



MEDIA RELEASE

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Rural transport operators back call to freeze road user charge

Rural transport operators say the Federal Government must freeze the heavy vehicle road user charge until the end of August as conflict in the Middle East drives diesel prices higher.

The Australian Livestock and Rural Transporters Association (ALRTA) strongly supports the Australian Trucking Association (ATA), which is taking the industry's case directly to Transport Minister Catherine King and calling for the scheduled increase to be delayed.

The charge is set to almost double on 3 August, rising from 16.4 to 32.4 cents per litre and adding \$64 to every 400-litre fill.

ALRTA President Gerard Johnson said rural transport operators were already travelling long distances across regional and remote Australia on extremely tight margins.

"Livestock and farm freight still have to move, whatever happens overseas," Mr Johnson said.

"Rural transport operators buy fuel by the thousands of litres. A rise of this size can wipe the margin from a load and turn a paying job into a loss.

"ALRTA stands with the ATA in taking this matter directly to the Minister. The industry is speaking with one voice: this increase should not proceed while international conflict is causing renewed volatility in fuel markets."

The national average terminal gate diesel price jumped 9.3 cents per litre in one week, from 181.7 cents to 191.0 cents.

The Government announced plans in June to restore fuel excise and the road user charge in stages after the United States and Iran agreed to a 60-day ceasefire. That ceasefire has since collapsed. Attacks and blockades are disrupting oil shipping, while Russia has stopped diesel exports following attacks on its refineries.

"We are asking Minister King to listen to the ATA and the broader transport industry, delay the next increase and review the position at the end of August," Mr Johnson said.

"Rural transport operators should not be hit with a higher tax in the middle of another fuel price shock—particularly when their work is essential to Australia's food supply, regional economies and national resilience."

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