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## **Submission on animal tagging shapes new law**

Industry's submission that farmers should be responsible for correctly tagging their animals to safeguard New Zealand's biosecurity, not truck drivers, has been heard and acted on, Road Transport Forum (RTF) chief executive Nick Leggett says.

In passing the National Animal Identification and Tracing Amendment Bill (No 2) yesterday, the Primary Production Select committee's changes ensured this.

"We would like to thank the Primary Production Select Committee members familiar with transporting animals for listening to industry and working hard to get an amendment to the Bill to provide some kind of indemnity for transport operators," Leggett says.

"Now, whenever anyone has to fill in the declaration forms around the animals that are leaving their property, there will be a new section that will be included, basically giving an indemnity to the trucking companies that the farmer has tagged the animals appropriately.

"This is what we asked for, including by appearing before the select committee, because the farmers are responsible for their stock, not the trucking company.

"We note the Government has a tendency to promote reliance on technology that does not exist yet to solve problems, such as scanning to identify NAIT tags on stock as they enter a truck. Industry doesn't support fitting scanners to trucks and we hope they find suitable funding to develop technologies to make compliance easier for farmers.

"Livestock transporters care about New Zealand's biosecurity and accept that animals must be traced to ensure their lifetime movements can be monitored in the event of any disease outbreaks.

"But essentially, they are moving animals they have no responsibility for, other than when they are on the truck. Often, they will be loading those animals alone in the dark, and sometimes the animals are moving at pace in tight enclosed spaces, so the truck driver cannot be expected to safely visually check every animal accurately for a small electronic tag.

"We think this new law has taken the correct approach in acknowledging that, and while there are some things to work out on the required paperwork, we think pragmatism has won the day."

### **For more information contact:**

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### **About Road Transport Forum New Zealand (RTF)**

RTF provides unified national representation for several regional trucking associations. RTF members include Road Transport Associations NZ, National Road Carriers, and NZ Trucking Association. The affiliated representation of the RTF is about 3,000 individual road transport companies which in turn, operate 16-18,000 trucks involved in road freight transport, as well as companies that provide services allied to road freight transport.

The road freight transport industry employs 26,600 people (3.0% of the workforce), has a gross annual turnover of \$6 billion, and transports about 70% of New Zealand's land-based freight measured on a tonne/kilometre basis.