



MEDIA RELEASE

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VTA advocates lifting mandatory vaccination requirement for workers

The Victorian Transport Association (VTA) has welcomed the further easing of COVID restrictions in Victoria announced earlier this week by Health Minister Martin Foley but is now calling for the vaccination mandate for transport workers to be lifted, in line with other jurisdictions around Australia.

“Victoria is now one of only three jurisdictions to retain vaccine mandates for workers, and with transport being a truly national industry, we need consistency in the rules between the states and territories,” said VTA CEO Peter Anderson.

“Since mandates were introduced last year, we estimate around 7-10% of drivers have left the transport industry, which is significant for an industry already facing driver shortages and challenges attracting new drivers to the industry. We need to make it easier for drivers to enter the transport industry, not harder.”

Anderson said the mandates had been a factor in supply chain disruptions that have led to delivery delays and chronic shortages at supermarkets and other retail stores, and that removing them would ease the labour pressures operators have been dealing with for months.

“The sooner vaccination mandates in Victoria are removed, the sooner drivers can get back to doing the work they love, and operators can re-employ workers they desperately need,” he said.

Anderson also pointed out that the transport industry has worked harder than ever during the pandemic under some of the toughest rules and restrictions, and that having maintained its social licence to operate the time had come to start to responsibly ease rules in the workplace.

“From having to get swabbed up to 10 times a month, isolating from family and friends in order to continue working, and observing strict hygiene practices, the transport industry hasn’t skipped a beat keeping Australia moving.

“As we start to move into the next phase of COVID, and with vaccination rates as high as they are, we need a consistent set of rules to start to get our supply chains back to normal,” he said.

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