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JUNE 2025 THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN FURNITURE REMOVERS ASSOCIATION

*AFRA Conference 2025  
20/08/25 to 22/08/25*



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SAFETY IN AND AROUND THE WAREHOUSE  
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CHANGES TO THE HEAVY VEHICLE NATIONAL LAW  
AFRA TEAM MEMBER PROFILE: SIMRAN KAUR



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MORE

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**A**s I write this article, I am sitting at a street café in Sydney's Barangaroo. It's rare for me to be in the CBD during the week, and I am surprised by the bustling atmosphere of modern working Sydney. Most of us are based in offices attached to warehouses on the edge of town, and it's easy to forget the changes happening around us while we are head down managing our business. This is an opportunity to reflect on change.

I have now been in Australia for 13 years, and in that time, I have seen huge changes. Our landscape and infrastructure are among the most notable. High rises dominate the centres, and sprawling suburbs are overtaking farmland on the outskirts. Even the centres have multiplied; Sydney now has three major hubs: Sydney, Chatswood, and Parramatta. Our favourite

demographer, Simon Kuestenmacher's vision, is becoming a reality.

I came into the city today on the Metro. What was once a one-hour ride on the train or bus is now just 30 minutes. I used to contemplate driving in, but the cost of tolls, parking, and the time it takes now makes that seem ludicrous. Regular commuters on public transport used to sit reading newspapers or books. Now, everyone is bent over their mobile phones, catching up on news, watching videos on social media, or playing games. The change is significant.

When I reflect on our own industry, the change has also been significant. The industry has consolidated, and some iconic names have disappeared. This reshaping will continue as many of our members grapple with succession challenges.

Against this backdrop of change, your Council will meet this week to consider the best way to change our membership structure. AFRA needs to evolve to keep pace with the changes in our industry. Technological and supply chain advancements mean that businesses no longer need offices and operations in every state to offer services nationwide. For AFRA to continue providing support and advocacy to its members across the country, the membership structure needs to reflect this.

This is why your Council has proposed that a fair system of membership fees be based on turnover rather than physical operations. The team at AFRA has sought membership feedback to model various proposals for the Council to consider. It's now crunch time, and we need to determine the model that will be presented to our members.

Change is scary, and there will be some winners and losers. However, apart from a modest fee increase for all, as the membership fees have not changed in several years, the aim of the Council is to put forward a model that is sustainable for the future while causing the least disruption to existing members.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to your Councillors. They will be pleased to hear from you on this matter. Registration for the Melbourne conference is now open, and I encourage you all to attend. It will be educational and fun, and it will give members more information about these changes and others that we need to make to be fit for future. I look forward to seeing you there. ●



### Introducing the UBEECO™ Group

As a member of AFRA, Ubeeco Packaging Solutions has a growing list of innovative products to offer members. We understand that storage customers want more varied storage options and storage owners need to cater for those changing market demands. Technical Packaging Specialist, Sean Clark said, "you can enhance your ability to service customer needs, give yourself a real point of difference from your competition – and increase revenue."



#### Portable / Stackable Storage Solutions

Portable / stackable timber storage units provide a real space-saving alternative. Strong, compact and durable – each module can hold 1.44 tonne and can be stacked up to 4 units high (see top right). Sean Clark said "Facilities need every option to optimize the airspace of properties without costly mezzanine floors and large steel units. The smaller lockable / stackable units provide flexibility allowing operators to make the best use of available space and provide options to their customers at a competitive pricepoint."



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## TRAINING REPORT

**A**s we move further into 2025, I hope the year has started well for all our AFRA members. It's been just over a month since I joined AFRA as the new Training and Compliance Officer, and I'm excited to share a little about what I've been working on – and what's ahead.

For those who haven't met me yet, I come from a legal background, having worked across several areas of law including property, family, immigration, and personal injury. My most recent role was in property law, where I led a team and was responsible for implementing new training and compliance processes. That's where I really honed my skills in training delivery – developing and rolling out internal programs, mentoring staff, and ensuring regulatory obligations were not only understood but applied consistently across the business.

What I've always loved most about my work is training others – getting into the details, clarifying the “why” behind the rules, and building confidence in people to take ownership of their responsibilities. I believe that when training is practical, clear, and engaging, it has a real impact on how businesses perform and operate day to day.

Since joining AFRA, I've had the opportunity to be involved in multiple compliance audits, giving me direct insight into the strengths and challenges our members are facing. These conversations have helped shape the improvements we're making to training resources, ensuring they're relevant, accessible, and supportive of your operations.

I also had the opportunity to attend my first Australian Trucking Association (ATA) Conference earlier this year, which was an incredible introduction to the wider transport industry. It reinforced just how important good training is – not just for compliance, but for building strong, safe, and informed business environments.

One of the key projects I'm currently working on is the update and redevelopment of AFRA's Chain of Responsibility (CoR) training. We're aligning it with the NHVR's Compulsory CoR Topics, and creating video-based modules to support learners at all levels, especially those who benefit from visual and accessible content.

We're also in the process of refreshing AFRA's WHS training, ensuring it's up-to-date, user-friendly, and suitable for our members. This includes reshooting our training videos, simplifying complex content, and embedding real-world examples relevant to the furniture removals industry.

Another exciting area I've been working on is the Estimator Course. We're revamping the entire program

– updating the learning guide, improving video content, and strengthening the connection between estimating and on-the-ground operations. This means clearer guidance around quoting accurately, managing customer expectations, and identifying potential risks early on to support compliance with CoR obligations.

