

## Alertness CRC NTC Media Release

Thursday, 8 December 2016

### **New partnership between the Alertness CRC and NTC designed to examine heavy vehicle driver fatigue**

In a first for the Australian heavy vehicle industry, a new partnership between the Cooperative Research Centre for Alertness, Safety and Productivity (Alertness CRC) and the National Transport Commission (NTC), will, through a combination of rigorous field and laboratory-based research, evaluate the impacts of the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) on heavy vehicle driver fatigue.

Currently, there is limited evidence on the impact of work scheduling practices on heavy vehicle driver fatigue, and very few studies that have measured driver alertness and fatigue using objective measurement and prediction technologies. There is also little information about the quality and quantity of drivers' sleep during minimum rest periods. Therefore our ability to examine the impact of current laws on heavy vehicle driver fatigue has been challenged.

Making use of increasingly-accurate alertness detection methods and sleep monitoring devices, the research undertaken by the Alertness CRC will support any future reforms of the HVNL fatigue laws – ultimately helping to keep heavy vehicle drivers and those around them safer on our roads.

The study will take place over 18 months, measuring driver drowsiness and sleeping patterns, both on the road during real-world work shifts and in laboratory settings. The research will use state-of-the-art alertness measurement technologies and a unique combination of research and industry based expertise that is made available through the Alertness CRC.

Chief Executive of the National Transport Commission Paul Retter welcomed the partnership.

“Our role is to help improve the productivity, safety and environmental performance of Australia’s road, rail and intermodal transport systems. We do this by proposing and developing national reforms and helping to ensure that those reform outcomes approved by ministers are realised on the ground. Through our partnership with the Alertness CRC, we will be able to understand in more detail how Australia’s current laws affect driver fatigue,” Mr Retter said.

Anthony Williams, CEO of the Alertness CRC added “The CRC’s key mission is to conduct research and develop new products and services that will improve alertness, safety and productivity for individuals and within organisations. Through our partnership with the NTC, and with the support of our other industry and academic partners, this project will facilitate the best research to support HVNL fatigue laws and deliver the safest outcomes for heavy vehicle drivers and operators.”

This research could not have been undertaken without the generous support of the Australian Government, which has committed \$828,000 to the project. Other financial contributors include Transport for New South Wales, the Institute for Breathing and Sleep and Monash University.

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**About the CRC for Alertness, Safety and Productivity**

The Alertness CRC is an industry focused research program committed to maximising alertness in the workplace. The mission of the Alertness CRC is to 1) Promote the prevention and control of sleep loss and sleep disorders, and 2) Develop new tools and products for individuals and organisations to improve alertness, productivity and safety.

<http://www.alertnesscrc.com/>

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**About NTC**

The NTC is an inter-governmental agency charged with improving the productivity, safety and environmental performance of Australia's road, rail and intermodal transport systems.

<http://www.ntc.gov.au/about-ntc/>

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