



**TIM DAWSON** State Secretary

## **TRANSPORT WORKERS' UNION**

### **WESTERN AUSTRALIA BRANCH**

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To Chief Executive Officer of BHP

### **RE: Parking Bay Amenities and WA Truck Stops**

The lack of appropriate amenities on Highways in Western Australia is leading to an unsafe and unhealthy transport industry and quite frankly, it is appalling that truck drivers in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century have still not been afforded a basic human right to frequent, accessible, suitable and clean amenities.

I am writing to you on behalf of members of the Transport Workers Union WA Branch who drive the long distances of our State and who, without their labour, transportation of consumer goods, minerals or equipment could not be made possible.

TWU Members want to see truck rest areas have more space for parking, cleaner and safer amenities, including showers and toilets for both genders, outdoor rest facilities like benches and tables, adequate signage that indicates the area is for the use of "trucks only" unless an emergency, rest areas that occur on regular intervals on the journey, facilities that are self-sustainable, powered by Solar PV and batteries and finally, have emergency communication equipment in case of poor mobile reception.

The Transport Workers Union has recently called on the WA State Government to invest in two separate types of rest areas for country road users, with a priority on "truck only" rest areas.

Truck bays are the responsibility of all road users, but even more prominently those who use the highways for commercial gain. The issue of appropriate parking bays for truck drivers has been put on the back burner for too long. Lack of proper facilities compromises driver safety, it compromises the mental health of our drivers and leads to a high turnover of workers in our industry. The less frequent appropriate rest stops occur the greater the fatigue constraints, which can lead to drivers parking in inappropriate areas or worse, not stopping at all – both with severe consequences. Drivers also experience severe health problems in their bladders and bowels from holding on for too long without appropriate rest stops.

Andrew Mackenzie, the cost of inaction on this urgent issue will only become more dire.

The transport industry is at a tipping point when it comes to attracting and retaining young drivers. As an industry we need to attract more female long-haul truck drivers, and more talented drivers with the skills needed to operate in an industry that is widely considered as the most dangerous in Australia. Clients and companies reap the benefits while the driver is expected to operate in an environment comparative to the third world.

It is an appalling sense of entitlement that companies can put trucks on the road and not be responsible for the maintenance of infrastructure, or the wellbeing of the driver behind the wheel.

On behalf of our members, I would like to take this opportunity to ask you to meet with me and discuss options on how I think your company can assist to turn around the appalling conditions that Long Distance drivers in WA have to work in every day and help change it for the better.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards

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**CC: Ken MacKenzie - Chairman of BHP**