



Case Study: Safety Truck - Gippsland Tour – March 2014

Introduction

In March 2014 Safety Truck toured the Gippsland region in south-east Victoria, in support of "Truckies Light Up For Safety," a campaign led by a local road safety group.

Concurrently, three of the ATA's *Truckies Top Tips* road safety messages were broadcast on the local commercial television station as community service announcements to support the campaign.

Subsequent crash data shows a remarkable drop in incidents over the campaign period.

Background

The Gippsland Safe Freight Network identified an alarming trend emerging in the region with increasing numbers of accidents between cars and heavy vehicles. The trend peaked between 16 January and 31 March 2013 when there were 17 crashes involving heavy vehicles, 15 of which involved other road users in daylight hours.

Gippsland's trucking industry rallied together to find solutions. The group developed an initiative to create awareness for all drivers on the issue. They asked all trucks to turn their lights on during daylight hours during the campaign period, run over the same period in 2014.

The ATA was approached by Alan Pincott, VicRoads Eastern Region Community Road Safety Advisor, to explore participation in the program.



Safety Truck's Role

Safety Truck is the trucking industry's road safety exhibition. Safety Truck has been brought to life to participate in road safety education programs, trucking industry led community events and other public events around the country.

An initiative of the Australian Trucking Association, the award winning* road safety exhibition responds to the community's concerns about the trucking industry's impact on daily life. We are able to turn negative stereotypes into positive community messages around safety education and industry image.

Funding

Through the generous support of major sponsors Volvo, BP Australia and NTI the Safety Truck prime mover is on the road, fuelled and insured. The program is also supported by a group of industry suppliers who provide the equipment and support.

There are, however, numerous other ongoing costs to keeping our presenters and driver on the road. Safety Truck's tour of the Gippsland region was sponsored by leading Gippsland trucking operators, BransTrans, based in Traralgon. Owners Nola and Norm Bransgrove's commitment to a three year sponsorship of Safety Truck program will enable the tour to be followed up in 2015 and 2016.

Gippsland Safe Freight Network raised funds to convert the *Truckies Top Tips* videos for television broadcast and to have a closing message acknowledging that the broadcast was a combined effort of the ATA and the regional group.

*2010 Transport and Logistics Industry Excellence Award in Community Service (CILTA)

Itinerary

The tour visited major centres in the Gippsland region including Bairnsdale, Sale, Leongatha and Traralgon. The tour opened with Safety Truck on display in Lakes Entrance supporting the East Gippsland Convoy for kids. The trucking industry led community event raises money to support kids with cancer.

Safety Truck's pedal cart track entertained youngsters at a festival at the conclusion of the Convoy, raising a small amount of money to be put back into the local community, demonstrating the Australian trucking industry's support for such local initiatives.

The tour included driving through the entire Gippsland region with a series of opportunities to open Safety Truck for display and others where the trailer was parked in strategic high profile locations to support the television campaign.



Engagement

Television

The ATA has developed a series of 30 second videos that are used in the Safety Truck display, available for use by schools, community and road safety groups, for viewing on YouTube.

The entertaining animated videos feature Safety Truck explaining some of the Truckies Tip Tips about how cars and trucks can share the road safely. Key messages include explaining braking distances, turning vehicles and blindspots.

The videos were broadcast on Gippsland's region WIN TV network over a three week period during the Truckies Light Up campaign.

Roving Billboard

The campaign was supported by having Safety Truck on the road in the region, parked in high profile locations and on display at shopping centres and at community events. Even when not on display the trailer is an engaging billboard reinforcing the *Share the Road Safely* message.

Media

Safety Truck driver/presenter Glen Schmidtke participated in a variety of newspaper and radio interviews featured in local newspapers, ABC local radio and ABC's regional news website. The tour was also covered by trucking industry media including BigRigs, ATN and CRT News.

Visitors to Safety Truck

Safety truck is designed to attract audiences of all age groups. As interacting with trucks is not covered in standard driver training or assessments, the messages are essential to anyone driving, but particularly in regional areas where heavy vehicles are very much a part of everyday life. Kids are also very effective means of influencing their parent's behaviour whether through conversation, repeating the messages, or as "back seat drivers."

Showbags are given to young visitors including a Safety Truck licence; getting to know more about trucks with colouring in and puzzles.

Older visitors are offered booklets featuring the truckies top tips, and booklets featuring information about Safety Truck, the ATA and the benefits of different trailer combinations to reduce the number of trucks on the road and to lessen the industry's environmental impact.

Conversation

With each regional area that Safety Truck visits, there tends to be a slightly different focus of concern by locals, depending on many local factors. Almost all visitors appreciate Safety Truck's messages about safe interaction between cars and trucks.

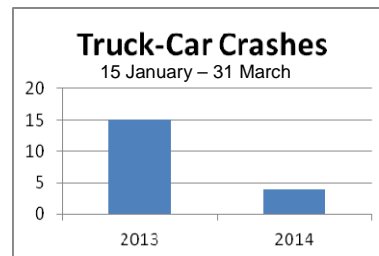
In Gippsland visitors were also keen to talk about issues and concerns such as:

- the effects that road deaths have on families and the community,
- towing caravans - where to obtain information and advice
- defensive driving courses.
- differing state laws
- work health and safety
- road design
- perceptions about heavy vehicle safety.

Outcomes

The collision data indicates that the campaign was successful. There was substantial reduction in crashes for the 10 week period when compared with the same period in 2013.

	2013	2014
Fatality crashes	2	0
Serious injury crashes	7	1
Minor injury crashes	6	3
Resulting in		
fatalities	2	0
serious injuries	9	1
minor injuries	21	4



Conclusion

The positive outcomes illustrated by new crash data suggest that the effort invested was extremely worthwhile. The energy and determination of the organising committee in Gippsland, and most particularly Alan Pincott, ensured that the Truckies Light Up campaign was a success. The evidence is enough to have persuaded a number of local trucking operators to make daytime running lights company policy.

Safety Truck served its purpose to highlight the trucking industry's commitment to improving road safety while delivering positive messages to the broader community about the integral role of the trucking industry.

Safety Truck was given great kudos, and whilst it is impossible to create a tangible measurement of its value in the program, Safety Truck's presence was valued as symbolic of support by the broader Australian trucking industry.

The effectiveness of Safety Truck in the region was magnified exponentially by the video messages appearing on television to coincide with the campaign.

The support of local media played a large role in ensuring that the campaign reached the regional community and remained a focus through the duration of the campaign.

The local trucking industry were the primary stakeholders, however many truck drivers were apparently cynical about the merit of daytime running lights; many initially resisted participating. The example set by a couple of respected operators was persuasive, providing and maintaining the momentum for increased and ongoing participation.

This cooperative initiative by the Gippsland trucking community and the ATA should serve as a worthwhile, if not inspirational, case study and example for others tackling road safety challenges in their region.

