



TRANSPORT

ABN 70 070 787 227

Tuesday, 24 September 2019

Committee Secretary,
Senate Standing Committees on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Inquiry: Importance of a viable, safe, sustainable and efficient Road Transport Industry

Firstly, thank you for holding this inquiry to evaluate the viability, safety, efficiency and most importantly, the sustainability of the Transport Industry. I applaud you for the initiative.

I have been Managing Director of a small transport company- for 30 years and am a member of NHVR, TRUCKSAFE and NatRoad.

Being intimately involved in a small company, I am uniquely aware of multi- faceted areas of concern for the Transport Industry. My role not only includes financial, compliance, regulatory administration but also covers driver mental health well- being, logistics and public awareness.

Personally, my greatest concern- being the lack of positivity, within the industry and also more concerning the lack of a positive public perception.

I honestly believe if the transport industry gains a *positive public perception* it will then flow into our industry, giving it a strong robust future. If the public starts viewing the Transport Industry as a fabulous and an essential part of a society needs, it will then be more accepted on our roads and also as a chosen career path for future employment.

I have included with this communication, a couple of articles I have written:

- Letter written to Transport Minister, Michael McCormack
- BIG RIGS article published 9.08.19- "changing public perception"
- BIG RIGS article published 16.09.19- "softening our image"

I have also included "WAVE TO A TRUCKIE" sticker, with back ground information, an initiative I created, playing a small part of my vision.

As part of this inquiry, I would urge the committee to touch on, creating a POSITIVE PUBLIC PERCEPTION leading to a viable and sustainable Transport Industry.

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX – TO SUCCEED WITHIN THE BOX.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter, I appreciate how busy you are.

Regards,

✓
Sally Tipping

Director

Tippings Transport

- Michael McCormack's letter 21.05.19
- Same question- POSITVELY different response
 - SUNRISE media report 25.05.19



TRANSPORT

ABN 70 070 787 227

Tuesday, 21 May 2019

Michael McCormack
Minister Transport and Infrastructure
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT
2600

Dear Michael,

Congratulations on your election victory and I am hoping you will retain your position as Transport Minister. It is vital that the Road Transport Industry has a positive role model to voice our concerns. I particularly enjoyed your visit to the NATROAD conference at Hamilton Island last year.

Firstly, I am very grateful for you taking the time to read this correspondence. I have been a managing director of a small transport company for nearly 30 years, being a member of TRUCKSAFE and NHVR for over 15 years. I am very passionate in the way the Transport Industry is perceived by the general public and would love a change to occur.

The Road Transport Industry is continually being portrayed, particularly in the Media, in a negative light. I had thought of journalists and the media always reporting in a bipartisan fashion however it now seems the general public is thrust into whatever view the particular journalist or network thinks will have the most impact. Reporting on the Road Transport Industry always seems to have negative connotations thus propelling this industry into disrepute. This is something that has concerned me considerably for quite some time now- one particular case really stands out in my mind, when during the Christmas period nearly 10 years ago, a horrific accident happened on the North Coast, a semitrailer ploughed into a house killing a young boy. Over the coming days, media blasted the Transport Industry, the Transport Company and the truck driver. This lasted for a number of days, pretty much vilifying the whole industry. At the time I did wonder who was at fault and what would play out in the coming months, years ahead, there was no denying this was a horrifying accident and something should be done to avoid this in the future. As it played out nearly 2 years later the main cause of this accident was another driver in a totally unrelated vehicle. I don't think this was ever revisited by the media- why would it, the damage and impact had been done- move on to the next story.

This is an example of how the media portrays our industry and manipulates the public into believing the Road Transport Industry is dangerous and unprofessional. THIS NEEDS TO CHANGE!!

Last night, I happened across your press conference transcript, Wagga Wagga ,20th May 2019.

