



2025 CORE SKILLED OCCUPATION LIST CONSULTATIONS

ARTICULATED TRUCK DRIVER (OSCA 713231) TANKER TRUCK DRIVER (OSCA 713232)

AUSTRALIAN TRUCKING ASSOCIATION SUBMISSION 26 SEPTEMBER 2025

1. About the Australian Trucking Association

The Australian Trucking Association is a united voice for our members on trucking issues of national importance. Through our eleven member associations, we represent the 60,000 businesses and 200,000 people who make up the Australian trucking industry.

2. Introduction and summary

On 25 August 2025, Jobs and Skills Australia (JSA) opened consultations on its advice to the Government on the 2025 Core Skills Occupations List (CSOL).¹

JSA has identified a group of occupations that are targeted for stakeholder consultation. These occupations relevantly include—

- articulated truck driver (OSCA 713231), and
- tanker truck driver (OSCA 713232).²

The two occupations are classified in OSCA as skill level 3, after the ATA and its member associations advised the ABS that occupational truck drivers require skills that are consistent with holding a Certificate III in Driving Operations.

Drivers of tanker trucks need similar skills to work competently, and must also hold an additional licence, with mandatory training, if they transport dangerous goods.³

This submission draws on evidence from JSA, the IRU and Industry Skills Australia to show there is an occupational shortage of truck drivers.

There are currently 28,000 unfilled truck driver roles, but the gap is projected to increase to 78,000 in 2029 as drivers retire. The industry is taking action to train more drivers, but it will not be enough.

Given the economic consequences of the supply chain disruptions caused by driver shortages, the ATA considers that **articulated truck drivers and tanker truck drivers should be added to the Core Skilled Occupation List.**

¹ JSA, [2025 Core Skills Occupations List \(CSOL\) consultations](#). Viewed 23 September 2025.

² JSA, [2025 Core Skills Occupations List \(CSOL\) - targeted for consultation group](#). Viewed 23 September 2025. Rows 281-282.

³ ATA, [ANZSCO review](#). Submission to the ABS, 27 August 2024. 2.

3. There is a shortage of truck drivers

Figure 1 summarises JSA’s findings about the occupational shortage of truck drivers between 2021 and 2024. There has been a national shortage of truck drivers since 2022, although driver availability improved in Victoria in 2024.

Figure 1: JSA analysis of truck driver shortages, 2021-2024

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Truck driver ANZSCO 7331	No shortage nationally; shortage in the NT	National shortage and shortage in every state	National shortage and shortage in every state	National shortage and shortage in every state except Victoria

Source: JSA, [Historical unit group shortage list](#), 2021-2024.

JSA found that the truck driver (general) occupation (ANZSCO 733111) was one of the five largest occupations in national shortage, in addition to aged or disabled carers, primary school teachers, secondary school teachers, and electricians.⁴

JSA’s analysis is confirmed by evidence from the IRU’s 2024 driver shortage survey and Industry Skills Australia’s 2025 Transport and logistics industry workforce plan. These are discussed below.

Evidence from the 2024 IRU driver shortage survey

The IRU is the world road transport organisation. The National Road Transport Operators’ Association (NatRoad) is an IRU member and facilitated Australia’s involvement in its 2024 driver shortage survey and report.

With strong engagement from local trucking operators, the report uncovered the extent of the driver shortage in Australia. It found that—

- 28,000, or 13.3 per cent, of driver positions were unfilled, and that
- 43 per cent of Australian trucking businesses were experiencing severe or very severe difficulty filling driver positions.⁵

The IRU conducted its research by sharing a common survey with IRU members, who then distributed it to trucking companies. 5,100 companies from 20 countries responded to the 2024 questionnaire.⁶

⁴ JSA, [2024 Occupation shortage list: key findings and insights report](#). 14 October 2024. 14.

⁵ IRU, [Global truck driver shortage report 2024](#). 32, 33, 37.

⁶ *ibid*, 138.

Evidence from the 2025 Transport and logistics industry workforce plan

Industry Skills Australia (ISA) is the Jobs and Skills Council for transport and logistics. It is responsible for developing the industry's workforce plan as the centrepiece of its functions.⁷

The plan was shaped by ISA's Transport and Logistics Industry Strategic Workforce Planning Committee, which is chaired by a TWU representative. The committee includes representatives of the industry, the MUA, the ADF and the NHVR.⁸

In addition to reporting JSA's occupational shortage data, ISA's 2025 workforce plan found that—

- workforce shortages were having a significant impact on road freight enterprises, particularly in regional areas
- 90 per cent of the stakeholders it surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that there was a shortage of heavy vehicle drivers, customs brokers and warehouse workers.⁹

The workforce plan was based on industry consultations, qualitative and quantitative data sources including labour market reports and academic studies, and stakeholder surveys.¹⁰

4. Although we are acting, the shortage will get worse as drivers retire

The ATA and its members are acting on the truck driver shortage.

With the support of our Foundation Sponsors, bp, NTI and Volvo Trucks, the ATA has launched career fact sheets to provide students, parents and career counsellors with information about how truck driving jobs compare as well as the pathway from a car licence to an MC licence.¹¹ The fact sheets are being distributed to schools, and at career expos and industry events.