Looking ahead, I'm committed to making our training programs not only legally accurate, but practical, approachable, and genuinely useful. Whether you're prepping for an audit, rolling out training across your team, or trying to get your head around HVNL requirements – I'm here to support you.

If you have any training or compliance-related questions, feel free to get in touch with me at [training@afra.com.au](mailto:training@afra.com.au) or through the AFRA office. ●

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BY SIMONE HILL

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

It is May, and it feels as though the year is slipping past at breakneck speed. In the AFRA office we have welcomed a new team member to the role of Training and Compliance. Simran shares her journey in this edition of OTM both in her report and as the subject of this edition's 'Five minutes with'. A compliance enthusiast with a legal training background, Simran will help AFRA overhaul our Audit process. Why are we asking the questions we ask? How can we better assist members to not just pass our audit, but also operate safe and compliant removals businesses who are committed to excellence? Simran and I will be working on this important restructuring next month, and rolling out new audits in time for the start of the 25/26 FY.

With Maddy's hard work, Conference 2025 is shaping up to be a fantastic event. Set in the historic Windsor hotel, our theme this year is a Traditional of Excellence. We have chosen this theme as to be an AFRA member is a commitment to excellence in all areas of business. AFRA has an expectation that members are not just removalists, but industry leaders. This extends to paying staff their correct wages, ensuring warehouses are of course immaculately clean and organised but also safe places to work in, trucks are beautifully maintained and your team members take pride in their work.

Truthful and transparent customer relations in all aspects, from the quoting of a job to the safe delivery of items is a not-negotiable AFRA member attribute. To be an AFRA is special, and our members should continue to strive for excellence. I hope you can join us in celebrating excellence in Melbourne.

“AFRA works for its members. We want to continue to build on the past 30 years of work AFRA has undertaken.”

Rose celebrates 19 years with us this month. What a commitment! In her time with us Rose has worked with three Executive Directors, become a grandparent, seen us transition through many different workplace systems and been instrumental in bringing AFRA firmly into the digital age, particularly during the past four years. If you call the office or email Rose, give her a hearty thanks for her work, and for my sake – tell her she cannot retire anytime soon.

I have had the opportunity to read President Nicki French's report, and wanted to make further contributions to the discussion around the proposed restructuring of membership. AFRA works for its members. We want to continue to build on the past 30 years of work AFRA has undertaken, and ensure the services and support AFRA provides to members is meaningful, valuable and high quality. There are many things AFRA does well, and a number of things I think we could do better. When a problem comes up in your business – such as WHS compliance, or a need for operational best practice guidance – AFRA should have anticipated it and have resources in place for your use.

AFRA resources must be crafted to an exceptional standard. It is no longer good enough to take another Association or another business's compliance documents and rebrand them with a few word changes. It is also not enough to get ChatGPT to knock up a policy.

To create quality compliance resources, and proactively monitor legal changes which may impact on these resources, requires AFRA to commit significant resources. To continue to work with government and industry bodies for the benefit of members and the industry takes resources. To promote the AFRA brand on members' behalf takes resources. To develop quality training and deliver it effectively takes resources. Auditing members takes resources, and promoting that our members are audited ensures the general public, businesses and government departments remain confident that selecting an AFRA member means a standard of excellence has been met. Facilitating direct access to quality IR and legal advice through the AiGroup and Bristow legal takes resources. Forming commercial relationships with Associate Members, which in turn enable removals members to access special rates and services, takes resources. Running annual conference, a quality networking and educational event, takes resources. AFRA requires adequate resources to continue this work, and to do so we must adapt and change.

When AFRA was established, membership categories were created in a way that reflected how removals companies operated in the 1990s. Size of a business was determined by their truck count and the number of locations a business was operating



BY MADELEINE VUMBACA



## MARKETING & MEMBER SERVICES OFFICE REPORT

in. The number of locations was determined in reference to the yellow pages advertisements our members ran. Not only have yellow pages gone the same way as the horses and carts our industry used to use for removals, so too the need to have brick and mortar offices in each location they are actively operating. Many members use both directly employed drivers operating trucks the member themselves own alongside contracted operators who run their own fleet of trucks with their own drivers. In many instances, our current membership fee structure gives rise to an inequitable application of cost to true size of company. The proposed restructuring attempts to redress this. The compulsory survey members have been forwarded will enable the AFRA Executive to model what any proposed new fee structure will look like and present that model to conference. No individual data will be shared with the Council. Members will have a chance to provide feedback to Council members, the executive and the general membership body.

We ask that members complete the survey promptly to provide the AFRA Executive plenty of time to undertake modelling of fee structures and adjust if required.

I thank members for their support during this revision of membership and encourage you to reach out to me with any question or concerns. No question, complaint or comment is too big or small.

I am excited for the future of AFRA. We will continue to evolve, taking inspiration from our wonderful members. Are you with me? ●

**T**ime has flown by and here we are at the halfway point of 2025. Planning for the 2025 AFRA Conference has been my primary focus throughout this quarter, ensuring that we put together a great event for you. The AFRA social platforms are continuously updated and worked on to maximise the organisation's exposure and engagement. I am always looking for content from our members to share and promote across AFRA's social media platforms and for inclusion in the Week in Wrap. If your business has any pictures or videos of moves or achievements, please send them to [memberservices@afra.com.au](mailto:memberservices@afra.com.au).

In May, we had a successful AFRA Learning Lunch hosted by our Associate Member Podium. The session focused on 'Save Time. Win More Jobs. Communicate Smarter with Podium.' It explored ways to increase team productivity, boosting customer engagement, and improving your business's Google rank. Thank you to Podium for hosting this session. We aim to hold an AFRA Learning Lunch each month. If you have a topic or person you would like for a Learning Lunch to cover, please let me know at [memberservices@afra.com.au](mailto:memberservices@afra.com.au).