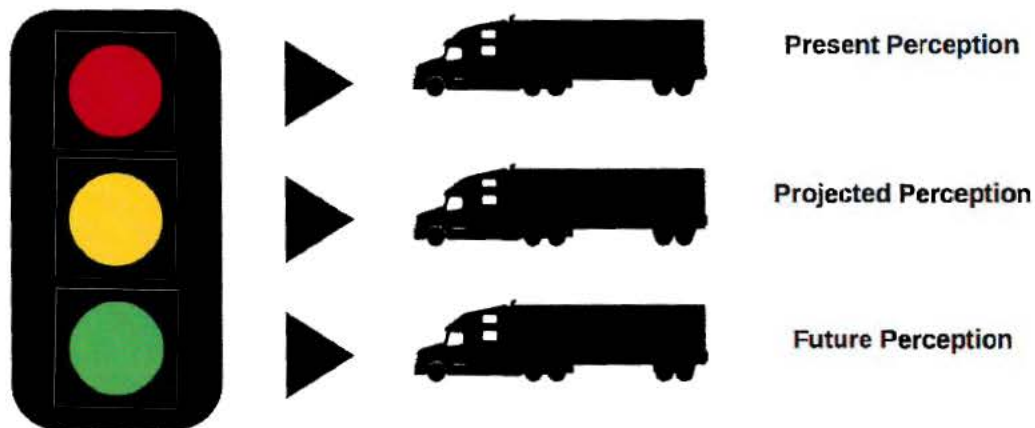
A journalist asked: What about the Parkes bypass? When is that promise going to be fulfilled?

Michael McCormack response:

"Well as part of the \$100billion infrastructure that we're rolling out right across the nation-I only announced it last Friday- but will begin soon. I want to make sure that the trucks that go through, that rumble through Parkes at a minute- a truck a minute- that they are taken away from that CBD. There'll be access, of course to the CBD for trucks which need to deliver goods to the central business district, to Clarinda street of Parkes, but we need to get those trucks around that important and growing and vibrant town and we'll do it"

My suggestive response would alternatively be "to deviate traffic away from the CBD, benefitting both the town of Parkes and also cutting times for highway uses".

Your response is another example of applying subliminal messages to our society, reinforcing the road industry in a negative light. At present when the word truck is used, it immediately conjures a red flag in the publics' mind. I suggest we start to **FLIP IT!**



We really need to start to change this mindset and really think about the power of words that describe this fantastic industry.

I am aware immediate action can't occur overnight, however the very first thing we have the ability to change, is the wording that is reported on the news every night when there is an accident that involves a commercial vehicle. It is ALWAYS reported as "the truck ploughed into", "the truck ran into"- always associating the commercial vehicle at fault, therefore reflecting how reckless this industry is. The media being the judge and jury. I strongly believe this is defamatory and should cease. Instead, using the words "two vehicles were involved in an accident" would be a better way of reporting and shifting the subliminal mindset of the general public. The same applies to the reporting of specific police investigations or enforcement. Media always

reporting on the number of fines applied and not the massive number of operators that had been targeted and are carrying out their business in an extremely professional manner.

An inquiry into the way media reports these accidents should be mandatory and specific wording should be abolished.

The public perception will then naturally shift and start to see that the Road Transport Industry plays an integral part in today's society and that it is an industry to which individuals are proud to be associated with.

That in turn, will change the attitude in recruiting a strong sustainable work force.

Yours Sincerely,

Sally Tipping
Director
Tippings Transport Pty Ltd
Dubbo



Same question- POSITVELY different answer

ATA

Hi Emily,

Just another example of specific wording in the media.

SUNRISE 28.05.19.A news bulletin regarding a truck colliding with a tree

7:00 am- "A truck slammed into a tree"

7:30am- "A truck was forced off the road....."

Specific wording- a positive change.

The POWER OF WORDS

Email Emily 25.05.19

BIG RIGS NATIONAL TRANSPORT NEWSPAPER-

ARTICLE PUBLISHED 9.08.19

Including:

- Michael McCormack's letter
- WAVE TO A TRUCKIE concept
- Changing public's perception

Drivers

This is probably the single most used word in every transport depot across Australia. Or the continuing lack of. Recruiting skilled drivers in the Transport Industry has hit a crisis point and urgent action is required. It is something that is a continuing issue for every Transport Company large or small, including my own.

We have a very successful regulatory body and fantastic associations including, Trucksafe, ATA and NatRoad that continually lobby for our industry and have made significant progress especially over the last 20 years. We have done everything that has been asked of us yet the public perception of the Transport Industry is at an all-time low.

I believe the biggest obstacle we face is changing public perception of our industry thus changing the attitude in recruiting a strong sustainable work force.

