



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**16 August 2018**

## **Premier commits \$4 million for heavy vehicle driver training**

Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews has pledged \$4 million in funding to cover the training of 800 new heavy vehicle drivers in partnership with the Victorian Transport Association and others, should the Labor government he leads be re-elected at the November state election.

The Premier made the announcement at a VTA reception held at Parliament House attended by over 100 VTA members and supporters, where he also outlined how transport infrastructure projects of the scale his Government has instituted needed to become “the new norm” for industry participants to achieve the efficiency and productivity they need to be successful.

“Heavy vehicle driver training and reforms to licensing are issues the VTA has been advocating strongly on for some time as a further mechanism for attracting new people to the industry and addressing the shortage of skills and drivers that are holding many operators back,” said VTA CEO Peter Anderson.

“In partnership with the Victorian Government, the VTA has provided intensive training for well over 60 new drivers through our Driver Delivery program, which has also been instrumental in putting these drivers in jobs in transport.

“The \$4 million the Premier has announced should his Government be returned will go a long way towards addressing this shortage, with 800 new highly-skilled and professional drivers over four years a welcome addition to the pool of drivers our industry desperately needs to service the growing freight task,” he said.

In wide-ranging remarks, the Premier discussed how his government over four years had invested in major transport infrastructure projects needed to handle unprecedented population growth, such as the Metro Tunnel, West Gate Tunnel and a capital works program that was maintaining and building new roads throughout regional Victoria, funded largely by the \$9 billion lease of the Port of Melbourne. He also re-committed to putting the North East Link out to market within 100 days of a re-elected Labor government.

The Premier also discussed his government’s investment in TAFE programs to help equip the next generation of workers with skills needed by the state’s growing economy, stating that partnering with groups like the VTA was essential to overcome the specific challenges faced by industry sectors.

Mr Anderson said it is an exciting time to be working in transport in Victoria.

“Our industry is about people, freight and the economy that drives the standard of living we all enjoy,” he said. “While over the years at times, as an industry, we have felt left behind, there is now a real focus on our industry and we are encouraged by new infrastructure, a new industry specific department in Freight Victoria, and an economy that is going from strength to strength.”

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