



Media Release

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Revolutionise driver licensing, says RTF

With a drive to get more people into the industry, Road Transport Forum New Zealand (RTF) chief executive Nick Leggett says it is time to revolutionise driver licensing.

“We believe it’s time for a revolutionary approach that looks to the future and takes into consideration the world we currently live in,” Leggett says.

“Our submission to the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) on the proposed driver licensing amendments says we feel they are merely tinkering with the rules, rather than being strategic about what is actually required for a robust and growing road transport industry.

“The road transport industry is facing a serious workforce shortage. We estimate that on an annual basis, New Zealand is about 4,000 drivers short. While about 2,000 of those are through natural attrition, 2,000 more are required because of the increase in the amount of goods needing to be moved via road and delivered door-to-door.

“To get young people into rewarding careers in the road transport industry, there needs to be clear pathways to add to their skills and qualifications and to recognise that progression.

“Road safety is of course, imperative and is very much part of our suggested approach that better aligns training and experiencing with vehicle classes in the licensing regime.

“RTF has been a leading advocate for a review of the graduated driver licensing framework. The road transport sector needs to access competent drivers and driver trainees, while avoiding unreasonable costs.

“In our view, training and driver knowledge applicable to the job should always be outside the scope of any licensing regime. Occupational training is the responsibility of the employer, and must remain beyond the scope of the driver licensing framework.

“This draft offers some benefits but, in our view, simply doesn’t go far enough toward simplifying the heavy vehicle licencing regime. If it goes forward as is, RTF can only see it as an opportunity lost.

“Our views have gone through the Cabinet process and we can only hope the expertise of the industry using this licensing regime, and that industry’s future projections and needs, will be listened to.”

The RTF submission on *Land Transport (Driver Licensing) Amendment Rule 2019* is available [here](#).

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For more information contact:

Josie Vidal, RTF manager communications & government relations

Mob: 022 092 9353

About Road Transport Forum New Zealand (RTF)

RTF provides unified national representation for several regional trucking associations. RTF members include Road Transport Associations NZ, National Road Carriers, and NZ Trucking Association. The affiliated representation of the RTF is about 3,000 individual road transport companies which in turn, operate 16-18,000 trucks involved in road freight transport, as well as companies that provide services allied to road freight transport.

The road freight transport industry employs 26,600 people (3.0% of the workforce), has a gross annual turnover of \$6 billion, and transports about 70% of New Zealand’s land-based freight measured on a tonne/kilometre basis.