

# Freight Transport Environmental Regulation

There are a range of environmental regulations that apply to all industries, including the transport and logistics sector. These standards place controls on air quality, noise and vibration among others. These standards are administered by state and local governments as well as centralised government bodies.

The model of environmental regulation for the road transport industry is applied through strict Australian Design Rules (ADR), administered by transport ministers, which regulate the noise and emissions produced by heavy vehicles.

Australia has had road vehicle emissions standards for new vehicles since the early 1970s and these have been progressively tightened over the past 40 years. The current standards for Heavy Vehicles Euro V have been in place since 2011 and limit the amount of Carbon, Nitrous Oxide and other Particle Matters that can be produced from a heavy vehicle.

In more recent years the Federal government is examining the possibility of enforcing the mandatory introduction of Euro VI standard engines for all new heavy vehicles to further limit the amount of emissions produced by heavy vehicles and is being touted for introduction to Australia for all new trucks from 1 January 2016.

In comparison, transport ministers do not impose environmental standards on rail in addition to the standard environmental regulations administered by environment and planning ministers.

Until recently the nature of Environmental Regulation across Australia created a number of issues for transport and logistics operators as environmental regulation for heavy vehicles was primarily the responsibility of the State and Territories creating inconsistencies between noise and air quality across jurisdictions.

However State (QLD, SA, NSW, VIC and TAS) regulations will no longer regulate emissions from Heavy Vehicles. Heavy vehicles will continue to be regulated, but under a different law as the Council of Australian Governments agreed in 2009 to establish a single heavy vehicle regulator, who will oversee responsibility for this area of regulation going forward.

Furthermore while Transport and Logistics are under no obligation to reduce their emissions, to encourage companies to do so the Federal Government setup the Emissions Reduction Fund (ERF). The ERF will provide incentives for emissions reduction activities across the Australian economy. It is the centrepiece of the Federal Government's Direct Action Plan and will operate alongside existing programmes such as the Renewable Energy Target and energy efficiency standards on appliances, equipment and buildings.

## What does this mean to you?

Due to significant environmental regulation throughout Australia, a number of transport and logistics operators or related enterprises may need to meet certain criteria. Their activities are often subject to environmental regulation, and certain activities may have to operate under various licences and permits under the laws of the Commonwealth, State and Territories.

Compliance with these licence and permits may require significant monitoring, depending on the type of activity, on a regular basis, such as environmental audits.

## In Context

For example the South Australian Environmental Protection Agency maintains a close working relationship with TransportSA, who have prime responsibility for managing all elements of the transport system and conducts impact studies on smaller scale transport developments for comparison with criteria set by the EPA. Larger scale transport proposals are subject to other more detailed impact assessment, with input from the EPA.

The EPA offers its expertise to Transport SA and provides advice on transport proposals in the early stages of planning. For particular types of individual industrial and commercial development, defined in the Development Act, the EPA assesses the likely impact and advises the planning authorities.

In terms of meeting new Euro emissions some Australian companies have already looked to buy heavy vehicles that meet

stringent Euro VI standards. TNT Australia have recently taken delivery of five Scania P450 prime movers, the first Euro VI trucks imported into Australia.

The ultra-low emission vehicles achieve stringent emission reductions by combining Exhaust Gas Recirculation (EGR) and Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR) technology in a 450 hp 13-litre six-cylinder incline engine and will meet the most stringent ADRs for some time into the future.

## For more information

Department of the Environment

<http://www.environment.gov.au/>

Emissions Reduction Fund

<http://www.environment.gov.au/climate-change/emissions-reduction-fund>

Australian Design Rules

<http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/roads/motor/design/>

