



The Hon Duncan Gay MLC

Leader of Government Business

Legislative Council

Minister for Roads & Ports

MEDIA RELEASE

30 June 2011

RED TAPE CUT FROM WOOL BALES

NSW Minister for Roads Duncan Gay today announced an immediate 2.7 metre width concession for the transportation of wool bales in NSW.

“The NSW Liberals & Nationals Government recognises the current dimensions and structure of many wool bale packs, as well as the wool baling process, contributes to wool bale loads exceeding the current 2.5 metres maximum width limit,” Mr Gay said.

“As every wool producer and carrier knows, when placed and restrained tightly on a truck, wool bale loads can deform or ‘bulge out’ beyond 2.5 metres in width.

“Unlike the former Labor Government, the NSW Liberals & Nationals Government understands and appreciates the unique challenges of baling, loading and transporting wool bales – many Coalition MPs are current or past farmers; my own farm at Crookwell has grown wool for nearly a century.”

Producers and carriers have been incurring heavy fines because of impractical and prescriptive rules and regulations that don’t account for the natural, physical attributes of wool bales.

“I know of a small Dubbo carrier who has incurred crippling fines of more than \$6,500 since November last year – this reform will inject some much needed common sense back into the equation”, Mr Gay said.

The 12 month concession – which will take immediate effect from tomorrow (Friday 1 July) – will give the NSW Government time to amend existing regulations to reflect the concessional width increase from 2.5 metres to 2.7 metres.

Mr Gay said to ensure road safety issues are adequately dealt with a number of important conditions will apply to the 12-month concession; notably:

- A maximum 100 mm side load projection on any one side of the vehicle;

- Vehicles travelling at night carrying more than 2.6 metre width loads of wool bales must have a flashing light, load delineators (i.e. reflective devices which identify the extremities of the load) and appropriate warning signs; and
- Clearway, transit lane and critical location restrictions will still apply.

Mr Gay reminded industry members and stakeholders of the development of the National Heavy Vehicle Laws, scheduled for implementation in late-2012, which may impact on future wool bale width limits nationally.

“In any future negotiations at the national level, I’ll be fighting hard for NSW to retain the 2.7 metre width increase for the transport of wool bales.

“The change is a positive example of how government, the RTA and wool industry representatives such as NSW Farmers’ Association and NatRoad (National Road Transport Operators Association) can work together to respond to the needs of stakeholders and customers while ensuring the safety for all road users is not compromised.

“This safe and sensible reform is a great result for drivers, farmers, industry members and stakeholders alike.”

A copy of the notice and related conditions documents will be available to download from the RTA website from 1 July 2011.