

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**4 August 2021**

# **Road transport industry requests Essential Service designation and modifications to asymptomatic COVID testing requirements**

The State of Emergency that has maintained the control of decision-making processes within states and territories throughout the COVID-19 pandemic continues to ensure that the Australian population abides by disciplines intended to diminish the risk of virus transmission in the community.

The road transport industry has ensured that it has adhered to all directives and has in fact gone above and beyond the general requirements, to ensure it is not a spreader of the virus as it goes about its essential transport and distribution tasks.

Over the past 18 months the road transport industry has made millions of trips and connections within every community and has not transmitted the COVID virus except for a handful of cases.

This record is exemplary and should be recognised in parallel with many of the parameters and restrictions that are having to be imposed upon the community due to the ease upon which the virus can spread.

Currently, the interstate transport sector is required to have asymptomatic COVID tests every three days to ensure they are virus free and do not carry COVID between states as they complete their freight tasks.

Without contesting medical advice and direction, the road freight industry is requesting that the asymptomatic testing regime for interstate freight drivers be modified to include less personally invasive rapid antigen testing for those drivers that must test more than once a week. That is, a rapid/home kit test and an accredited pathology laboratory test every week.

This modification would see the testing regime still acknowledged, the community protected and drivers avoiding the personal discomfort that twice weekly lab testing provides.

It is also important to note that the decision to declare that the road freight industry be recognised as an Essential Service during a State of Emergency is crucial in ensuring continuity within our national supply chains. The road transport industry is requesting that this recognition be implemented immediately, and that the status of the road freight driver be adjusted accordingly.

The status of being an Essential Service while in a State of Emergency only, is a consideration that would consolidate the commitment of the state and worker towards each other.

We request that federal cabinet progress the above requests as a matter of urgency and respond accordingly.

**Endorsed by the following State Transport Associations:**

