

Media Release

The Hon Melissa Horne MP

Minister for Casino, Gaming and Liquor Regulation

Minister for Local Government

Minister for Ports and Freight

Minister for Roads and Road Safety



Monday, 20 March 2023

DRIVING OUR FREIGHT AGENDA AT STATE CONFERENCE

Workers who drive the state's economy through our \$21 billion freight and logistics industry will be of focus at this weekend's Victorian Transport Association state conference.

Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne today launched the conference in Philip Island, which brings together key members of the industry to improve and enhance supply chain capability and address labour shortages.

Those in the industry will be recognised under this year's theme: *People First – Managing Transport's Greatest Asset*.

The Labor Government is working with the Victorian Transport Association to address labour shortages in the sector through the Freight Industry Training initiative.

The \$3 million program – which was launched early last year – has equipped participants with the necessary skills to secure long-term job opportunities, such as driving heavy vehicles, forklifts and working in warehousing, and ensuring essential supplies get to their destination.

The Government's *Women in Transport Strategy 2021-24* will also be a focal point at the conference – with the project aimed at increasing the number of women working in public and private industry transport sectors to 50 per cent by 2024.

Women currently make up just 16 per cent of workers in the freight and logistics industry and therefore have been a priority in the program – many are now in full-time employment and more graduates are looking for opportunities to join them.

The sector's resilience and response to local and global events that have impacted supply chains will also be discussed at the conference. It includes the impacts to the industry following the devastating floods last year.

The freight sector contributes \$21 billion to the state's economy each year and underpins 260,000 jobs that ensure producers, exporters and importers can get their products to local and global markets.

The state conference is being held until March 21.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Ports and Freight Melissa Horne

"We're continuing to work with the freight and logistics industry to keep supply chains moving into the future and benefit the thousands of Victorians who work in and rely on it daily."

"This Victorian Transport Association state conference is a great way to hear from key members of the industry to understand issues and address them, so we can keep supporting our producers, freight operators and exporters."

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