



**MEDIA RELEASE**

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## **VTA and MTAG come together to improve inner west amenity and safety**

Communities in Melbourne's inner west, freight operators and the environment would benefit from a plan to incentivise the use of modern lower emission trucks as a condition for them being able to travel through the area for longer hours on roads that have truck curfews.

Under the Victorian Transport Association (VTA) and Maribyrnong Truck Action Group (MTAG) *Maribyrnong Cleaner Freight Initiative*, access times for trucks using Francis Street, Somerville Road and Moore Street in Yarraville would be increased for accredited operators and reduced for those without accreditation.

To qualify, operators must use prime movers that have low emission Euro 5 compliant or greater engines. Exhausts would be fitted with emission control systems, and dangerous goods placarded vehicles required to display highly-reflective conspicuity tape to increase visibility.

Under the plan, accredited operators would be fitted with GPS technology, and data made available for third party review as an enforcement and compliance tool.

Curfews on Buckley Street and Williamstown Road would also be introduced, and reduced speed limits of 50 km/h applied to all vehicles using gazetted freight routes in the City of Maribyrnong as part of the plan.

VTA CEO Peter Anderson said the transport industry was showing leadership and creating greater harmony between residents and freight operators, and that the *Maribyrnong Cleaner Freight Initiative* would increase standards and provide productivity gains for accredited operators.

"This visionary plan we have developed with MTAG addresses the safety and environmental concerns of residents and equips drivers with a specific skills-set for operating in residential communities," Mr Anderson said.

"Productivity gains accredited operators will receive from having longer access to curfewed roads will offset criteria they will have to meet to qualify. The community also benefits from trucks being replaced by younger, more efficient fleets operated by drivers who have had specialist training covering local freight routes, bridges, school zones, bicycle routes and noise abatement," he said.

"This Initiative is a huge leap forward in finding solutions agreeable to both sides," said MTAG President Ms Samantha McArthur. "We really welcome this opportunity to work alongside the VTA."

"MTAG and the community have been calling out for measures to modernise the trucks in our area for years. This initiative will, for the first time in Victoria, start to initiate this much needed change."

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***About the Cleaner Freight Initiative***

The *Maribyrnong Cleaner Freight Initiative* was developed by the VTA and MTAG to address residents' concerns about heavy vehicles operating in the City of Maribyrnong, and to help the transport industry transition to permanent restrictions the Andrews Government plans for roads with truck curfews after the West Gate Tunnel is built.

Under the plan, accredited operators would have an additional hour every day during the week to use roads where there are truck curfews, with no change to access on weekends. Unaccredited operators would have their access reduced by two hours per day during the week, and by two hours on weekends.

Locally based operators and local deliveries would continue to be exempt from the curfews.

The plan is a key part of the VTA's strategy of harmonising community amenity with economic productivity, and of demonstrating the values and efficiencies that can be gained by transport companies renewing their fleet with younger vehicles.

When implemented, changes to local government bylaws would enable council and VicRoads to enforce the plan. Drivers would be required to carry a card showing their certification, and a visible identifier would be displayed on vehicles that qualify for curfew exemptions.

**Ends...**

**For further information please contact Brian O'Neil on 0411 055 284.**