



11 June 2014

Prepared by Mathew Munro



ALRTA PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

In the weeks since my last contribution, amongst other things, I have been to the National Remote and Regional Transport Infrastructure and Service Forum in Alice Springs.

A very interesting and worthwhile forum indeed. It reinforced what I've been saying for many years, that rural and remote Australia, although a small proportion of the population, has the potential to determine its own destiny while making a huge positive contribution to the rest of the country.

The discussion paper distributed in the lead up to the forum recognised that there are actually two zones in this country, the coastal zone and the rest of Australia. As we all know, 85% of the Australian population live within 50kms of the coast and know little about what goes on elsewhere.

No one who has heard me ramble on long and often about these very facts will be at all surprised when I say that a very large squeaky wheel, which is the 95% of the greater Australian land mass, is now demanding some oil.

It is exciting to see that we are now talking about the facts of the matter and those facts indicate that there is a need for some real attention be paid to the rural regional and remote areas of this vast land. I'm not getting too excited. There was a lot of talk and I just hope that we get some action out of the talk.

The Northern Territory Government and the other organisers of the forum should be congratulated on the event and on the drawing together of experts in many and varied fields who were willing and very capable participants in a workshop which should change the way rural and remote issues are dealt with. It should also be noted that there was a large proportion of actual operators from across many modes actively participating and voicing their concerns in a very effective way.

I also attended the SCOTI, newly renamed the TIC (Transport & Infrastructure Council), which is the council of all state transport ministers and is chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Warren Truss. A bit of an eye opener for me as I have heard much talk about the process. It is always interesting to see how the wheels of power turn and there certainly was some power in that room.

It has been said that the dinner on the evening before this meeting is as valuable as the meeting itself and that is indeed true. I met some very nice "minders" and got a first-hand feel for what drives those who support ministers in carrying out the task of governing across all three levels of government.

I'm off to Adelaide in the morning for our National Council meeting on Thursday and the combined LRTASA-ALRTA conference which is shaping up to be a very good show. Congratulations in advance to the LRTASA team especially David Smith and Cheryl Howe along with Mat and the staff in Canberra.

I am looking forward to meeting new members and supporters and renewing old acquaintances, although having looked at the weather I am concerned about a temperature range of 8 > 18 degrees. Hence an extra case just for the jumpers. I know, I know, but 18 > 28 was the temperature range here yesterday and I was cold.

Liz Schmidt, ALRTA President

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GET YOURSELF ALONG TO NATIONAL CONFERENCE THIS WEEK!

It's just a few days now until the combined LRTASA and ALRTA National Conference to be held at the Adelaide Entertainment Centre on 13-14 June 2014.

Friday kicks off from 12:00pm with a Sponsors Golf Day at Adelaide Golf Links in the city. At 6:30pm, you can join us for pre-dinner drinks prior to our National Sponsors Dinner. While we celebrate the ongoing support of our five National Sponsors, our special guest Anthony Albanese will make a short address and comedian Marty Fields will provide some light-hearted entertainment.

We get down to business on Saturday with the official Conference Opening by SA Transport Minister Stephen Mullighan and a key note address by Federal Assistant Minister for Infrastructure Jamie Briggs. There will be an informative panel session on the Road Safety Remuneration Order and we'll take a look at grass-roots issues like ramps, electronic braking systems and accident response procedures. Delegates will also hear important updates from NTC, NHVR and ALRTA.

The Gala Dinner and fund raising auction on Saturday evening is the perfect way to finish.

What are you doing this weekend? It's not too late to register. You can find details at: http://www.ltasa.com.au/lrta_sa_2014_conference

HISTORIC ALRTA COUNCIL MEETING

Members are invited to observe the ALRTA's National Council Meeting in Adelaide, 12 June 2014.

As regular readers will know, the ALRTA's long association with HGH Consulting is coming to an end on 31 July 2014. This will be an historic meeting that will determine the agenda and mode of operation of the ALRTA into the future so now is a good time to speak to your State representatives about your national association.

As usual, National Council will also consider a range of policy matters such as ramps, truckCare, effluent, chain of responsibility, electronic work diaries, telematics and fatigue.

If you would like to attend please contact the ALRTA Secretariat on the details below.

PENDING ENFORCEMENT ACTION ON EFFLUENT LOSS

Members travelling through the New England area of Northern NSW are advised that local police in that area are planning a targeted enforcement campaign of the road rules relating to effluent from livestock transport vehicles. We are advised that action will commence from 12 June 2014.

Section 11 of the 2008 Roads Regulation states that a person must not allow liquid, loose or waste material to escape onto a road, with a penalty of \$498 for a breach of the regulation. Section 293 of the Road Rules states that a driver must also remove any such material from the roadway, with the same fine of \$498 applying to a breach.

The ALRTA Stock Preparation Guide outlines sensible strategies that are in the best interests of the producer, transporter and the animals. Unfortunately, some producers incorrectly believe that filling stock up with feed and water before transport will improve sale weights - even after MLA research has shown that this is not the case.

LBCA has been active on this issue and just last week issued a detailed newsletter outlining their concerns about the pending enforcement action. These types of actions target drivers when this is in reality a chain of responsibility issue that centres around correct stock preparation prior to transport. Effluent tanks are not the answer because there simply is no network of disposal sites.

This matter has been listed for discussion at this week's National Council meeting in Adelaide.

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