



Queensland Bus Industry Council Inc.

19 August, 2016

Media Release

Bus drivers need more protection

The peak body representing Queensland's bus industry has warned of a mass exodus of bus drivers if they are not given greater protection while doing their job.

The call from the Queensland Bus Industry Council (QBIC) coincides with the launch of the 'Get on Board' campaign as south-east Queensland bus drivers unite to demand action to reduce violence on the public transport network.

QBIC Executive Director David Tape says the industry has had enough of drivers being assaulted, robbed, and abused in their workplace.

"A staggering number of our drivers have reported being abused with one in five being physically attacked at the wheel and it must stop now".

"There were more than 40 reported attacks on bus drivers in Queensland in every year from 2011," Mr Tape said.

"We need harsher penalties for all offenders who attack bus drivers and the travelling public. Comprehensive risk assessments need to be conducted on our bus networks".

Mr Tape argued that we need to do more to provide a safe workplace for the drivers, let alone a safe travelling experience for passengers.

"Drivers will leave the industry if they are afraid that they will be the next victim. How can we increase services and reduce congestion if we do not have sufficient drivers warned Mr Tape."

QBIC has joined with the Transport Workers Union (TWU) in this day of action on Friday 19th August.

Details of the rally:

- The 'Get on Board' campaign will be launched at the Bus stop in front of Pacific Fair on the Gold Coast
- Interview available with QBIC Executive Director David Tape
- Launch will start from 11:00am

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The statewide survey of Queensland bus drivers revealed:

- 96.5% of drivers have been abused
- 62.4% report that they get abused regularly
- 89.4% report being intimidated or threatened
- 81.2% have been threatened with physical harm, 54.1% reporting this happens regularly
- 71.8% have had objects thrown at their bus such as rocks, bottles, metal poles
- 74.1% experienced verbal abuse
- 68.2% were the target of road rage
- 17.6% experienced racial abuse
- 27% have been spat on
- 21.2% or one fifth have been physically attacked at the wheel (assaulted)
- 36.5% reported passengers assaulting other passengers on their bus
- 85.9% reported vandalism
- 95.3% reported carrying intoxicated passengers
- 58.8% say that the procedures in place are not adequate to ensuring safety in dealing with repeat offenders

Serious road safety issues impacting on the safety of passengers, drivers and road users were also exposed:

- 89.4% said that the TransLink running schedule pressures drivers to drive unsafely
- 95.3% had been abused because their bus was late due to unrealistic timetables
- 84.7% said lack of buses and/or drivers serving a route pressures drivers to drive unsafely
- 98.8% believe the contract renewal process introduced by the Government will increase the pressure on drivers