



VTA E-News

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VTA seeks advice on minimum requirements for COVID work permits

The VTA is seeking advice from Freight Victoria for a definitive answer about the 'minimum' requirement for re-issuing COVID work permits. The current advice is that there is likely to be some consideration in the enforcement of the expiry date on current permits in the short-term, and that employees should continue to carry their current permits if these cannot be reissued. When reissuing work permits, employers are advised to build in a buffer period on the expiry date to early November – this is based on the current instruction about reissuing permits this time that: 'If businesses have issued permits with future date ranges, they do not need to reissue permitted worker permits.' For any general updates on worker permits the best source of information is www.vic.gov.au/worker-permit-scheme The VTA will relay any further advice from Freight Victoria as soon as it is available.

Postal and Distribution COVID-19 Guidance from Freight Victoria

Members are reminded that Freight Victoria has updated its guidance for the essential transport, freight and logistics industries around COVID-19 work restrictions for postal and distribution operators. As part of Step Two on the roadmap towards COVID Normal and the easing of restrictions, Freight Victoria are advising that from 28 September, subject to public health advice at that time, no restrictions will apply to postal and distribution operators. You can review the advice from Freight Victoria [here](#) and [here](#). Please contact the VTA should you have any queries.

New date announced for AFIA presentation

The VTA has received a record number of entries for the **2020 Australian Freight Industry Awards**, which is a phenomenal effort given the challenging year we find ourselves in. Due to the extension of Stage 4 COVID restrictions in Victoria, we have regrettably had to postpone the presentation of the Awards in order to deliver the high-quality production we promised. The new date for the award presentation evening is **Sunday 29 November**. The presentation will include live entertainment from Boom Crash Opera, live announcements and a professional production that is commensurate with the high standards the Awards have built a reputation for over 30 years. You can register to view this **free** live production at www.afiawards.com.au and we invite you to encourage your colleagues, family and friends to register as well.

Freight operations unabated in Victorian COVID recovery roadmap

The Victorian Government released its roadmap for re-opening the state's economy as part of a phased withdrawal from the Stage 3 and 4 restrictions. The roadmap confirmed transport operators can continue to remain open with a COVIDSafe Plan, which is consistent with VTA advocacy in consultations with the government prior to its release of the roadmap. Please refer to the [bulletin from Freight Victoria](#) for industry specific restrictions for freight and ports, noting that there is some differentiation between metropolitan Melbourne and regional Victoria.

In advising the government on re-opening the economy, the VTA is continuing to recommend curfew exemptions on heavy vehicles be extended beyond September 21, when the temporary change to the Road Safety Act is due to expire. We will continue to advocate for this extension so that our industry can service its customers and consumers as we progress through the steps towards the economy re-opening. We will also advocate for the Victorian Government to provide additional financial support and relief to businesses that have had longer restrictions forced upon them through no fault of their own.

Grand Final Holiday Re-scheduled to Friday 23 October

The Grand Final public holiday in Victoria has been rescheduled to Friday, 23 October, to align with the new date of the AFL Grand Final. Please consult the VTA website in the member's section for information on public holiday payment provisions, especially where an employee is required to work on that public holiday.

TIC confirms new truck sales shrink despite freight surge

The Truck Industry Council (TIC) has confirmed the new truck and heavy van market for the month of August has shrunk by a fifth when compared to sales for the same month last year. The 20.7 per cent drop continued the pattern of slowing sales in a year affected by COVID-19 economic impacts and market uncertainty. Year-to-date Heavy Vehicle sales are tracking 13.5 per cent lower than last year. The Heavy-Duty Sector performed the best of the Heavy Vehicle segment in August with 821 units delivered (-16.7 per cent on August last year). The Medium Duty Truck segment, which has struggled since the start of 2020, posted the second largest percentage loss in August with only 484 MD trucks sold (-160 units on August 2019).

NTI announces free counselling for Victorian Transport workers

VTA supporter National Transport Insurance has announced it will offer counselling to Victorian workers who feel impacted by the state's ongoing lockdown. In a statement issued during the week, NTI confirmed a service would be provided free of charge for truck drivers, cargo and warehouse personnel and construction workers. The NTI confirmed it would leverage its trauma counselling and employee assistance service provider, Assure Programs, to provide Victorian logistics and transport workers counselling throughout September and October. Having experienced the lockdown first-hand, NTI CEO Tony Clark said the counselling sessions were a continuation of NTI's commitment to supporting the health and wellbeing of those who keep Australia moving.

NHVR unveils Blueprint to boost heavy vehicle productivity

Expanding networks and reducing the need for access permits will continue to boost freight efficiency, according to a productivity blueprint released by the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR). The *Heavy Vehicle Productivity Plan 2020-25* outlines important objectives, including partnering with local governments to build capability and promoting more productive heavy vehicles that are better for the environment and communities, as well as providing certainty and consistency with access. For further information about the plan please click [here](#).

VTA Coronavirus Information Page

Members are reminded to visit the VTA [information page](#) on its website where critical information about the COVID-19 pandemic is housed and updated for members and visitors to the site to access. It can be found as an addition to the "INFO CENTRE" icon on the website home page. The page contains information on federal and state government initiatives to assist transport operators to manage the economic hardship the virus has created for thousands of businesses across Australia, as well as the important work the VTA and other industry groups are doing to advocate for policy and regulatory settings to help our industry at this time. The VTA is committed to providing timely, fact-based and practical information to members about the coronavirus pandemic, and how the Association and industry is responding. We are open for business and fully staffed, so do not hesitate to contact us on 03 9646 8590 for any advice, assistance or to discuss specific issues