

Media Release

The Hon Gayle Tierney MLC
Deputy Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council
Minister for Training and Skills
Minister for Higher Education



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SMARTPHONE APP PAVES THE WAY FOR FEMALE TRUCK DRIVERS

A new smartphone app supported by the Victorian Government will be a one-stop-shop for female truck drivers to give them the confidence and support they need on the road.

The \$1.38 million *Oz Truck App* will provide 24/7 emergency support during breakdowns and crashes, as well as an online forum for drivers to provide peer support, health and wellbeing information, and petrol station, weighbridge and rest-stop finders.

The app was developed after research undertaken at Wodonga TAFE identified negative cultural perceptions of women in the freight and logistics industry – with women reporting intimidation and bullying by male counterparts, and a desire for more support and training for new female drivers and those of diverse backgrounds.

The project will be piloted using 5000 truck drivers from mid-2021 before being rolled out for free to the broader industry.

As part of the Victorian Government's *Women Driving Transport Careers* program, Wodonga TAFE developed the app in collaboration with Launchpad App Development – alongside Australia Post, Linfox, Volvo Group Australia, the Australian Trucking Association and Transport Women Australia.

Other initiatives to support women in transport careers include a VET ambassador in schools program, a diversity training program for middle managers in trucking organisations, the creation of a modified heavy vehicle training course and creation of a new truck driver capability framework.

Since 2014, the Victorian Government has invested a record \$3.2 billion to rebuild TAFE and support universities and higher education to ensure Victorians have access to high quality education and rewarding career pathways.

The *Victorian Budget 2021/22* includes a \$383.8 million investment in the sector to ensure more Victorians get the training they need for in-demand jobs.

Quote attributable to Minister for Training and Skills Gayle Tierney

"The Oz Truck App is a great example of TAFEs working with industry in innovative ways – creating great opportunities for Victorians, stronger and more diverse workforces, and addressing skills needs."

Quote attributable to Minister for Women Gabrielle Williams

"We're proud to support this project – which is helping modernise the freight and logistics industry by creating cultural change and providing more support to Victorian women."

Quote attributable to Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne

"The representation of women in Victoria's freight industry continues to grow and this app is a fantastic example of how we can enhance health and safety and boost the number of women entering the freight industry."

Quote attributable to Member for Northern Victoria Jaclyn Symes

"It's great that this innovative app was developed right here in Wodonga – I hope it encourages more female truck drivers into this vital industry."

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Quote attributable to Wodonga TAFE CEO Phil Paterson

“We’re proud to launch this new initiative alongside our industry partners – it’s an innovative app that will encourage more women to get involved in the industry and increase its professionalism, safety and diversity.”