



AgForce Queensland Farmers Limited

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22 March 2018

Committee Secretary
Transport and Public Works Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

Dear Transport and Public Works Committee Secretary Mr Shane King (MP)

Re: Submission - Heavy Vehicle National Law and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018

AgForce Queensland Farmers (AgForce) is the peak rural group representing beef, sheep & wool and grain producers in Queensland. The broadacre beef, sheep and grains industries in Queensland generated around \$6.8 billion in gross farm-gate value of production in 2015-16. AgForce exists to facilitate the long-term growth, viability, competitiveness and profitability of these industries. The producers who support AgForce provide high-quality food and fibre to Australian and overseas consumers, manage around 40 per cent of the Queensland agricultural landscape and contribute significantly to the social fabric of rural and remote communities.

Transport makes up to 40 per cent of farmers' production costs, and therefore, access to quality and affordable transport options is vitally important for growing the Queensland agricultural industry, as well as the sustainability of the communities that support it.

We write to you regarding the Heavy Vehicle National Law and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2018, the proposed amendments to Chain of Responsibility. The agriculture sector, through AgForce and the National Farmers Federation (NFF), has raised concerns regarding the communication of these changes and the sector's ability to adequately prepare for them. Within the agricultural industry there are overwhelming misconceptions as to the impact these changes will have upon on-farm operations. For example, there is the belief among producers that they are required to monitor and evaluate if a driver and their vehicle is fit for purpose, entailing the need to check logbooks and maintenance logs. These misconceptions are widespread across the industry and without adequate time to address them, the effectiveness of these well intended changes will fall short.

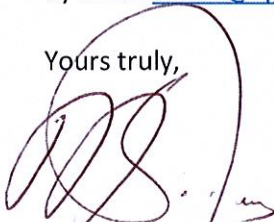
The work being undertaken by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR) to tailor communication material specific to the agricultural sector is welcome, however there is still considerable work needed to ensure those within the sector are prepared for the changes.

It is understood that the commencement date of this Bill could be pushed back to 1 December 2018, with the agreement of the Minister for Transport and Main Roads. A later commencement date would assist industry bodies and the NHVR to work collaboratively to ensure that primary producers are well prepared and aware of the changes and that farmers along with others in the supply chain can assist further in improving the safety of the heavy transport industry.

AgForce is supportive of legislation that seeks to improve safety outcomes in the heavy vehicle industry and more specifically the agriculture sector. Greater alignment to workplace health and safety legislation, is beneficial as is consistency with other jurisdictions. AgForce seeks to ensure consistent and equitable regulation across jurisdictions relating to the heavy vehicle industry is achieved and acknowledges that this Bill seeks to make efforts towards that goal.

AgForce welcomes the opportunity to engage further on this matter if required. If you would like to discuss further please contact Amelia Shaw, AgForce Policy Officer, by phone 07 3238 6013 or by email shawa@agforceqld.org.au.

Yours truly,



Michael Guerin
AgForce Chief Executive Officer