AUSTRALIAN ROAD TRAIN ASSOCIATION

Representing all Multi-Combination Operators

MEDIA RELEASE

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ARTA SUPPORTS CHAIN OF RESPONSIBILITY COMPLIANCE

The Australian Road Train Association (ARTA) supports the 'Chain of Responsibility' prosecutions being brought by the NSW Roads Minister, Eric Roozendaal and the NSW Roads & Traffic Authority (RTA) against 'severe category' overloading breaches that occurred during the 2005-06 wheat harvest season, Dubbo-based ARTA Executive Director, John Morris, said today.

"After all, as they say, 'the law is the law, is the law' and we cannot - at any time - condone the breaking of the law on our roads by heavy vehicles - particularly when it compromises safety for all road users," Mr Morris said.

"Severely overloaded trucks are a definite safety risk in anybody's book and the days of overloading are long gone across the vast majority of our professional transport operators today.

"The key benefit the C&E legislation has brought our industry is that it makes everybody in the 'chain' accountable and liable – from drivers, owners, consignors (ie. farmers), loaders (ie. header operators) and consignees (ie. grain receivers).

"In turn it means the pressure is spread across those who do not abide by the laws, and provides and 'even playing field' for law-abiding operators against those who attempt to 'fleece the system'."

Mr Morris was responding to a recent story in The Land newspaper stating that "Central West (NSW) truck drivers believed the 2005 harvest was to be a 'trial and awareness' year for new grain overloading rules".

"The reality is that was not the case, and transport operators were well warned beforehand throughout 2005," Mr Morris said.

Mr Morris highlighted that the RTA conducted many Compliance and Enforcement (C&E) seminars throughout NSW and publicised C&E information in the trade media in 2005, stating that the Road Transport (General) Act 2005 (encompassing C&E laws) would be introduced in September 2005.

"Speaking also in my capacity as a transport insurance representative, it is a well known fact that if a truck crashes and in the worst case scenario, injures or kills someone while they overloaded, especially severely overloaded, the insurance company has the right to deny any claim for damages, and the driver, and also the owner, can end up in jail" Mr Morris said.

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KENWORTH

EVERY TIME. Cummins