



"The Sign of a Professional"

## NZ Heavy Haulage Association Media Statement

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### **Breach of Permit Changes Welcomed by the NZ Heavy Haulage Sector**

10 July 2015

The changes to the Vehicle Dimensions and Mass Rule that came into force on 8 July have been received with a sense of the relief. "They have been a long time coming and to finally see them come into law does away with huge penalties that simply did not fit the offence", the Association's Chief Executive, Mr Jonathan Bhana-Thomson said.

"The headline change for the heavy haulage industry is the removal of the 'null and void' clause which essentially treated an operator as if they didn't have a permit, by voiding any permit that they held if any condition was breached. The overloading fines were calculated from the normal maximum weight of the transporter and so fines in the region of \$30,000 were not unusual."

The NZ Heavy Haulage Association had been pushing for reform to the way that these fines are calculated for many years, and Mr Warwick Bell, the current Heavy Haulage sector convenor on the Association's Board, stated that he had been personally pushing for changes to this since he first entered the sector more than 20 years ago. "While there needs to be a penalty relating to overloading of overweight loads, the vast majority of the time, this is simply because an overweight load is placed either slightly forward or behind the optimum point."

"This can be a matter of 30cm difference, and while an individual axle may be overloaded, this is well within the gross loading of the vehicle as listed on the permit."

Mr Bell went on to say that in the future any such overloading fines will be calculated by compared the weighed up weight, with that stated on the permit – which will now remain valid, rather than being voided. "There are still large fines for other offences, such as overloading the gross weight, going off the stated route, or not complying with travel restrictions on bridges."

Mr Bhana-Thomson explained that there are now a range of 'critical' conditions identified on an overweight permit that now attract a \$2000 infringement fine, and also overloading offences can be calculated which add to this.

"However for the operator that has a permit and is otherwise complying with bridge restrictions, they will no longer be treated as a criminal who has no intention to comply with the law" said Mr Bhana-Thomson.

"It needs to be stated that without the lobbying effort from the Association, that this change would not have come to pass for the heavy haulage industry. We are proud of what we have achieved for our sector."

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