Taking place in the iconic city of Melbourne, the 2025 AFRA Conference will be buzzing, packed with industry insights, renowned landmarks, and great coffee! Be sure to register for the conference through the Humanitix booking page, and secure discounted accommodation at The Hotel Windsor. You can access conference booking information via the AFRA Members website on the events page.

The theme of the 2025 AFRA Conference is 'A Tradition of Excellence'. As the conference will be taking place in The Hotel Windsor in Melbourne, a heritage hotel where the Australian Constitution was written, we found it fitting to focus on AFRA's long standing service to the removals industry. This conference, we will be celebrating AFRA's strength, success, and high standards that have been defined throughout our association's history.

The conference begins bright and early on Wednesday (20 August) morning at The Dunes Golf Links for the annual Golf Day. Registration is that afternoon, followed by the 'AFRA's Got Talent' Welcome Event. Make sure to register for 'AFRA's Got Talent' to raise funds for the AFRA Support Fund. The conference sessions program has a variety of speakers from a futurist, to a motivational speaker, to industry specific advice.

The Social Tour (previously known as the Partner's Tour) will be a walking tour around the city of Melbourne. A great experience to learn about the history and culture of Melbourne, seeing parts of the city you would otherwise miss while stopping for some tastings and lunch.

Thursday night will be the VISY Bugshifters' Dinner at the Melbourne Museum, then the final night dinner on Friday will be the AFRA Gala Dinner at The Hotel Windsor.

Has one of your staff been providing outstanding work? Is your fleet outshining the rest? Take a moment to nominate someone for the annual AFRA Awards that will be presented at conference. It is important to recognise and celebrate those exceptional contributors to the removals industry, nominations are open and accessible via the AFRA members website under the events section. ●

# TOOLBOX TALKS

## SAFETY IN AND AROUND THE WAREHOUSE



**DID YOU KNOW?**

### WHY TOOLBOX TALKS MATTER

Toolbox Talks are short, practical safety sessions designed to keep safety front of mind – especially in fast-paced, high-risk environments like warehouses. They're not just a tick-the-box exercise. These conversations help prevent injuries, build a strong safety culture, and remind us that we all play a part in protecting ourselves and those around us. A few minutes of focus now can prevent serious incidents later.

### WHY THIS TOPIC MATTERS

Whether you're based in the warehouse full-time or just pop in occasionally, it's important to remember that safety is everyone's responsibility. Warehouses are busy spaces – people, forklifts, trucks, and goods are all moving at once, and things can go wrong quickly if we're not paying attention.

This Toolbox Talk highlights some of the most common hazards in and around the warehouse and offers simple ways to stay safe and keep others safe too.

### COMMON HAZARDS TO WATCH OUT FOR

- Loading docks, especially during loading or unloading
- Moving vehicles like forklifts and trucks
- Walkways that are blocked or cluttered
- Items falling from poorly stacked goods
- Pallets, broken equipment, or rubbish left where people walk

### EVERYONE'S SAFETY CHECKLIST

Your workspace is only as safe as you keep it. That means making sure walkways and work areas are clear – not just once a day, but constantly. If you see a broken pallet or any rubbish lying around, don't step over it – bin it straight away.

Lifting something heavy? Use the proper technique and don't hesitate to ask for help or grab the right equipment. It's not worth risking your back to prove a point. When stacking items, always put the heavy ones at the bottom and lighter ones on top – it's simple physics, and it prevents things from toppling over.

Need to reach something up high? A ladder is your best friend. Pallets, crates, and forklifts aren't climbing frames. And shelving? It's made for storing, not for standing. Keep your feet on the ground and your safety in check.

### IF YOU OPERATE A FORKLIFT

Driving a forklift isn't just another task – it's a high-risk responsibility. Only get behind the wheel if you're licensed and trained to do so. When you approach

corners or blind spots, always sound your horn. You might know you're there, but others might not.

Before reversing, don't just hope for the best – check your mirrors or ask someone to spot for you. And while you're moving around, stay within your designated zones and stay alert. Pedestrians and forklifts don't mix well, and it's on you to keep a safe distance.

### IF YOU'RE A MANAGER OR SUPERVISOR

Leadership in safety starts with visibility – literally. Make sure all safety signs are up to date and where people can see them. Take regular walks through the warehouse to check floors, lighting, and equipment. If visibility's an issue, install mirrors. If spills are common, put down anti-slip mats.

Emergency evacuation maps should be on display, not tucked away in a drawer. Fire extinguishers need to be accessible and maintained. Hazardous materials must be stored correctly, with SDS information easy to find when it counts.

And don't just run training once and forget it – keep it fresh. Make sure your team knows how to use the equipment and what to do in an emergency. A well-informed team is a safer team, and your commitment to training makes all the difference.

### WORKING TOGETHER FOR A SAFER WAREHOUSE

At the end of the day, safety is a team effort. A tidy workspace, an alert mindset, and a bit of extra care can prevent serious injuries. When each of us takes responsibility for our surroundings, we help protect not only ourselves, but also our workmates and anyone else coming through the depot.

### WANT MORE TOOLBOX TALKS?

AFRA Members have exclusive access to a growing collection of Toolbox Talks covering key safety, training, and compliance topics – including this one on warehouse safety.

