



## **The Hon Michael McCormack MP**

Deputy Prime Minister  
Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development  
Leader of The Nationals  
Federal Member for Riverina

## **The Hon Scott Buchholz MP**

Assistant Minister for Road Safety and Freight Transport  
Federal Member for Wright

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### **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **EXEMPTIONS FOR HEAVY VEHICLE DRIVERS AT REST STOPS**

The Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) and the National Cabinet have tonight approved an exemption for roadhouses, dedicated truck stop facilities and truck driver lounges to remain open so Australia's heavy vehicle drivers have access to showers, restrooms and facilities to undertake their mandated fatigue management breaks.

Due to recent COVID-19 restrictions that apply to roadside eateries, truck driver lounges and rest stops have closed, leaving truck drivers with nowhere to eat, rest and go to the bathroom.

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development Michael McCormack said the trucking sector is playing a critical role in Australia's response to COVID-19.

"Our truck drivers are transporting everything from supermarket supplies and fuel to vital medical equipment and medicine to where it is needed across Australia," Mr McCormack said.

"We have heard their concerns loud and clear and this is a common sense solution which ensures heavy vehicle drivers have access to essential amenities, can take regular breaks and eat properly whilst delivering their vital cargo.

"Roadside service stations, roadhouses and truck driver lounges provide a vital function allowing truck drivers to eat, shower, use restrooms, refuel and rest comfortably before resuming their work – which is critical for them to continue efficient and safe freight distribution across the country."

"I thank the AHPPC and the National Cabinet for agreeing to these common-sense changes for the benefit of our truckies."

The exemptions will only apply to facilities where appropriate social distancing and hygiene measures can be maintained and the use of roadhouses will be strictly limited to heavy vehicle drivers.

Assistant Minister for Road Safety and Freight Transport Scott Buchholz said the safety of truck drivers at this difficult time is a key consideration of Government.

"I come from a freight industry background and I know first-hand how important these facilities are. I've been hearing direct from industry about the great work they are doing in this difficult time and the challenges they have been facing.

"We want to make sure our truckies are safe, both in terms of fatigue management and their risk of exposure to COVID-19 and this exemption gets that balance right.

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Parliament House Canberra | (02) 6277 7520 | [minister.mccormack@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:minister.mccormack@infrastructure.gov.au)  
Suite 2, 11-15 Fitzmaurice Street, Wagga Wagga NSW 2650 | [michael.mccormack.mp@aph.gov.au](mailto:michael.mccormack.mp@aph.gov.au)

“With this exemption now in place, I do ask that facilities that can open per the social distancing and hygiene requirements of this new exemption do so.

“I want to thank the heavy vehicle sector and the peak industry bodies for working cooperatively with government and raising this from the grassroots level to the attention of the Commonwealth, the AHPPC and the National Cabinet.”

**Media Contact:**

Mr McCormack – Tess Salmon 0467 740 017

Mr Buchholz – Scott O’Connell 0413 424 384