees who receive comprehensive training often feel more valued and are likely to stay longer with the company. They learn the company's policies, culture, and procedures directly, helping them integrate more effectively.
- **Customised Training:** Training can be tailored to the specific needs of the freight task for the role, ensuring that drivers can practically apply safety procedures and demonstrate relevant skills.
- **Increased Productivity:** Employees who undergo on-the-job training tend to become productive faster as they are trained within the context of their daily tasks.
- **Improved Team Dynamics:** Collaborative on the job training environments foster teamwork and improve relationships among other drivers and creates a better level of acceptance of new drivers.
- **Adaptability to Change:** Drivers trained on the job are often better equipped to adapt to changes in processes or technology as they are able to use the systems in the trucks they will be driving.
- **Immediate Contribution:** Employees can start contributing to the organisation's goals sooner than those who undergo traditional training programs that do not have a practical work experience element.
- **Mentorship Opportunities:** This program is providing experienced senior drivers with an opportunity to pass on their knowledge and expertise to new drivers coming through.



- **Career Advancement:** The model creates a pipeline of new drivers into a business enabling other drivers to upgrade to higher licence classes or move into operational or compliance positions.
- **Increased Confidence:** Gaining experience through practical work helps boost the drivers confidence in their abilities.

In summary, on-the-job training helps bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, benefitting both the employees and the employers.

A professional driver development program like the “Job-Ready Program” model will provide a solution to the driver shortage for employers who are needing to fill the ongoing vacancies due to the growing freight task as well as the impacts of an ageing workforce in the industry.

We urge the next Queensland Government to fund the “Job-Ready Program” model for the road freight industry to ensure the industry has the capability to meet future growth and demand of road freight movement into the future.

Fully Fund the Heavy Vehicle Driver Apprenticeship

In 2022, the QTA successfully championed a business case to the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT) to establish the Heavy Vehicle Driver Apprenticeship in Queensland. The Heavy Vehicle Driver Apprenticeship is recognition of the level of skill truck drivers require and must develop to be a safe and competent operator. This is a significant step towards sustaining the future workforce in the road freight industry with truck driving now offered as a professional trade.



QTA is now urging the next Queensland Government to have the Heavy Vehicle Driver Apprenticeship included as part of the 180,000 additional fee-free TAFE places that the Prime Minister announced at the Jobs and Skills Summit in 2023.

Apprenticeships are a key enabler of economic and social prosperity and in essence are an investment in the ongoing prosperity of the individual, an enterprise and its supply chain and ultimately the Queensland economy.

International research indicates that for every one dollar that is spent on apprenticeships, the economy gains by \$21.

A business’s decision to engage in apprenticeship training is largely determined by the cost-benefit ratio of such an investment compared to other alternatives of securing skilled workers. International empirical evidence shows that through a well-functioning apprenticeship training system, the majority of host businesses recoup their training investments by the end of the training period. As training firms often succeed in

retaining the most suitable apprentices, offering apprenticeships is an attractive strategy to recruit their future skilled work force.

Global evidence reveals the benefits of apprenticeships for all parties involved.

Apprenticeships return economic benefits ranging from five per cent to 25 per cent across different sectors which in turn translate in to increased profits, competitiveness, lower prices and better products. Other benefits accrue including lower costs for future recruitment of skilled workers, less attrition, higher productivity, improved work environment including (job satisfaction, team spirit, training

culture, commitment to work and attitude of the staff); improved employee retention (less absenteeism and staff turnover); improved innovation and work processes as a result of the new knowledge brought by apprentices; and improved public image and reputation for the firm from taking on apprentices.

It is time funding support is provided for industry led programs.

The benefits to individuals who conduct an apprenticeship accrue from improved earnings, better employment outcomes, higher mobility and higher job satisfaction after their training, compared with individuals who were not skilled. In addition to higher wages, apprentices are also more likely to benefit from the greater likelihood of being employed. An apprentice benefits from a structured training process during this period, resulting in higher skills levels compared to an unskilled worker. This in turn makes an apprentice more employable and reduces the period to find employment after the training. International research reveals apprentices are more likely to be in employment for longer.

The investment in apprenticeships benefit to Government include less expenditure on welfare assistance and more tax revenues from employee income, employee spend and business profits and transactions. International research indicates that returns on investment for Government range between 1:16 to 1:35.

The above confirms there is compelling and persuasive international evidence that the financial and non-financial benefits of funding apprenticeships far outweigh the costs, for enterprises, governments and apprentices alike. These benefits create significant reason for the Queensland Government to invest in apprenticeships in the road freight transport industry to boost productivity, prime economic activity, create jobs and ultimately deliver savings to Government.

QTA believes the next Queensland Government has an opportunity to secure the future of the workforce in the road freight industry by fully funding the Heavy Vehicle Driver Apprenticeship. This will afford all people seeking to enter the industry an opportunity to be skilled for their own and the State's economic productivity. The fact this intervention will create significant economic stimulus through higher wages and lower inflation is further grounds for this support.



The QTA's current workforce programs including the Get in2 Transport and Logistics Career Awareness Program, Driving Townsville's Future Program and Heavy Vehicle Safe Driver Program are providing a multi-layered workforce strategy to ensure the industry has the people to fill jobs to meet the growing freight task.

Over the next two years we will see growing numbers of people graduate as Heavy Vehicle Driver Apprentices since the official commencement of the

apprenticeship in Queensland in July 2023.

QTA believes the Queensland Government needs to embrace reshaping a dynamic that has historically existed where apprentice uptake has been as a response to economic activity. The Queensland Government must have a new mindset that apprentices can be a primer of productivity, economic and business activity.

The QTA also recommends the heavy vehicle driver occupations be included on the National Skill's Commission Skill Priority List.

Fund a Transport and Logistics ‘Trade Taster’ Program

The Transport and Logistics industry needs to be recognised as delivering an essential service to Queensland. Unlike other trades, there is no formal ‘trade taster’ program offered to showcase the industry to potential new entrants.

Trade taster programs provide significant benefits for both high school students and the industry. For students, these programs offer career exploration, allowing them to discover different trades and industries, which helps them make informed decisions about their future paths. They also include hands-on experience, enabling students to develop practical skills that enhance their employability right after graduation. Additionally, these programs offer networking opportunities with industry professionals, which can lead to mentorship and job connections. Engaging in trade-related activities can boost students’ motivation and confidence as they uncover passions for specific fields.

For the industry, trade taster programs help develop a talent pipeline, addressing workforce shortages by familiarising students with various trades. These programs ensure skill alignment, as they expose students to the skills that are in demand in the job market. The projections for the growth in the freight task, warrant the inclusion of a trade taster program for the transport and logistics industry. Without this, the transport and logistics industry will remain invisible to many school students seeking a vocation in the trade area.

A trade taster program for Transport and Logistics would raise awareness of the diverse job roles, career opportunities and earnings, helping to combat negative stereotypes associated with the industry.

Employers benefit by identifying and potentially recruiting enthusiastic and capable students for future positions. Finally, collaboration between schools and industries fosters stronger community ties and encourages innovation, as young participants bring fresh ideas and perspectives to the workplace. Overall, trade taster programs create a mutually beneficial relationship between students and the industry.

The QTA urges the next Queensland Government to establish a ‘trade tester’ program for transport and logistics in Queensland.



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