



AUSTRALIAN ROAD TRAIN ASSOCIATION Inc.

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Carrying Australia's Economic Future

Media Release

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STRUGGLING RURAL TRANSPORT OPERATORS WELCOME FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DROUGHT ASSISTANCE

Today's Federal Government announcement that small businesses affected by the drought will be eligible for Exceptional Circumstance (EC) assistance is a warmly welcomed 'hand up' for the Australian rural trucking sector, Australian Road Train Association Chief Executive, Duncan Bremner, said today.

"Today's announcement by the Deputy Prime Minister and Leader of The Nationals, Mark Vaile, of \$210 million EC assistance over two years for small business is welcome recognition of the immense burden the drought is having not just on our farmers, but all businesses in rural and regional Australia," Mr Bremner said.

The assistance will be through income support and EC interest rate subsidies.

The package will be available to businesses deriving 70 per cent of income from primary industry and are in EC areas.

Mr Bremner said the announcement meant many truck operators would now be able to reassess their financial positions.

"The long-term impact of this drought has had many of our members questioning their long term viability," Mr Bremner said.

"Today's announcement means they will be able to reassess their position and hopefully bridge the gap that may have seen staff lay offs or business closures.

"When the agriculture sector is crippled, so are the many businesses that rely on it.

"We welcome the Federal Government's recognition of this, and now ask their state counterparts to consider likewise."

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