Each topic comes as part of a Toolbox Talk Kit, complete with a PowerPoint presentation, fact sheet, and attendance sheet – making it easy to run a short, effective session with your team. ●

**Why not make your next Toolbox Talk about warehouse safety?**

**Simply log in to the AFRA Members' website and head to the Toolbox section to download everything you need: [www.afra.com.au/members/toolbox](http://www.afra.com.au/members/toolbox)**





# Upcoming changes to the Heavy Vehicle National Law

**A**s members would be aware, the Heavy Vehicle National Law (HVNL) has been subject to extensive review over the past few years, and proposed amendments are in the final stages of consultation. Although these proposals are yet to be considered by Parliament (and are still subject to change), they are well on their way to being finalised. Some of the key changes affecting road transport businesses are outlined below.

## New duty to not drive while fatigued or unfit to drive

While the current HVNL already contains a duty to avoid driving while fatigued, this has been expanded to also include a duty not to drive while unfit to do so. A driver is unfit to drive if they are “not of sufficiently good health or fitness to drive the heavy vehicle safely”. This places obligations on drivers to manage and be responsible for their health and fitness levels while operating a heavy vehicle. This expansion of the duty will also give legal protection for drivers to allow them to stop driving if necessary, as chain of responsibility parties must not directly or indirectly cause or encourage a driver to contravene the HVNL.

## Accreditation scheme changes

You may be familiar with the AFM and BFM accreditations relating to driver fatigue which are provided for under the current HVNL. The draft amendments propose to replace these with a new accreditation: fatigue alternative compliance accreditation. An alternative compliance accreditation can also be granted for other (non-fatigue related) requirements – eg, vehicle

“It is important to be aware of these likely changes and how they will affect your business.”

mass requirements. A new core feature of these accreditations is a “safety management system” – which is defined as a group of policies, systems and procedures relating to the safety of an operator’s transport activities. Applications for these accreditations must include a statement by the applicant that their safety management system is compliant with the relevant standards, and a similar statement by an approved auditor. Any alternative hours under a fatigue alternative compliance accreditation must still be within the maximum work times and minimum rest times as prescribed by the regulations (ie, the Regulator must develop alternative standards within the outer limits of the legislation). A three-year transition period has been proposed for these changes, to allow operators who have existing accreditations to develop a “safety management system” and make any other necessary changes, so it will be some time before this accreditation scheme is actually in effect.

## Updated penalties

There are some proposed changes to the penalties for HVNL offences, including 50 increased penalties

and 21 decreased penalties. These changes have been made to ensure penalties are proportionate to the severity of the risk and to the type of conduct involved.

## Changes to mass and dimension requirements

Although not included in the draft Bill, it was recommended that the following potential changes to “general vehicle access” be considered:

- Increasing the general mass limit (GML) to the concessional mass limit (CML).
- Overall length increase from 19 to 20 metres.
- Overall height increase from 4.3 to 4.6 metres.

These potential increases to mass and dimension requirements would ensure that less vehicles would need special permits/exemptions to operate. This would allow slightly heavier, higher and longer vehicles to qualify, which is aimed to improve productivity and safety outcomes.

## What’s next?

It is important to be aware of these likely changes and how they will affect your business. In particular, if you have AFM or BFM accreditations, you will need to switch to the new accreditation system (although the proposed 3-year transition period will give you some time to do so). While the proposed amendments are still in draft form and are subject to change, they are well on their way to becoming law, so it is essential to stay up-to-date. ●

**If this raises any questions or concerns, please get in touch with us via the AFRA helpline [afrahelpline@bristowlegal.com.au](mailto:afrahelpline@bristowlegal.com.au)**



# AFRA CONFERENCE

## 20 – 22 AUGUST 2025

The Hotel  
Windsor,  
Melbourne,  
Victoria



**M**elbourne provides an iconic backdrop for the 2025 AFRA Conference, with bustling city life, amazing art, cultural and historic charm, great food, and even better coffee. If you have not already, make sure to register for the conference as you do not want to miss out on this event.

Members and Associate Members have been sent a link to book conference tickets and discounted accommodation at The Hotel Windsor.

All AFRA Regular Members have one ticket to the conference included as part of their membership. This can be redeemed through the code that was emailed to you – please be sure to take advantage of this no additional cost ticket.

If you cannot find your code or if it has not been sent through to you, please email Maddy at [memberservices@afra.com.au](mailto:memberservices@afra.com.au) and she will resolve any issues.

With the opportunity to gain industry insights, catch up with friends, network with new people in the industry, and expand your skillset, the conference provides a variety of opportunities for everyone.



“ We are very excited to welcome you all to our 2025 AFRA Conference in Melbourne and see our planning come to life. ”

### 2025 AWARD NOMINATIONS

The 2025 AFRA Award nominations are open so please take a moment to nominate a fellow coworker or employee for one of the following awards:

- 2025 VISY Trainee of the Year
- 2025 Podium Furniture Removalist of the Year
- 2025 Aurizon Woman of the Year
- 2025 CEVA Employee of the Year
- 2025 AFRA Removal Fleet Award
- 2025 AFRA Outstanding Contribution Award



**DON'T  
MISS OUT!  
BOOK NOW**

The annual AFRA Awards celebrate excellence across the removals industry, recognising individuals and organisations whose outstanding work sets new benchmarks. These prestigious awards honour those who go above and beyond, driving progress and raising standards throughout the sector.

We appreciate you taking time to submit a nomination to recognise someone who is making a difference by exceeding standards. The nomination forms are available on the AFRA members' website in the 'Events' tab and have been emailed to members. Entries close on Friday 4 July 2025. We are looking forward to seeing who has been working exceptionally hard and is deserving of recognition. The awards will be presented to recipients throughout the conference.

