

Accident & Breakdown Towing Pty Ltd

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July 6, 2015

Department Of Justice and Attorney - General
Task Force into organised crime legislation
Chairperson-Justice Alan Wilson

Dear members of taskforce

Our Submission to the taskforce re: Occupational Licensing.

Accident & Breakdown Towing Pty Ltd is family owned and operated business servicing Bribie Island and surrounding areas for many years. We are Members of the Moreton Bay Regional Towing Association and are active on the Police Towing roster.

Accident & Breakdown Towing would like to bring to your attention a serious problem regarding licensing.

We feel it is worsening in the Tow Truck Industry in Queensland and could be putting the public at risk. Queensland currently has certain areas that are 'regulated' and other areas that are not. A regulated area is where tow truck operators must comply with the relevant Queensland legislation (being the Tow Truck Act 1973 and the Tow Truck Regulation 2009) and be licensed to attend traffic accidents. Gympie is excluded from these licensing requirements.

Licensing ensures that the tow truck operators only employ staff that meets the criteria required to hold a tow truck licence EG: Yearly Criminal checks Vehicle Safety checks.

The tow truck industry just doesn't deal with damaged vehicles it involves the general public and often in very high risk situations on roads and highways. A lot of the time we transport the people and sometimes their pets along with their belongings from the accident or break down scene. The maintenance of equipment is paramount and can have deadly consequences if not using the appropriate rated equipment. With current licensing issues we believe this poses a risk to general public at the moment there is no monitoring of the tow truck operators and their equipment.

It is easy for operators who are unlicensed to take advantage of persons who are highly emotional after being involved in an accident. People place their trust in tow truck operators many times we are first on the accident scene. These operators could have criminal history and be transporting persons after breakdowns or accidents.

The general Public is lacking in knowledge regarding the licensing requirements in Queensland. Hence resulting through a system being outdated in operation and causing much confusion and lack of enforcement.

Even the latest Queensland Transport **What to Do In A Traffic Crash brochure**, which is accompanying all vehicle registration renewal notices. This further enforces these misperceptions the brochure states that if your vehicle needs towing to contact a towing company of your choice to arrange for your vehicle to be towed. No wear in the brochure does not say to contact a **Queensland Government licensed towing operator**. This can lead to the general public to unknowingly partake in an illegal activity by requesting an unlicensed tow operator to tow their vehicle from an accident scene in regulated areas.

NSW has a licensing system where every tow truck and every tow truck driver is either licensed with a **Category A license** for all towing activities or a **Category B license** for only breakdown and general trade towing. Operators in The New South Wales work harmoanesly under this system know exactly where they stand regarding the towing of vehicles within the scope of their license. This system is simple and it works.

The Queensland Tow Truck licensing system needs to become much more transparent and enforceable and in turn will be easier to manage in conclusion Accident & Breakdown Towing would like to see,

- 1) Every tow truck and all tow truck drivers in Queensland licensed with annual criminal checks on operators and drivers.
- 2) All tow trucks showing the tow truck license number on advertising.

This system is currently in practise with great success in New South Wales. Accident Breakdown Towing fully supports the licensing of all Tow Trucks, Operators and Drivers in Queensland.

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Yours sincerely