



Dissenting Report—Mr Paul Neville MP, Mr Paul Fletcher MP, Mrs Jane Prentice MP, Mr Darren Chester MP

- 1.1 The Road Safety Remuneration Bill 2011 and Road Safety Remuneration (Consequential Amendments and Related Provisions) Bill 2011 seek to legislate to provide for 'safe rates' to improve occupational health and safety outcomes for the transport industry and the general public.
- 1.2 A safe rate is generally understood as a proposal for an enforceable rate of remuneration for transport workers, set by the government or other appropriate body, to underpin safety in the heavy vehicle industry in Australia.
- 1.3 The Coalition Members of the Standing Committee on Infrastructure and Communications are concerned by the comparatively high rate of fatalities and serious injuries in the Australian transport industry.
- 1.4 The Coalition members fully support the need for a multi-faceted approach to reduce the accident rate in the transport industry. However, it should be noted that there has been a gradual improvement in the accident and fatality rate in recent years, despite an increase in the national freight task.
- 1.5 The report is a fair and accurate record of the evidence that was received in submissions and during the public hearings but the Coalition Members of the committee reached different conclusions from that evidence.
- 1.6 In assessing the evidence that was submitted, the Coalition members were unconvinced that safe rates will lead to an improvement in road safety outcomes. The finding contained in clause 2.36 of the report is not supported by the Coalition members.
- 1.7 The Coalition members were also concerned that so-called 'jurisdictional creep' (referred to in the Australian Logistics Council submission), which

has seen the proposed Bill extended to include intrastate courier operators, is not supported by the evidence.

- 1.8 In particular, the Coalition members believe the link between remuneration and safety in the transport industry has not been definitively established with conflicting evidence provided in many submissions, as outlined in clause 2.25. Evidence was also received which highlighted the need to allow pending changes under the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator to be fully implemented (from January 2013) and properly assessed before adding another layer of bureaucracy and red tape on the transport industry.
- 1.9 The committee also received evidence which supported an increased focus on improving road infrastructure and enforcement of existing laws and regulations to achieve safety improvements. It was repeatedly put to the committee that other measures would be more valuable in terms of reducing accident rates. The Coalition members support that approach.
- 1.10 The Coalition members of the committee were also conscious of the various submissions which pointed to the existing complexity of rules and regulations and the need to reduce duplication and inconsistencies across state borders. It was feared that adding another layer of bureaucracy would not improve safety outcomes but would lead to increased costs to industry and consumers.
- 1.11 Evidence presented to the committee in relation to loading issues and extended waiting times at distribution centres have the potential to deliver practical outcomes without the introduction of more complex legislation.
- 1.12 Given these concerns, the Coalition members support further efforts to improve occupational health and safety outcomes, particularly fatigue reduction measures, for the transport industry but reject the final recommendation to pass the Bill.

Mr Paul Neville MP
Deputy Chair

Mrs Jane Prentice MP
Member

Mr Paul Fletcher MP
Member

Mr Darren Chester MP
Supplementary Member