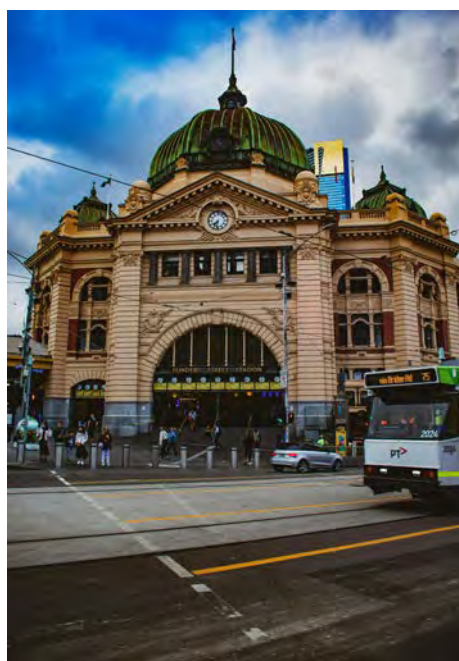
#### **Guest speakers include:**

- Michael McQueen: Change Strategist, Trend Forecaster
- Molly Taylor: Australian Rally Car Champion, Motivational Speaker
- Catherine Molloy: Communication, Leadership, and Sales Expert

#### **WEDNESDAY 20 AUGUST 2025**

The Annual Golf Day will tee off early Wednesday morning at The Dunes Golf Links located on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula. This year's Golf Day is a special one with its location consistently ranking in the top 25 golf courses across the country. Thank you to those Associate Members who have already contributed to the golf awards and prizes.

Conference registrations begin that afternoon, so make sure to collect your name lanyards, delegate bags, and AFRA jumpers. The conference scavenger hunt starts here. After the competitiveness of last year's scavenger hunt, make sure to bring your game faces and professional strategy.







# AFRA CONFERENCE

## 20 – 22 AUGUST 2025



Don't miss out  
on the industry  
event of the year!  
Book now!



'AFRA's Got Talent' Welcome Event is Wednesday evening at a comedy club, starting off the conference with some fun. Start practicing your dance moves, rehearse your comedy routine, and warm up your vocal cords as there are prizes to be won. This will be a pay-to-vote system, with proceeds going to the AFRA Support Fund so make sure you bring cash to donate and vote.

### THURSDAY 21 AUGUST 2025

The Cowden Welcome Breakfast opens Thursday, followed by insightful, industry specific sessions.

The Social Tour attendees have a walking tour around the city of Melbourne, learning about its rich history and culture, and seeing sites that would otherwise be missed without a tour guide. Along the way, attendees will get some yummy tastings, with the tour concluding with a group lunch.

As the day comes to a conclusion, we will be celebrating at the VISY Boxes & More Bugshifter's Dinner at the Melbourne Museum.

### FRIDAY 22 AUGUST 2025

Starting off Friday with a half-day of conference sessions, the annual Members Forum and Annual General Meeting for members follows. You are then left with a few hours to explore the city.

Bringing the 2025 Conference to an end, we have the AFRA Gala Dinner in The Hotel Windsor Ballroom. This will be a black-tie affair, to suit the grand room.

### CONFERENCE TICKETS

Be sure to get tickets to the 2025 AFRA Conference via the AFRA members website under the events tab.

With Social Tickets and Children Tickets, you can have guests join you on this work trip. If you cannot attend this year's conference, consider sending one of your staff members to enrich their industry knowledge.

Do not let your complimentary ticket go to waste, make the most of your AFRA Membership.

### ACCOMMODATION AND TRAVEL

Accommodation and travel are not included in the conference tickets. Discounted accommodation at The Hotel Windsor is available to conference attendees.

Please email Maddy at [memberservices@afra.com.au](mailto:memberservices@afra.com.au) for details.

Flights and other travel to Melbourne are not organised by AFRA. You will need to organise and book your own travel arrangements to get to and from the conference. ●





## SPOTLIGHT ON INDUSTRY SERVICE PROVIDER

### WHO IS TOLL?

Established in 1888 by Albert Toll in Newcastle, Australia, Toll has grown into a multibillion-dollar organisation servicing customer and industries worldwide and employing around 16,000 people across some 1,200 locations in more than 50 countries. With dual headquarters in Melbourne, Australia and Singapore, Toll Group is considered as the Asia Pacific region's leading integrated logistics service provider.

At Toll, we move the businesses that move the world- drawing on experience and curiosity to deliver the best in logistics. Toll has a wide range of experience and knowledge catering for a wide range of industry sectors including; Government and Defence, Healthcare, Consumer, Energy , Automotive , Retail and Fashion, Technology, Resources and Industrials. As a core competency , Toll delivers cost effective and timely customized supply chain solutions to meet the needs of our customers across the range of industries we service.

Within our Government and Defence business, Toll Managed Services is a premier provider of managed services, specialising in global relocation management for Defence Personnel, Corporate and Government employees (through Toll Transitions); 4PL (Fourth Party Logistics) solutions; and humanitarian services. We partner with our clients and industry to identify and provide secure , customised and flexible solutions tailored to their requirements.

Our motto" We move the businesses that move the world" encapsulates our mission to address our clients' most intricate requirements, where it involves moving their people, good, or services. Our commitment is to assist clients in navigating and leveraging sophisticated supply chain networks

to deliver solutions that offer holistic value for money and exceptional customer case, enabling them to focus on their core business and achieve strategic objectives.

