

Review of accident towing

Release of issues paper – 24 October 2014

The Commission has released an issues paper on its review of the regulation of accident towing and storage in Victoria. The review covers both regular and heavy vehicle accident towing.

In relation to *regular vehicle* accident towing, the review is focussed primarily on three matters: should fees be regulated, the appropriateness of existing boundaries establishing the Melbourne controlled and Geelong self-management areas and the appropriateness of the current accident allocation schemes in these areas.

In relation to *heavy vehicle* accident towing, the review will consider whether there are any reasons to move away from the current approach, where operators are free to set their own fees and compete for accident towing jobs.

Current regulation

The approach to regulation of the accident towing industry varies between regular and heavy vehicle accident towing.

- *Regular vehicle accident towing* — regulation varies between the controlled, self-management and unregulated parts of the state.

In the Melbourne controlled area, towing and storage fees are regulated and VicRoads administers an accident allocation scheme. In the Geelong self-management area, a self-managed allocation scheme applies, but fees are not regulated. In unregulated areas of the state, there is no fee regulation or formal accident allocation schemes.

- *Heavy vehicle accident towing* — heavy vehicle accident towing is unregulated. Fees are not regulated and there are no formal accident allocation schemes.

Review process

There will be multiple opportunities to contribute to the review. We first invite submissions on the issues paper. We will subsequently release a draft report for further consultation.

FACT SHEET – Accident towing issues paper

REVIEW PROCESS

| Activity | Timing |
|--|--------------------------|
| Publication of notice of review | 19 August 2014 |
| Issues Paper release | 24 October 2014 |
| Consultations | October to November 2014 |
| Submissions to Issues Paper close | 28 November 2014 |
| Consultations | February to April |
| Draft Report release | May 2015 |
| Consultations and public hearing(s) ^a | May / June |
| Submissions to Draft Report close ^a | June 2015 |
| Final Report to Ministers | July 2015 |

^a We will notify you of the specific dates for public hearings and receipt of submissions when these have been set.

We will hold at least one public hearing following release of the draft report. More hearings may be scheduled. We will consider submissions to the draft report and your views before preparing our final report.

Issues for your comment

Questions for your comment are presented below. You may also wish to provide comment on other issues which are not covered in our questions, but which you believe are relevant to our review and terms of reference.

How to make a submission

You are invited to comment on the issues raised in the issues paper by sending a written submission. Submissions are due by 28 November 2014. As relevant, submissions should contain supporting evidence for any claims made.

Submissions should be emailed to: **towtruckreview@esc.vic.gov.au**

You can also send comments by fax to 03 9032 1303 or by mail marked:

Submission to the Tow Truck Review
Essential Services Commission
Level 37, 2 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne VIC 3000

FACT SHEET – Accident towing issues paper

Questions for your comment

Should fees be regulated? (section 3.1 of issues paper)

1. Should accident towing fees in the controlled area continue to be regulated? Why? Are there any reasons to begin regulating towing fees outside the controlled area?

Should there be defined areas and allocation schemes? (section 3.2 of issues paper)

2. Should there be separate controlled and self management areas? Why? If so, are the current areas and allocation zone boundaries reasonable?
3. Which process and criteria should be applied in setting area and allocation zone boundaries?
4. Should accident allocation schemes continue in the controlled and self-management areas? How can the current schemes be improved?
5. Should accident allocations in unregulated parts of the state continue to be unregulated? Why?

Regulation of heavy vehicle accident towing (section 4.1 of issues paper)

6. Should heavy vehicle accident towing fees continue to be unregulated? Why? Are there any reasons to begin regulating heavy vehicle accident towing fees?
7. Should heavy vehicle accident allocations continue to be unregulated? Why? Are there excessive delays in clearing these accidents because there is no allocation scheme?

Other (section 2.2 of issues paper)

Are there accident towing regulatory arrangements in other states and territories or overseas that the Commission should consider as part of this review?