Our InRoads Workforce website¹² provides information about how employers can recruit more broadly than drivers who are already in the industry.

The site includes our inclusive recruitment booklet, which features guidance about how to write job ads that attract people who are new to the industry and how to develop more inclusive recruitment processes.

The booklet was sponsored by Teletrac Navman, who also sponsor our solution to helping employers get a better understanding about recruiting from untapped talent pools and then retaining staff: the SBS Inclusion Program's online training course.

Businesses and individuals in the industry can sign up to a free subscription to the program, which provides 24x7 access to online training modules on appropriate workplace behaviour, inclusion, cultural diversity and more.

⁷ Industry Skills Australia (ISA), [Transport and logistics industry 2025 workforce plan](#), 6.

⁸ ISA, [Transport and logistics workforce planning committee](#). Viewed 25 September 2025.

⁹ ISA, 2025. 20, 24, 87.

¹⁰ *ibid.* 91.

¹¹ ATA, [InRoads workforce program](#). Viewed 25 September 2025.

¹² *ibid.*

Meanwhile, ATA member associations and companies are running short driver training courses. These courses go beyond getting a licence to include other skills that drivers need to succeed.

- the **Victorian Transport Association's** Driver Delivery Program is an eight day, 2:1 training course that provides tailored training, mentoring and behind the wheel driving experience¹³
- the **Queensland Trucking Association** is running a Heavy Vehicle Safe Driver Project to employ and upskill drivers with an HR or HC licence who could not obtain employment due to their lack of supervised driving time.¹⁴ The QTA is also delivering a ten day pre-apprenticeship course in Townsville.¹⁵ The two programs now have 72 graduates in total.¹⁶ The QTA is the industry's lead advocate for truck driving apprenticeships, which are now available in Queensland.¹⁷
- the **Western Roads Federation** runs a heavy vehicle driver training course that has now trained 1,600 drivers. About 25 per cent of the graduates from the course are women; 11 per cent of the course graduates are Indigenous.¹⁸
- **Volvo Trucks Australia** has partnered with **Wodonga TAFE's** Driver Education Centre of Australia (DECA) to run its Australian Iron Women driver training program. On successful completion of the 12 month program, graduates receive a Certificate III in Driving Operations. The first cohort from the program has graduated.¹⁹

These initiatives are essential, but they cannot scale far enough to offset the retirements from the industry.

The IRU driver shortage report found that 28 per cent of the current truck driver workforce is projected to retire by 2029 – a loss of 50,000 workers on top of the 28,000 positions unfilled in 2024.²⁰

The ISA workforce plan reached similar conclusions and noted employer reports that there were not enough young drivers entering the profession to fill the vacancies.²¹

¹³ VTA, [Driver delivery program](#). Viewed 25 September 2025.

¹⁴ QTA, [HV safe driver project](#). Viewed 25 September 2025.

¹⁵ QTA, [Driving Townsville's future](#). Viewed 25 September 2025.

¹⁶ Email from QTA General Manager – Strategy and Engagement Lisa Fraser, 25 September 2025.

¹⁷ Department of Trade, Employment and Training. [Heavy vehicle driver](#). Viewed 25 September 2025.

¹⁸ Email from WRF CEO Cam Dumesny, 25 September 2025.

¹⁹ Volvo Trucks Australia, [Volvo Iron Women](#). Viewed 25 September 2025.

²⁰ IRU, 2024. 63.

²¹ ISA, 2025. 25.

5. The economic consequences of the shortage are serious

The economic consequences of the driver shortage are serious—

- disruptions in the transport supply chain due to the lack of drivers cause interruptions to just-in-time inventory systems²² and adversely affect the capability and performance of logistics service providers²³
- delays have implications for agriculture sector exports and cause issues for supply chains involving perishable goods
- the disruptions add to the business case for reinstating local inventories to smooth out disruptions. Managing larger inventories on a just-in-case basis carries an unproductive cost
- trucking businesses have equipment standing idle because they cannot source drivers to operate it.²⁴

Beyond the economic consequences of the driver shortage, there are animal welfare risks when pick-up or delivery windows in the agriculture sector are missed.

6. Skilled migration as a partial solution

Australia needs more truck drivers to fill the existing driver vacancies and to offset the workers who are projected to retire.

It is both urgent and important that we fill these vacancies, but the industry's efforts cannot scale far enough.

70 per cent of the industry stakeholders that ISA surveyed in the development of its 2025 workforce plan agreed or strongly agreed that the current lack of skilled migration pathways to address workforce shortages was a challenge.²⁵

Given the evidence set out in this submission, the ATA recommends that **articulated truck drivers and tanker truck drivers be added to the Core Skilled Occupation List.**

²² *ibid.* 24.

²³ Wang, M. et al, 'Transportation capacity shortage influence on logistics performance: evidence from the driver shortage,' in *Heliyon* 8:5 (May 2022). [Link](#).

²⁴ ISA, 2025. 24.

²⁵ *ibid.* 87.