### WHAT SERVICES DOES TOLL PROVIDE?

Toll Transitions' core business is to provide global relocation management services to clients including the Department of Defence and corporate clients. We provide our clients with end-to-end relocation services, tailored to meet the specific needs of their employees and aligned to their employer's mobility policies. Our bespoke services are designed to support our customers in a wide range of areas including removals management, logistics management (such as flights, temporary accommodation, car hire and so forth), destination services, cost estimate and budget planning, customer reimbursements, cultural/ language training coordination and expense administration.

### WHERE DOES TOLL PROVIDE SERVICES? ALL OVER AUSTRALIA?

Toll provides end to end relocation support domestically and internationally. Utilising our strong global footprint and our approved network of global partners, Toll has capabilities to provide services into most cities around the world.

### DOMESTIC AND/OR INTERNATIONAL MOVES?

Toll's capability is to support our clients with their domestic and global relocation needs. This has extended beyond just domestic and international moves, but we also support our customers with any mobility needs arising from customers that are commuting due to business trips and fly in fly out (FIFO) arrangements as well

### HOW CAN A REMOVALS COMPANY UNDERTAKE WORK FOR TOLL?

#### 5 SIMPLE STEPS to working with



1

CONTACT TOLL

2

ASSESS FOR SUITABILITY

3

APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION

4

INVITATION TO JOIN PANEL

5

SUPPLIER TRAINING

### AND WHO SHOULD THEY CONTACT AT TOLL TO DISCUSS?

You may register via the QR code or email at [nspm@tollgroup.com](mailto:nspm@tollgroup.com).



Toll will then assign you to the local Regional Manager who will be more than happy to assist you further. ●

# IR UPDATE

## WHAT'S IN STORE FOR REMOVALS EMPLOYERS AFTER THE ELECTION

**W**ith the result of the 2025 election, the re-elected Albanese Government forming its new ministry, and Parliament to resume shortly, attention turns to the various workplace relations policies announced during the campaign.

The Government announced two new commitments on workplace relations:

- **Banning non-compete clauses on the basis that 'making it easier for workers to switch to a better job will boost wages'.**

The proposed ban on non-compete clauses would apply to workers earning less than the high-income threshold in the Fair Work Act (currently \$175,000). In addition, the Government intends to 'consult further on non-solicitation clauses for clients and co-workers'.

Non-compete clauses are terms in employment contracts which prohibit an employee from working for a competitor or leaving to operate a competing business (either during or after employment). Non-solicitation clauses prohibit an ex-employee from soliciting customers, suppliers and other staff members.

Under current laws, these clauses operate for a defined period and must be 'reasonable'. If a clause is not reasonable, it is not enforceable.

- **Legislating to 'protect penalty rates in awards'.** This is in response to Fair Work Commission proceedings concerning the retail, clerical and banking awards. Relevantly for AFRA members, Ai Group has proposed that an 'exemption rate clause' be inserted into the Clerks - Private Sector Award. The provision would

mean that clerical employees paid significantly above award rates of pay would not be subject to some of the highly prescriptive rules in the instrument, including onerous and restrictive rules around record keeping, when ordinary hours of work can be performed, over-time and penalty rates. More information will be provided to AFRA members as it becomes available, to the extent that it is relevant to the removals industry.

The Australian Greens also made a number of policy announcements, including:

- **12 days' paid reproductive leave.** The detail of the proposal, including the precise triggers for taking this additional paid leave are not clear but it is likely to encompass leave to assist employees dealing with menopause or infertility. If implemented, it will be in addition to the current 10 days' paid personal/carers leave per annum.
- **Trials of a 4-day work week,** not at 80% of existing pay, but retaining 100% of pay for working 80% of the previous full-time hours. The detail will remain to be seen, but this could take the form of a roughly 29-hour week, worked over 4 days.
- **Paid leave for casual employees** in addition to the additional loading they receive for working on a casual basis.

No legislation has been introduced into Parliament or released for comment at this stage.

It remains to be seen if, when, and to what extent these announcements may be progressed, and in what form.

Ai Group, AFRA's workplace relations partner, will be at the forefront of negotiations and representations in relation to any workplace relations policy proposals.

Ai Group will continue to work to protect employer interests, including those of AFRA members.

### CHANGES DURING THE 2022-2025 PARLIAMENT

Any further amendments to employment obligations would follow the 2022 to 2025 Parliament in which several major pieces of workplace relations legislation were passed, amending the Fair Work Act significantly, changing employer obligations, and imposing entirely new and novel obligations and restrictions on employers.

The changes made over this period are too numerous to list in full. However, notable changes, include:

- Significant changes to the meaning of "casual employee" and to the casual conversion process.
- Expanded rights for employees to seek flexible working arrangements, and obligations on employers to consider, consult and respond to such requests within strict time periods. Where the employer and employee cannot agree, either party can ask the Fair Work Commission to conciliate or arbitrate.
- The new Right to Disconnect as an additional national employment standard. It provides a right for employees to not monitor, read, or respond to an employer's work-related contact outside working hours, unless refusing to do so is unreasonable. Modern awards also contain model right to disconnect terms and disputes about the new rights may be brought to the Fair Work Commission. Members are reminded that the new rights apply to employees of small businesses from 26 August 2025 and to medium to larger businesses from 26 August 2024.
- Restrictions on the use of fixed term employment, including on



“An area in which the rules have changed significantly is in the engagement of independent contractors, including contract drivers and any professional administrative and white-collar staff working as contractors rather than employees.”

the length of fixed term contracts, and on employers' capacity to extend or renew fixed term employment.

