

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Boost for farm exports and safer roads: a winning combination**

#### ***Rural trucking industry thanks Government for listening***

The 2012-13 Budget has established a new permanent Federal road funding program that will promote export efficiency and improve road safety for years to come.

The Australian Livestock and Rural Transporters Association warmly welcomes the decision, which matches proposals the Association raised with the Government.

“The Federal Government has listened to ideas from the grass-roots, and we’re delighted by that” said John Beer, National President of the ALRTA.

The new *Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program* commits \$140M over seven years to strengthen and upgrade road bridges and to build new and improved rest areas for Australia’s truck drivers. Combined with State and Territory matching funds, this will deliver a \$280M investment, the bulk of which will go to rural and regional highways.

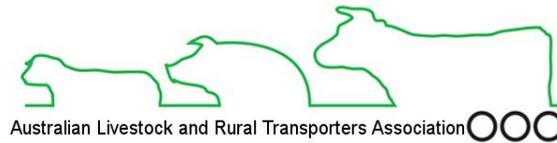
“Importantly, the Government has confirmed to the ALRTA that it has decided to make this a permanent road funding program. It will continue forever, and gradually we’ll see the roadblocks in rural and regional areas being lifted.”

The ALRTA first raised these issues at the Government’s national Tax Forum in 2011, providing examples of livestock drivers having to take four (4) hour detours in order around unsuitable regional bridges, or have to carry reduced payloads in order to traverse rural bridges. The ALRTA approached the Government again in early 2012.

“Almost everything produced by our agricultural industries is collected at the farm-gate by trucks,” said John. “Every unnecessary hour is a cost that has to be paid by our customers.”

“Over coming years, this commitment of a steady flow of targeted funding will improve freight efficiency in rural and regional Australia, and that will improve the international competitiveness of farm exports.”

This importance of this permanent commitment to improving road freight efficiency is underlined by recent research from the Australian Farm Institute, which found that transport accounts for a large share of the farm gate value of Australia's agricultural products: an average of 8.75% for all domestic markets and 23.64% for international markets.



## About ALRTA

- 1) The Australian Livestock and Rural Transporters Association (ALRTA) represents 900 companies across regional Australia who provide the 'first and last' link of the supply chain for Australia's agricultural industries and communities.
- 2) Australian agriculture relies on ALRTA's members in order to access domestic and global markets. Almost all inputs to, and production from, Australian agriculture involves transport by truck.
- 3) Our members deliver the fertilizer, hay, feed, water, fuel and other supplies that Australia's farmers need to stay in business, and we deliver their grain, livestock, wool and other products to the domestic market and the nation's export ports.
- 4) Two-thirds of Australia's agricultural production is exported, comprising 20% of Australia's global merchandise exports.
- 5) Established in 1985, ALRTA is Australia's oldest purely policy-focused road transport industry association. ALRTA has no political affiliation and does not engage in industrial representation.
- 6) The National Council of the ALRTA is solely comprised of road transport operators, as are each State Council. ALRTA and its State bodies represent transport operators located in every Australian State and Territory. Our member operators are engaged in both short haul operations and long-distance haulage, extending to trans-continental movements. Our members provide services to remote stations, regional communities, coastal urban areas and regional and metropolitan ports.
- 7) The ALRTA is a member of the Australian Logistics Council (ALC), the Australian Trucking Association (ATA), and the Council of Small Businesses of Australia (COSBOA).