



MEDIA RELEASE

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VTA awarded Commonwealth mental health funding

The Victorian Transport Association is one of 26 organisations to secure a share in \$5.9 million of Commonwealth funding under Round 5 of the Australian Government's Heavy Vehicle Safety Initiative.

Recently announced by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development Michael McCormack and Assistant Minister for Road Safety and Freight Transport Scott Buchholz, this funding will deliver safety benefits for the heavy vehicle industry and other road users. Over the past five years, the Initiative has provided \$22.8 million for 89 HVSI grants.

"Projects being funded this round target key areas such as developing or testing innovative new technologies, mental health support for drivers, educational campaigns and much-needed training and development," said Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormack in announcing the funding

VTA CEO Peter Anderson welcomed the funding and the Commonwealth's confidence in the VTA's delivery of this important program.

"Work-related and associated mental health problems are a major concern for the transport and logistics industry with around 17 per cent of workers reporting that factors within their workplace resulted in their development of a mental health condition - the fifth highest instance across all industries," Anderson said.

The VTA **HeadFit, BusinessFit** program is designed to effectively drive change and significantly improve the mental health and well-being across the Victorian transport and logistics industry.

Anderson said mental ill-health affects not only the health and wellbeing of employees, but also the productivity of operators, and that it makes good business sense to address mental health in the workplace.

"The project objective is to implement an integrated change management approach to mental health and well-being into transport organisations. It is designed to create a positive workplace environment in employer companies by building workplace cultures, positive leadership, systems and process and individual support into transport and logistics organisations," he said.

"To date, recognising and addressing work-related and associated mental health problems has been very small. The VTA recognises effective change requires proactively addressing the organisational and individual factors which influence work-related mental health issues.

"This project has an industry wide focus with real benefits for both industry and the community and will roll out over a two-year period across Melbourne and regional Victoria. It will promote and raise the awareness of mental health issues and facilitate and connect organisations with professional service providers when implementing an integrated approach to mental health," Anderson said.

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