

Presentation



by Dr Peter Hart, Chairman ARTSA

Challenges and Opportunities for the Road Freight Industry

Top Ten Issues

1 Road Safety

- Failure-to-stop-in-time crashes.
- Roll-overs.
- Fatigue leading to loss of control.

Response:

- Adopt advanced electronic braking and control technologies.
- Adopt fatigue management strategies / programs.
- Monitor driver performance.
- Educate drivers about road safety risks.
- Improve condition of the fleet.

Top Ten Issues

2 Poor Public Perception of the Industry

- Government is reluctant to grant favours.
- Local hostility to access.
- Poor treatment at warehouses and docks.

Response:

- Develop industry performance metrics.
 - Safety, tonnage, age of fleet, age of drivers,...
- Advise industry good and bad performance.
- Inform politicians of industry performance.
- Highlight improvements to the press.

Top Ten Issues

3 Man Power Planning / Staff Shortages

- Drivers, Diesel mechanics,...
- Driver population is aging.
- Mining industry steals skilled people.

Response:

- Make industry more attractive to women.
- Lift conditions: sleeping, ride, safety, ...
- Develop career path for drivers.
- Act to raise the status of drivers.
- Maintain accreditation standards in face of mining industry competition.

Top Ten Issues

4 Quality of Life / Health of People

- This is an extremely hard-working industry.
- Working hours are often excessive.
- The average age of personnel seems to be increasing.

Response:

- Recognize that long-term excessive hours is a bad approach. Work smarter not longer.
- Regular health checks for all staff.
- Promote happiness at work.
- Actively seek to get young people involved. Apprenticeships, traineeships, ...

Top Ten Issues

5 Public Liability, OHS and Chain of Responsibility Requirements

- Managing obligations is getting harder.
- Reporting obligations are colliding with the ‘can do attitude’.

Response:

- Attend education forums.
- Keep the paperwork as simple as possible.
- Encourage bottom up approach. Toolbox and driver-room meetings.
- Provide written guides.

Top Ten Issues

6 Profitability

- Many businesses run on fine margins.
- A struggling company is more likely to cut corners.

Response:

- Fair cartage rates.
- Accumulation of companies.
- Always achieving return loading.
- Maximizing vehicle reliability.
- Staff focus on cost control.

Top Ten Issues

7 Road User Changes & Fuel Costs

- Registration charges are distorting equipment purchase choices.
- Inevitably fuel charges will rise faster than inflation.

Response:

- Train drivers in eco-driving.
- Provide a fuel economy gauge.
- Adopt new technology trucks / engines.
- Lobby government for registration charge reform.
- Promote relatively new vehicles.

Top Ten Issues

8 National Harmonization of Operating Rules

- Axle weight limit changes at borders
- Permit conditions

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 - Truck inspection requirements

Top Ten Issues

9 Unlock Multi-modal Interfaces

- Rail depots and docks are privately controlled.
- It is not a level playing field.
- This situation is a disincentive to multi-modal freight movement.

Response:

- Pressure governments to reform the situation.
- Lobby to have the multi-modal interface issues reviewed by NTC.

Top Ten Issues

10 Trailer Market Information

- The characteristics of the Australian trailer fleet are poorly known.
- Local manufacturers are under extreme pressure.
- Good planning needs good data.

Response:

- A monthly registration activity report is needed.
- The report should classify trailer registrations by type, number of axles, state,...

Trailer Industry Activity Index

Barriers

- There are 783 Heavy Trailer Licensees and about 3,500 new trailer model approvals.
- Most suppliers are family businesses with no history of reporting for industry good.
- Government is very sensitive about privacy considerations.

Response:

- Industry-wide registration data can be obtained from Government.
- Company-specific data can only be obtained with the approval of the company.
- Component suppliers might contribute to an activity index.