



# SAM BIRRELL MP

Federal Member for Nicholls

## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Economy cannot afford a hike in truck charges.**

Federal Member for Nicholls Sam Birrell has warned that rises in heavy vehicle charges of up to 10 per cent will add to inflation and impose higher prices on consumers.

Heavy vehicle charges increased by 2.75 per cent in 2022-23 but the National Transport Commission has released options for the next three years that includes 10 per cent annual rises which would amount to a \$2.6 billion tax on trucks.

Mr Birrell today met with regional transport operators and urged the Albanese Government not to go down the path of full cost recovery.

“Transport companies and supply chains are still recovering from the disruption of the pandemic and dealing with higher fuel prices and operating costs,” Mr Birrell said.

“Primary producers, who truck produce to market would also be hit.

“Many Australians are already struggling with cost of living pressures and a massive hike in taxes on heavy transport will be passed down the line to consumers, adding to the cost of everything shipped by road.”

Every heavy vehicle that uses Australian roads pays a vehicle registration fee and operators also pay a road user charge on diesel fuel. State and territory governments use the money to maintain and improve roads for heavy vehicles, but the NTC has revisited how the impact of heavy vehicles in the road network is calculated.

“Not one submission in response to the implementation options paper supported the 10 per cent cost recovery model,” Mr Birrell said.

“Another option to increase charges by 18 per cent over three years would also have widespread negative impacts.”

The Australian Trucking Association submitted that truck charges should be frozen for 2023-24 followed by modest annual increases of 2.27 per cent.

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