- New wage theft criminal offences and significant increases to fines where employers underpay employees, including by failing to pay allowances, penalty rates or overtime rates under an applicable award or enterprise agreement in the periods in which they are due.
- A number of significant changes for employers that participate in the enterprise bargaining system, or that previously did so, and for those with an on-site union presence or who have ongoing dealings with trade unions. In brief, these changes make it easier for unions to initiate bargaining, permit the Fair Work Commission to intervene in circumstances of intractable bargaining, create new types of multi-enterprise agreements and have created new rights and protections for workplace union delegates (both under the Fair Work Act and as model award terms).
- Changes in the obligations of employers that continue to apply old enterprise agreements made under previous versions of workplace relations legislation, in particular any arrangements remaining in place from prior to 2010.

- Changes to arrangements for taking parental leave which broaden eligibility, and which enable such leave to be taken more flexibly.
- Further obligations prohibiting sexual harassment in the workplace and requiring employers to take reasonable steps to prevent such behaviours.
- Employees having access to 10 days' paid Family and Domestic Violence Leave.

An area in which the rules have changed significantly is in the engagement of independent contractors, including contract drivers and any professional administrative and white-collar staff working as contractors rather than employees.

This includes a new statutory definition of who is an employee rather than a contractor. Under these changes, there is an enhanced risk that a contractor who works "like an employee" will be found to be an employee at law. This may mean a business will incur liabilities for unpaid employment entitlements and be fined for mischaracterising the working relationship. Even if a contractor relationship is legitimate, the contractor may alternatively seek assistance from the Fair Work Commission by alleging the contract terms are 'unfair'. This is a complex new area of employment law, and any business working with independent contractors is

encouraged to consider obtaining up to date legal advice regarding their current arrangements.

There are also significant and related processes underway in relation to the wider road transport industry, driven by claims from the Transport Workers Union (TWU), including the potential for new obligations to be imposed on contract drivers. Ai Group is leading business representation in all facets of this process and will brief AFRA members in due course on how this may affect their obligations.

## OTHER CHANGES

A number of other inquiries and policy processes were underway at the time of calling of the election which are now expected to proceed, including potential changes in relation to, privacy, artificial intelligence and its effect on the workplace and data retention and a proposal to implement 'pay-day superannuation obligations' that would require superannuation contributions to paid much more frequently rather than the existing quarterly requirements.

## CHANGES OPERATIVE FROM 1 JULY 2025

The start of each new financial year sees various changes in obligations for businesses, including for AFRA members in their capacity as employers. Key workplace relations and employment related changes from 1 July 2025 (or the first pay period on or after that date) include:

- An increase in minimum wages payable under the Road Transport and Distribution and the Road Transport (Long Distance Operations) Awards.
- An increase in the Furniture Carter Allowance under the award (currently \$25.27 per week, and set to increase from the first pay period on or after 1 July 2025).
- An increase in the Superannuation Guarantee (SG) contribution rate from 11.5% to 12%.

Ai Group is currently leading employer representation in the FWC seeking to ensure that any increases in minimum wages and allowances that commence from the first pay period on or after 1 July 2025 are fair and balanced and appropriately take into account what business can and cannot afford alongside challenges that may be identified by the Fair Work Commission due to increases in the cost of living.

Ai Group is pressing for a moderate increase in the real (inflation adjusted) value of minimum wages through an increase of not more than 2.6% in 2025 and is in the process of making detailed economic and other arguments to the Fair Work Commission. The ACTU is pursuing a 4.5% wage increase.

The Fair Work Commission is expected to announce its 2025 Annual Wage Review decision in early June. During June the

Commission will then confirm increased minimum wage rates in road transport awards, and a commensurate increase in the Furniture Carter Allowance and other allowances. AFRA and Ai Group will circulate information on the new obligations and their implementation to AFRA members during June.

### WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

AFRA members with any questions on new pay rates, relevant allowances or any other workplace relations issues can contact Ai Group's Workplace Advice Line on 1300 55 66 77.

Ai Group's team of expert Workplace Lawyers is available to advise and assist AFRA members in complying with changing legal obligations, managing risks, and ensuring they are well positioned for current and future changes in workplace law. As Ai Group is

a registered organisation under workplace laws, its team of lawyers have the right to appear in the Fair Work Commission without obtaining its permission. Lawyers simply engaged by a traditional private practice are often not permitted to appear in such proceedings. This means that members can be certain of their ability to obtain representation from a lawyer in the Commission by virtue of AFRA's partnership with Ai Group.

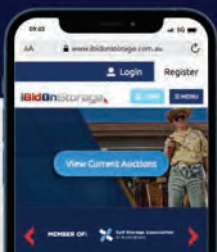
The Ai Group Workplace Lawyers team can also assist any employer wanting to review compliance with their workplace relations obligations, including by comprehensively auditing what they are paying against their award or agreement obligations. ●

**AFRA members can call 1300 55 45 81 or email [info@aigroupworkplacelawyers.com.au](mailto:info@aigroupworkplacelawyers.com.au)**

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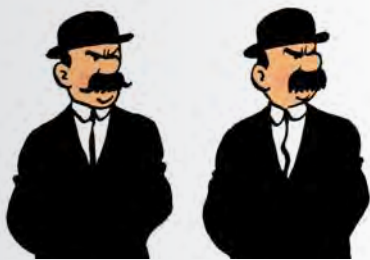




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 Submit your photos, gossip and rumors to  
 The Ferret c/o [ceo@afra.com.au](mailto:ceo@afra.com.au).  
 All submission handled confidentially.

