

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Timber Towns Victoria Welcomes 58c Fuel Relief for Timber Haulage

National Cabinet halves fuel excise and zeros the heavy vehicle road user charge returning 58 cents a litre to regional operators already burning tens of thousands of dollars every week in additional diesel charges.

Timber Towns Victoria has welcomed the National Cabinet's decision to halve the fuel excise and reduce the heavy vehicle road user charge to zero over the next few months, saying the combined 58-cent-per-litre relief package arrives at a critical moment for Victorian timber communities under severe financial strain from surging diesel prices.

"The impact on the timber sector is huge and puts at risk many jobs across the sector and into the production of building products," according to Cr Karen Stephens, president of Timber Towns Victoria and Mayor of Glenelg Shire Council. "More needs to be done (like the excise) to support companies and jobs to secure incomes for every household impacted by the cost of living crisis," Stephens said.

It comes after Prime Minister Anthony Albanese confirmed on Monday that fuel excise will be halved for all vehicles from Wednesday April 1. A move that cuts petrol and diesel by 26 cents per litre, whilst the heavy vehicle road user charge will be reduced to zero, adding a further 32.4 cents per litre for trucks over 4.5 tonnes gross vehicle mass.

"We understand in particular that the heavy vehicle industry is under real pressure," Prime Minister Albanese said. "For many trucking companies, they rely upon a cash flow that is under pressure because they pay for their fuel."

The relief follows weeks of escalating pressure on harvest and haulage operators across regional Victoria, with surging fuel costs running some operators tens of thousands of dollars a week in the red. In Victoria's timber towns, prices reached as high as \$3.98 a litre in some bowsers, with major distributors cutting supply to independent bulk fuel users.

The National Cabinet also adopted a formal national fuel security plan, formalising intervention thresholds as supply conditions deteriorate, a move that follows documentation obtained from the National Cabinet revealing that Australia could not guarantee fuel supply past mid-April.

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About Timber Towns Victoria

Timber Towns Victoria is the peak local government body for Victoria on forestry policy. It represents Victorian Local Government areas with forestry industries on public or private land. In representing these local councils and the communities that work within the forestry and timber industries, TTV is committed to maintaining sustainable practices to ensure the industry continues into the future.

Media Enquiries

For more information, contact Timber Towns Victoria President, Glenelg Shire
Councillor Cr Karen Stephens

P: 0488 900 645

E: secretary@timbertownsvictoria.com.au