The Road Transport Industry is continually being portrayed, particularly in the Media, in a negative light. I had thought of journalists and the media always reporting in a bipartisan fashion however it seems the general public is thrust into whatever view the particular journalist or network thinks will have the most impact. Reporting on the Road Transport Industry always seems to have negative connotations thus propelling this industry into disrepute.

I am aware immediate action can't occur overnight, however the very first thing we have the ability to change, is the wording that is reported on the news every night when there is an accident that involves a commercial vehicle. It is ALWAYS reported as "the truck ploughed into", "the truck ran into"- always associating the commercial vehicle at fault, therefore reflecting how reckless this industry is. The media being the judge and jury, before any police investigations take place. I strongly believe this is defamatory and should cease. Instead, using the words "two vehicles were involved in an accident" would be a better way of reporting and shifting the subliminal mindset of the general public. The same applies to the reporting of specific police investigations or enforcement. Media always reporting on the number of fines applied and not the massive number of operators that had been targeted and are carrying out their business in an extremely professional manner.

For the last month I had been drafting a letter to Minister Michael McCormack regarding my concerns with specific wording. With the election looming I put it on the back burner, I wasn't too positive that Michael McCormack would even be Transport Minister let alone be in government. Much to my delight the Coalition was victorious, a fabulous positive step for our industry. My letter was back on the table, I was eager to see who was the next Transport Minister, I may need to hold off a little longer. Monday night after the election, while searching for more information I came across a press conference transcript, Wagga Wagga ,20th May 2019.

A journalist asked: What about the Parkes bypass? When is that promise going to be fulfilled?

Michael McCormack response:

"Well as part of the \$100billion infrastructure that we're rolling out right across the nation-I only announced it last Friday- but will begin soon. I want to make sure that the trucks that go through, that rumble through Parkes at a minute- a truck a minute- that they are taken away from that CBD. There'll be access, of course to the CBD for trucks which need to deliver goods to the central business district, to Clarinda street of Parkes, but we need to get those trucks around that important and growing and vibrant town and we'll do it"

This response is another example of applying subliminal messages to our society, reinforcing the road industry in a negative light.

BOOM – I needed to get this letter off as soon as possible.

If a Minister is using these words, what hope do we have?

We need to start flipping our wording: My suggestive response would alternatively be “to deviate traffic away from the CBD, benefitting both the town of Parkes and also cutting times for highway users”.

At present when the word truck is used, it immediately conjures a **red** flag in the public's mind. I use the analogy of a traffic light.

Red being negative and the way the public perception is at present.

Amber neutral, a projected perception

Green positive, a future perception

We really need to start to change this mindset and really think about the power of words that describe this fantastic industry.

An inquiry into the way media reports these accidents should be mandatory and specific wording needs be abolished.

Public perception has always been a concern for me and I have been thinking of different ways, I could possibly contribute in some way, however small. As a small company we continue to strive to keep up with the standards that are now required by this Industry and I do believe that small operations, under 10 vehicles, can run an extremely professional company on par or even better than larger organisations as we are in control of all aspects of the business and are on the ground overseeing daily operations.

About 18 months ago, I started taking interest in Tippings transports' face book page. The Tipping family have always been associated with transport, sawmilling around the central west since the early 1900s and I thought if anything it would be great to post old photos as well as being a visual diary for my children and their children in years to come. Social media isn't something that comes too easily for my generation but I thought I would give it a go!

After posting a series of photos, I soon realised that the followers loved action shots and interacted more with these posts. It was really fabulous to see our own drivers interacting and supplying me with numerous photos of them working, some also attaching stories, giving me an insight into how their day was.

Last month Grant showed me a couple of photos of loading on one early morning and I wanted to post something positive about that. This is where I thought of a campaign maybe to encourage a positive interaction between the general public and the Transport Industry. I couldn't think of anything better than a simple wave- a “Wave to a Truckie” campaign.

With photos I posted:

“wouldn’t it be fantastic if we could all show a truckie a simple ACT OF KINDNESS! Even if it is just for one day. Replacing a finger with a huge wave or easing off a little so the vehicle in front can safely merge.

This small ACT OF KINDNESS makes a huge impact on a drivers’ day and will makes his frown turn upside down!

Kindness is contagious!!

Our drivers working hard delivering goods for all of us!”

