

17 July 2015

Mr Tim Watling  
Secretary  
[Erin.east@aph.gov.au](mailto:Erin.east@aph.gov.au)

Ref: Response - Inquiry into aspects of Road Safety

Dear Mr Watling,

Thank you for providing us the opportunity to respond directly regarding a number of allegations submitted to this Senate Inquiry by Mr Duane Bowering and the TWU. Bluestar Global Logistics takes Road Safety and the requirements to meet and exceed the legislative requirements extremely importantly and we are disappointed that not only were there a number of allegations put forward by Mr Bowering that are both incorrect and without substance but also that we were "*named and shamed*" on national TV. Mr Bowering worked in our Adelaide operation and did not drive any Linehaul vehicles as he was a local driver.

Our response to these allegations are as follows;

1. At the time of the hearing Mr Bowering was not employed by Bluestar Global Logistics and had abandoned his employment as he had not responded to our efforts to make contact with him over a number of weeks.
2. Mr Bowering had in fact received a number of warnings for regularly breaching Company Policies. The first was in January 2014 for breaching company policies of which he formally acknowledged. There were further warnings for breaching company policies regarding not completing proper vehicle inspections.
3. The reference to an incident regarding a left hand indicator that was supposedly not addressed for over 6 months is completely false.
4. Mr Bowering refers to his departure from Bluestar Global Logistics as having been partly triggered by "*an actual falling out with Coca-Cola*". Coca-Cola has never been a customer of Bluestar Global Logistics so this allegation is unfounded
5. Allegations regarding intimidation and harassment are also false and at no time over the 3 years of his employment did he make a formal complaint to the Human Resources Division within Bluestar Global Logistics

In summary, Mr Bowering has not only potentially damaged the reputation of Bluestar Global Logistics but with the support of the TWU has used the media to also promote these allegations. Bluestar Global Logistics unfortunately does not have any rights to challenge these allegations through other legal avenues as they are made under privilege. We find these allegations extremely defamatory and unsubstantiated.

We do not know why Mr Bowering would have made such allegations and what motivations he may have had to take such action. It is extremely hurtful to all Bluestar Global employees who work diligently to apply and adhere to the strict guidelines and policies that we have within our business.

Bluestar Global has some of the most comprehensive and strict policies and procedures regarding;

- Chain of Responsibility (COR)
- HACCP
- Mass Management (Accreditation V01770)
- Maintenance Management (Accreditation V01770)
- Fatigue Management (Accreditation V01770)
- Load restraint and Dimensions
- Alcohol and Drug Testing
- Customer Discrepancy & Non-conformance Reporting System
- Customer Relationship Management System (CRM)

In addition, we were recently recognised by the NHVAS (National Heavy Vehicle Accreditation Scheme) for our diligence and disciplined procedures that we have in place.

Email dated 11 June 2015 from Mr D.Gascoyne (NHVAS Auditor)

Quote: *'in all of the 38 years I spent as a compliance officer in charge of VicRoads, I have never met a more prepared and delightful company ... You actually overwhelmed me in the professional way you are conducting your business ... because of your commitment to compliance.'*

Finally, we ask that Bluestar Global Logistics is not referred to directly or indirectly as a rogue operator as was the case by Senator Rice who quoted; *"or are there other things that need to happen to get rid of the rogue operators who are employing people like Mr Bowering under appalling conditions"*. This is a clear reference to Bluestar Global Logistics.

Bluestar Global Logistics works tirelessly to ensure that we meet all regulations, that we maintain our equipment to the highest standards, and that we encourage the relevant authorities to inspect our records and our procedures. In addition, we have a dedicated WHS Advisor that continuously updates and communicates all our policies and procedures. We are offended and dismayed by these allegations. We more than appreciate our obligations both legally and morally to our industry and most importantly to the wider public and look forward to the outcomes from this Road Safety Inquiry.

Yours sincerely,

~~Wayne~~ Thompson  
Chief Operating Officer