



TRUCK ACCIDENTS HIGHLIGHT URGENT NEED FOR FREIGHT RAIL INVESTMENT

In recent weeks, there have been four truck accidents on the Hume highway between Gunning and Jugiong. According to Angus Taylor, the Liberal Candidate for Hume, these accidents reinforce the urgent need for investment in Australia's freight transport problems. He has repeated his call for development of the 'inland rail' corridor from Melbourne to Brisbane, alongside urgent investment in the current rail corridor.

Last week a large truck near Jugiong careered off the highway into a vehicle parked on the side on the road. Mr Taylor said that last week's accident followed a major crash the week before involving a double truck near Yass, in which both the driver and his passenger were killed. And in the week prior to that, another B-Double careered off the highway near the Yass service centre, and burst into flames. A prime mover burst into flames near Gunning the same morning.

Mr Taylor said:

"It is clear that an increasing numbers of trucks are involved in major accidents on the Hume. These accidents are just another reason why we need to look hard at how we meet the fast growing freight task in this country.

"Earlier in the year Infrastructure Australia provided its annual report to the Council of Australian Governments on progress and action for Australian infrastructure. That report announced a proposal that B-triples should be trialled on the Hume Highway, from next year. I have been and remain highly critical of this development.

"Infrastructure Australia continues to talk a big game on importance of delivering an improved North South rail corridor (Melbourne – Sydney - Brisbane), but there is little evidence of progress.

"Instead, we are facing an increase in the size of the trucks on the Hume Highway. This is a knee jerk, patchwork reaction to a failing freight rail policy. We can't keep increasing the size of trucks as a reaction to rising fuel and labour costs, when the real answer is a better freight rail corridor."

"I drive on that Highway several times each week, and have driven this road regularly all my life. As the months and years pass the Hume looks more and more like a continuous road train.

Mr Taylor said:

"We need some policy making with vision and commitment to the long term prosperity of the country – particularly regional areas."

“For many years now I have been arguing to establish an inland rail line to support, and for reinvestment in the current route from Melbourne to Sydney.

“Doing this will get trucks off the Hume, will reduce our long distance freight haulage costs, and will also support improvement in our grain haulage systems

“I will continue to fight for investment in rail freight as a solution to the crisis on our roads

For queries please contact Angus Taylor on 0413 963 113.