## Thomson and Thompson found to have been living under alias for past 40 years in Perth!

**M**any a long term reader of this newsletter will recall *The Ferret*. *The Ferret* was responsible for sniffing out potential gossip and other interesting tidbits involving AFRA members. The identity of *The Ferret* was never disclosed. Anonymous, apparently all knowing, *The Ferret* knew all. But one day the Ferret just disappeared. One day the Ferret was around, the next, gone. No one had heard from *The Ferret* in many years...until now...



### THE FERRET HAS DISCOVERED THAT

The Adventure of Tintin's beloved detectives Thomson and Thompson – missing since 1986 – are in fact alive and well and living in

Perth. Fans will recall that in their last case the detective duo saved Tintin from being encased in liquid polyester and sold as modern art. This dastardly plan was the brainchild of spiritual leader Endaddine Akass, and many speculated that Akass had sought his revenge on the pair for thwarting his plans.

Rumours were rife regarding the disappearance of Mr Thomson and Mr Thompson - "that's Thompson with a 'P', like in physiology" - included that they themselves had been encased in plastic by Akass, or were hiding in the Congo, or had been extradited to San Theodoros in relation to their alleged attempt to overthrow the military government of General Tapioca.

The Ferret can instead happily report that the pair safely made their way to Perth. One unconfirmed source suggests they were enroute in their second attempt to reach the International Space Exploration Conference they had missed in Sydney in 1967, but upon reaching Perth decided it was too risky to continue the journey. A bounty was out for them, and the pair were forced into hiding.

Fearing that they may be too easily located by their many evil enemies if publicly working as a pair, they changed their name and presented as a single person. The decision was made for them both to adopt



Keys founders Nick D'Adamo and Matt Gill with Keys cake made by Phil Gordon.

Thompson's square bottomed moustache, which was easier to maintain in the Perth heat. As luck would have it, the pair arrived in Western Australia at the start of the Busy, and like many European back packers before them, soon found lucrative work in removals. Wridgways managers reported that their work efforts and output were 'unprecedented', unbeknownst that their star worker was in fact two people.

The pair soon worked their way up the industry ladder, and went on to open their own business. The pair served as Chair of WA RTA Furniture Division, and President and Chair of AFRA from 2003-2005. The pair were also made Life Member of AFRA in recognition of their outstanding work and service in the industry.

It is with delight that the Ferret can confirm that Thomson and Thompson are in fact Nick D'Adamo. Now estimated to be 113 years old, in an exclusive interview with the Ferret Thomson and Thompson credit the Perth climate and the removals industry for their youthful appearance and longevity. The incredible elixir of youth that this combination offers is confirmed by the fact that KEYS recently celebrating 30 years in business. Well done and congratulations to Thomson and Thompson – err, Nick D'Adamo – and we leave you with their final words during our interview.... "don't tell Janeen." ●

## 5 MINUTES WITH..

The AFRA office team comprises four permanent team members and one casual contractor. The team deliver services and support to AFRA members, and drive forward the projects established by National Council. In each edition of *On The Move* we spend five minutes getting to know a team member. This month we chat with....

### Simran Kaur

**Role:** Training and Compliance Officer

**Do you have a nickname?** Sim

**Tell us a little bit about yourself – where have you trained? Studied? Worked before?** Before joining AFRA, I worked as a lawyer specialising in residential and commercial property settlements. I studied Law and Commerce (majoring in Marketing) at Macquarie University. My background has always had a strong compliance focus, and I've carried that passion into my current role.

**How did you end up at AFRA?** I've always enjoyed the legal and compliance side of things – I like identifying risks, improving processes, and making complex rules easier to understand and follow. That mindset naturally led me into the training and compliance space at AFRA, where I get to support members and help make safety and legal obligations clearer across the industry.

**What is the biggest challenge facing associations or our industry?** Helping people across all roles understand that compliance isn't just a box-ticking exercise – it's about creating systems that work in practice and keep everyone safe. The challenge is making those systems practical, consistent, and easy to follow in a busy operational environment.

**Coffee or tea?** A very weak mocha with extra milk! I'm not really a coffee or tea person.

**Favourite holiday destination?** Paris – I love the food, the vibe, and how stunning everything looks. It's a beautiful city with so much character.

**Do you have a hobby/play a musical instrument/play a sport?** Last year I set out to try a new hobby every few months – because you only live once! I've done horse riding (fell off a mountain the first time but kept going!), dance classes, pottery, yoga, and pilates. My most consistent hobby, though, is going to the gym – especially weightlifting, which I've been doing for a few years now.

**If you were stuck on a desert island, what food would you be unable to live without?** Nutella – I could have it any day, any time!

“ Compliance isn't just a box-ticking exercise – it's about creating systems that work in practice and keep everyone safe.”



# AFRA COMPLIANCE ESPRESSO

A QUICK AND CONCENTRATED SHOT OF AFRA REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Each edition we look at an AFRA membership requirement, how you can comply and why it is important.



## AFRA Code of Conduct: Vehicle Signage Requirements

AFRA Code of Conduct:

**5(b)** *Vehicles owned or leased by the member must be sign written with at least the member's business name and, if applicable, logo.*

This is a constitutional requirement that AFRA actively audits. Clearly identifiable trucks help reassure customers that the team arriving to perform their move is indeed the business they hired. Customers can verify a company's AFRA membership by checking the AFRA website or contacting the AFRA office.

To support this requirement, AFRA provides truck decals that can be easily applied, ensuring customers and the public can quickly recognize your business as an AFRA member. This visibility reinforces your commitment to AFRA's high standards.

With the rise of online booking platforms, where removalists may appear interchangeable, proudly displaying your business name has never been more important. We understand that not all removalists are the same—signwritten trucks help set your business apart, build trust, and highlight the quality of your services. ●



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