



23 September 2026

The Hon Anthony Albanese MP
Prime Minister of Australia
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister,

Urgent fuel price relief for rural and regional carriers

I write on behalf of the Livestock, Bulk and Rural Carriers Association (LBRCA) to urge the Australian Government to consider further measures to relieve the pressure of elevated diesel prices on rural and regional road freight operators.

Fuel is one of the largest operating costs for road freight businesses, particularly rural carriers travelling long distances and operating in areas where diesel prices are often higher. Sharp increases cannot simply be absorbed by operators already facing higher wages, insurance, maintenance, finance and compliance costs.

The impact extends well beyond transport. Higher freight costs flow through to farmers, processors, regional businesses and consumers, while smaller and family-owned carriers face immediate cashflow pressure when diesel costs rise faster than fuel levies and freight rates can be adjusted.

LBRCA asks the government to consider:

- reconsidering heavy vehicle Road User Charge settings while diesel prices remain elevated
- temporary and targeted fuel-price relief for road freight and agricultural supply chains
- extending ATO payment relief and examining options for faster or more frequent Fuel Tax Credit refunds to improve operator cash flow
- extending and improving access to the Economic Resilience Program for small and medium road freight businesses experiencing fuel-related financial pressure
- ensuring the government's fuel-security measures deliver tangible benefits to regional Australia, including increased regional diesel storage and supply resilience
- sending a clear signal across the supply chain that freight customers should promptly adjust fuel levies and contractual rates as fuel prices rise, including across Commonwealth procurement, publicly funded infrastructure contracts and Government Business Enterprises.



Relief should be targeted towards freight and production businesses that cannot readily reduce diesel consumption or absorb sustained price increases. It should also address the significant cashflow burden created when carriers are effectively required to finance higher fuel costs until those costs can be recovered from customers.

The government should also take current fuel market conditions into account when determining future heavy-vehicle charges. Increasing the Road User Charge during a period of elevated diesel prices compounds the pressure on businesses with very limited ability to reduce fuel consumption.

Rural freight is a highly competitive industry dominated by small businesses and owner-drivers. Operators have limited capacity to absorb sudden increases in input costs, particularly when existing contracts or customer arrangements delay the recovery of higher fuel costs.

Rural carriers have even fewer practical alternatives. Long distances, regional road networks, heavy payloads and the nature of livestock and agricultural freight mean diesel remains essential to keeping regional supply chains operating.

Australia relies on rural road freight every day to move livestock, grain, agricultural inputs, food and essential goods. Maintaining the viability of these businesses is therefore a national economic, food-security and supply-chain issue, not simply a transport issue.

Yours sincerely,

Wade Lewis
President

Livestock, Bulk and Rural Carriers Association Inc.