

IAP the road forward //

MEDIA RELEASE

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THE REAL FACTS ON THE IAP: BACK-OFFICE SYSTEMS AND LAST MILE ACCESS

Transport Certification Australia CEO, Chris Koniditsiotis has taken the opportunity with the announcement of Transport Compliance Services joining Transtech Driven, Minorplanet and Omnistar as an IAP Service Provider, to table the facts about the Intelligent Access Program (IAP). "There is a lot of speculation and claims about IAP, much of which is wide of the mark. We are in a good position to know what is going on regarding take up of IAP, the benefits, back-office systems and last mile access," said Mr Koniditsiotis.

The IAP utilises contemporary telematic technology to provide improved access to areas or activities in Australia in return for compliance with access conditions. Current applications include Higher Mass Limits (HML) in NSW and QLD, cranes in VIC and NSW, and AB Triples and B Triples in NSW. Some special vehicles such as Quad Axle B Doubles in certain ports are also under the IAP. Other programs in Victoria are also starting up including High Productivity Freight Vehicles requiring IAP as part of the operating condition. Local Government is also recognising the benefits of IAP in providing improved access.

TRANSPORT OPERATORS CAN KEEP THEIR BACK-OFFICE SYSTEMS

Entry to the IAP means that existing GPS units will need to be replaced with an IAP type-approved unit. However this is where the difference ends. Transport Operator's existing or proposed 'back-office systems' are not affected. It is not true that you need to start again with all your systems. "This is where some industry bodies are not listening, nor trying to find out and pass on worthwhile facts to their members. These costs are not of the order that some would want you to believe," said Mr Koniditsiotis.

To future-proof your fleet, transport operators should consider fitting IAP type-approved units when re-equipping their fleets, regardless of whether they intend signing up to IAP applications or not. This gives them the flexibility to use IAP applications as they develop in future.

"Operators should shop around to make sure they get not only the best deal but the one that best suits their commercial operations and existing back-office arrangements," said Mr Koniditsiotis.

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LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND THE 'LAST MILE'

Some transport operators have raised the issue of "last mile" access (entry to Local Government road network). The IAP does not change the regulatory environment in which road network access is granted within Australia. However, it is being used by both State and Local Governments to provide enhanced access.

"A clear benefit of the IAP is the electronic HML map provided to IAP operators in NSW. This is updated regularly as both State and Local Government routes are opened up, and provides a real competitive advantage for IAP operators. Currently over 86% of the State controlled network in NSW is now HML accessible. Informed operators are now exploiting this access" said Mr Koniditsiotis.

Local Government is also starting to realise that it can offer more certainty to its communities if it can rely on IAP to prove compliance. According to Philip Lovel, CEO of the Victorian Transport Association, "We are working with several Councils in Melbourne who are interested in opening up heavy vehicle access to some areas that are controlled by curfews. There are benefits to industry from improved access, and Councils are seeking IAP coverage to keep communities comfortable that operators are staying within the access arrangements. Operators have done the sums and are interested in this approach."

"IAP has the potential to really open up access, which will increase productivity across a wide range of Local Government areas, saving our customers time and money as well as delivering environmental benefits through reduced emissions. Our trials with Local Government will show what the industry can do. With the thousands of deliveries made across cities everyday and increasing congestion, this will deliver significant benefits for everyone. It also has enabled us to go back to Local Government with something positive," said Mr Lovel.

BENEFITS OF IAP

IAP is about better managing the infrastructure, safety and the environment, remembering the general community concerns with respect to heavy vehicle movements. "The IAP is a very powerful tool being used by governments and industry to cover-off traditional engineering and safety issues and now public expectations" said Mr Koniditsiotis.

The IAP has a reporting process that generates a report to the road authority when the vehicle does not adhere to its operating conditions. All road authorities using IAP have already indicated that they see it as an effective productivity enhancement and compliance management tool.

Neil Findlay, well known industry expert and former Truck Safe chief says, "It's about transparency. Good operators have nothing to fear from IAP, as they are already well practised in running compliance operations," he said.

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Neil is also the Deputy Chairman of the NTC's Performance Based Standards (PBS) review committee that looks at PBS approvals for vehicles. "What I am hearing from Local Government, is that at last they can assess and implement an application with currently available, scientifically backed tools such as PBS (to prove the safety and infrastructure risk issues) and IAP as an operating condition (to deliver certainty/confidence to their councils/constituents). There are now good reasons why a local authority would want to deal with an access application rather than dismissing it out of hand. This is a quantum leap forward," he said.

"It is up to industry to decide if the benefits stack up", said Mr Koniditsiotis. The experience with IAP to date (as at May 2009) has been positive with over 100 companies, including many major carriers signing-up to the program for some of their vehicles.

SUMMARY

The costs and benefits of any new initiative are always an issue for operators. With over 100 companies already on board, there is mounting evidence that industry is recognising the power of the IAP platform. As for the back-office and the need to "rip it out and start again", this is simply not true and operators should seek more advice from IAP Service Providers. Finally, IAP provides Local Government with reasons as to why they can now deal with last mile issues with greater confidence.

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