



9 January 2020

New training to attract and keep good staff

Two new training programmes will contribute to upskilling truck drivers, and others who want careers in road freight transport, Road Transport Forum (RTF) chief executive Nick Leggett says.

The New Zealand Certificate in Commercial Road Transport Skills (Level 3) and the New Zealand Certificate in Commercial Road Transport (Heavy Vehicle Operator - Level 3), are available this year.

“Trucking is an industry where on the job training and assessment is particularly relevant,” Leggett says. “Getting a heavy transport licence is just the start of it; there are lots of other things drivers and other employees need to know to ensure a long, safe career in road freight transport.

“It is increasingly important to offer career pathways, via training and opportunities to upskill, and to encourage good employees to move across different parts of the industry if that is what will keep them. That’s the way we will attract new and diverse talent, and keep that talent.

“We have an ageing workforce, with an average driver age of 54, and what worked 20 years ago is no longer relevant to younger people in the job market.

“Our industry needs to be responsive and offer both training and career pathways if we want to make an impact on driver shortages. There are times where industry estimates a 4,000 shortfall in available drivers.

“Industry has worked with MITO on a targeted review of qualifications, with some RTF funding and input from businesses with specialist knowledge and experience in training. We have ended up with recognised qualifications for the road transport sector that span natural career progression, from new entrants to managerial and senior qualifications, from level 2 to level 5.

“The RTF is working on a cadetship programme to be launched this year to incorporate and build on the existing qualification frame work and to provide employers with another tool to attract and retain good staff.”

There is more information on the new courses on the MITO website [here](#).

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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.