I was quite hesitant in posting this and I did not know what sort of reaction would take place but if I reached one person it would be a positive success. A start in engaging the public to interact to our fabulous industry. Starting to turn the RED light to AMBER.

A wave is a simple way of saying “hey, how are you going, no problem, have a great day” and everyone can become involved, especially young children, this should be our target audience.

One of the very first toys a child is given is something that involves transport, a truck, bus or a digger and yet by the time a child finishes their education their first interactions are gone. This is where we need to target, this generation. We need to try and hang on to this interaction so by the time the child leaves school the interest is still at the forefront of their minds.

We may not be able to make big changes to our generation of public perception; however, we have the chance and the ability to change the next and we need to do the ground work now! These children are our future drivers.

Ways and concepts, on how we can achieve this should be high on the agenda at any discussion table.

I am now eagerly waiting for a response from Minister McCormack and am hoping an inquiry will come to fruition as it is long overdue, in the meantime I will keep working on public perception and hoping to change the lights.

Post note-

I received a very gracious phone call from Deputy Prime Minister, Michael McCormack yesterday and thanked me for shedding some light on my concerns for our Transport Industry. He recognized the negativity the media portrays our Industry and will help with our fight to change the public perception.

BIG RIGS NATIONAL TRANSPORT NEWSPAPER

- "Softening our image" - published 16.09.19

Softening our Image.

Is it time to soften our transport image?

I have noticed more recently, large corporations, including Westpac and NRMA are endeavouring to soften their corporate image by investing in advertising with feelgood campaigns.

Westpac's "Baker from Beirut" campaign is a prime example of how, telling a heart-warming story can lift public perception of a company. It does not involve any corporate images, it does not show any shock and awe of consequences, instead delivering an emotional story that softens the pure essence of Westpac. A job well done.

Maybe we should be taking note of the lead, these multi-national companies are striving toward to make their businesses a more likeable and appreciable industry. They have obviously analysed their future direction and felt the need to soften their image and therefore influencing new customers

Why the Transport Industry needs a WAVEE!

Why would the transport industry want to embrace a comical looking symbol, that looks like it would set the transport industry back 25 years?

Twenty-five years that the transport sector has proudly transformed into a professional and well reformed industry. A credit to all involved.

My "WAVE TO A TRUCKIE" campaign is multi-faceted, something that looks so simple is in fact, quite complex.

It should not be cast aside

- Raising public perception by encouraging professional drivers and road users to interact with each other on a positive level. Leading to a greater understanding and acceptance of one another.
- "WAVEE" is perfect to interact with young children. By encouraging children to participate in our industry, at an early age, would then lead to future employment opportunities, accepting our industry as a professional career choice.

Presently the public perception of a heavy vehicle on the road is that is dangerous, it should not be on the road, it slows the traffic and to avoid it all costs.

My goal is to change this negative perception into a positive one.

To gain a positive public perception.





HI THERE!!!

Thank you for joining my **WAVE TO A TRUCKIE** family and joining our little company.

As a fellow WAVEE, you are now an honorary custodian of WAVEE!

GOOD JOB !!

WAVEE is always kind and courteous, he makes people smile and be happy. He passes these special powers on to everyone that puts him on their vehicle.

He makes everyone feel important.

WAVEE loves to travel, the more places WAVEE can be, the better!!
He has the power to spread our message far and wide!

By placing WAVEE on your vehicle, you are also encouraging other road users to be kind and courteous!!

I would love to see all the places he travels- *to infinity and beyond!*

My message isn't only about waving to Truckies, it is about engaging in positivity and spreading a little kindness around the transport industry. A small act of kindness, not only a wave, shown on our roads, can make a huge difference to a driver's day, it can really turn their day around and in turn, will spread to other road users!

KINDNESS IS CONTAGIOUS!

If you would like any more info, or if you have any ideas on how to further promote this little idea, I would be most grateful! 😊 We need to have fun with this! 😊

I would love to hear any positive feedback, or if anyone wants stickers, message me and I'll try accommodate them as best as I can.

Follow and like our WAVE To A Truckie FB page and share all "WAVEEs" adventures!

Promoting our drivers -Promoting our industry!

We are all doing it tough at the moment, so I will try and self-fund WAVEE however if you would like to make a small donation to place more orders, that would be awesome!!

Sally Tipping