



2023 SARTA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – Wed 27th September 2023

PRESIDENTS REPORT

WELCOME TO COUNTRY - We respect and honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past, present and emerging. We acknowledge the stories, traditions and living cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on this land and commit to building a brighter future together.

On behalf of Vice Chairs Carl Hamilton, Mark Crossling, the SARTA Board, Life Members and Secretariat, I welcome you all here today for our 2023 AGM.

I'd particularly like to extend a special welcome to the SARTA Members who have joined us tonight. Its great to see members showing an interest in the management of SARTA.

I also acknowledge and thank all the current members of the SARTA Board. I appreciate your commitment of time and effort. Your contributions to the discussions and decisions that determine and guide SARTA's actions in representing our members and this great industry are invaluable. We are particularly grateful to our suppliers and sponsors that get behind the industry and SARTA.

SARTA has continued to represent industry robustly on every front over the past year. The new SA Government and its Minister for Transport and Infrastructure made clear early on after their election and again at the 2023 SARTA Conference, that they consider SARTA to be a credible, reasonable and very effective representative of the industry.

The close working relationship that we re-established after the 2022 State Election had continued to grow in strength. This is important because it enables us to have a real impact with the Minister and the Government, including, when necessary, through the media.

The frank discussion we had with Minister Koutsantonis at the 2023 SARTA conference regarding the debacle of the HC to MC licence upgrade pilot and a number of infrastructure issues, highlighted the value and effectiveness of SARTA's approach.

On the Monday morning following the Conference our Executive Officer, Steve Shearer, took a number of important follow-up actions and we have continued to maintain the pressure in pursuit of the right outcomes and there is good reason to believe, from discussions he had this month with the DiT CEO, that we will secure a good result on the HC to MC Licence Upgrade.

SARTA has been well-represented on Minister Koutsantonis' Freight and Supply Chain Strategy Consultative Committee by Wendy Fennell and our Executive Officer, along with David Smith, Chair of the ATA. Through their efforts we hope to ensure that the resultant strategy includes key policies that will facilitate greater access for Heavy Vehicles, including High Productivity Vehicles as well as commitments to the infrastructure required.

We have secured a commitment to the re-introduction of HV Access Trials, where there is doubt within DiT about whether or not HPVs fit. The challenge is to make this a reality.

As I said to Minister Koutsantonis in my speech at this year's Conference optimising the safe use of high productivity vehicles and using the least number of truck movements for the task, is the only way that the industry can meet:

- The economy's need for efficient road freight;
- The community's desire for minimised road congestion and emissions; and
- Everyone's expectation of safe road freight.

We believe that the Minister and his Department understand and accept this reality.

However, a major challenge on this front is the action of the Federal Government in undertaking a 90 Day Review of all major Infrastructure projects and funding. That review was completed almost 50 days ago and the Federal Minister, Catherine King, announced in Federal Parliament earlier this month that she is considering the Review Report which shows that project costs have blown out by \$33 billion, or 41%.

Its clear that SA will have to fight to secure the continuation of the SA projects, as will all states. The Federal Minister has since stated that if all the projects are honoured, there will be no new projects for at least 10 years.

This will clearly be a challenge and SARTA will have to work hard with the State Government to get the best infrastructure outcomes.

The Federal Government's most recent controversial IR Reforms, the "Closing Loopholes" Bill was introduced into Federal Parliament early this month, after months of secretive meetings and negotiating. This Bill is a particular challenge for our industry because it includes the legislation to empower the Fair Work Commission to make Orders for Minimum Standards in Road Transport, which could include the setting of freight rates. If that occurs, we could very quickly be face with the same problems the industry had with the RSRT in 2015 and 2016. SARTA is working closely with the ATA in an effort to prevent that outcome and at the very least to limit potential harm.

We have made good progress in addressing the need to re-establish career pathways from schools to our industry. We have established an Industry Reference Group with the Dept for Education and we have secured the establishment of a Transport Flexible Industry Pathway within the secondary school curriculum from 2024. SARTA has attended two major Career

Expos this year with the HV Simulator and taken it to career events in Yankalilla, reaching 8 regional schools, and in Mount Gambier, reaching 5 major schools.

The Reference Group is working on the development of an effective information package, including video content, about our industry for distribution throughout the school system. The never-ending Review of the HVNL, which is now in its fifth year, has continued to be a hard slog, requiring continual effort and pressure from SARTA and others in an effort to keep it moving and to counter the games being played by most jurisdictions. This is an extremely important body of work because the industry will be stuck with the revised law for 10 years in all probability.

It seems that, slowly, senior police are coming around to the idea of adopting a Risk-Based and Safety-Focussed approach to enforcement, but ground-level officers remain stuck in the age-old practice of black and white letter of the law enforcement, because they can. SARTA is playing a key role in relentlessly pushing senior police and the NHVR towards the Risk-Based and Safety-focussed approach.

Alternative Fuelled vehicles are now firmly on the various governments' agenda, but they just aren't doing enough to support and facilitate uptake of these technologies. We pushed this hard at this year's Conference and SARTA's Wendy Fennell and Steve Shearer have since held meetings with DiT and secured their agreement to setting up a broad forum or Working Group, including DiT, SARTA, Operators, OEM suppliers and Freight Customers, to start driving a focussed and comprehensive discussion and planning for a shift to Alternative Fuelled HVs.

Along with all of this and other major issues, SARTA continues to support our members with a wide range of information and advice on issues involving the member's day-to-day operations. We know from the comments we receive, that our members appreciate that support and knowing that we are here to help them if we can.

Sharon Middleton AM

President

27 September 2023