

Supporting best practice national training and assessment

What are the issues?

The practice and standards of approving heavy vehicle trainers and assessors varies between jurisdictions. Some training and assessment providers are exemplary but others have been dishonest or delivered poor standards of service. Commercial pressures on independent heavy vehicle driver trainers and assessors may not produce the best trained drivers. As a result, drivers may not be able to safely operate vehicles for which they hold a licence.

What is being progressed to address the issue?

Training provider governance

Austrroads has developed best practice standards and training material to support the consistent delivery of enhanced heavy vehicle competencies and assessment and will work with jurisdictions in implementation of core elements. Material developed includes:

- training provider approval framework (including key eligibility criteria)
- standards covering delivery, reporting, and consequences for non-compliance to be included in contracts
- skills, qualifications and experience required by trainers and assessors including any ongoing professional development needs
- a tool to help auditors
- skills, qualifications, and experience required of auditors.

Online modules

Foundational knowledge will be delivered online. These modules will be developed by Austrroads and used by all states and territories as part of their licensing requirements. They will deliver both a training and assessment component with applicants required to successfully complete all assessments ahead of commencing face-to-face training.

Face-to-face training

A detailed training and assessment guide providing better clarity to trainers will be developed by Austrroads. This will cover the required classroom-based, behind-the-wheel, and around-the-vehicle training and assessment competencies and assessment standards.

This material will be provided to states and territories which may make some modifications to suit local conditions.

With a growing freight task and changing vehicle fleet, Australia needs a lot of well-trained and capable heavy vehicle drivers. That starts with effective driver licensing.

What problem are we trying to solve?

Heavy vehicles are over represented in crashes, particularly fatal crashes.

The National Heavy Vehicle Driver Competency Framework (the Framework) and heavy vehicle licensing regimes exist to help protect all road users by ensuring drivers are competent to safely operate the vehicles they are licensed to drive.

Through the review of the Framework, requested by Transport Ministers, three problems were identified:

1. Heavy vehicle driver licensing is not sufficiently focused on key risks.
2. Arrangements governing heavy vehicle training and assessment are affecting the quality of driver training.
3. Heavy vehicle driver licensing is applied inconsistently, even across jurisdictions which have adopted the Framework.

Australian transport ministers have approved changes to the National Heavy Vehicle Driver Competency Framework.

What's next?

Austrroads is leading a national program of work with licensing authorities. Our focus will be to deliver a harmonised approach across Australia.

We expect to implement this large and complex program in stages. We anticipate it will be implemented in phases and take a number of years to be fully in place.