



City of **HOBART**

Memorandum: Lord Mayor
Deputy Lord Mayor
Elected Members

Response to Question Without Notice

AIR BRAKES ON MACQUARIE AND DAVEY STREETS

Meeting: City Infrastructure Committee

Meeting date: 24 June 2020

Raised by: Lord Mayor Reynolds

Question:

Could the Director please advise if anything can be done by the Council to limit or ban the use of air brakes by large trucks in Macquarie and Davey Streets?

Response:

The following advice has been received from State Growth;

Engine brakes (aka Jake Brakes) are an essential piece of equipment installed on heavy vehicles to save on brake wear and brake overheating. How engine brakes work is primarily through engine retardation which results in some noise being emitted through the exhaust system. The amount of noise can vary from truck to truck, depending on make, model, engine type, exhaust design etc.

Unfortunately the use of engine brakes in or near built up and urban areas is a complaint that is received on a regular basis. While there are some situations where heavy vehicle drivers could potentially combine better gear selection and road speed to reduce the need for the use of the engine brake, in the main, drivers use of this equipment is appropriate and responsible.

While sympathising with the concerns, the issue of excessive vehicle noise is not one that can be easily addressed.

Generally:

'Avoid Using Engine Brakes' signs can sometimes be installed by the relevant Road Manager to remind drivers of noise considerations in some situations. However it should be noted that such signs are not a regulatory control and do rely on the courtesy of heavy vehicle drivers to limit engine braking where safe to do so in that area.

Regulation and control of heavy vehicles rests with the National Heavy Vehicle Regulator (NHVR). However they can only effectively follow up with drivers if basic details, such as location, time, date and registration number, of individual vehicles are provided. The NHVR can be contacted on 1300 696 487.

Specifically:

Macquarie and Davey Streets are important roads with a significant regional freight carrying function. For the safety of all road corridor users heavy vehicle engine brakes may need to be used by drivers to avoid conflict with others. It is noted that 'Avoid Using Engine Brakes' signs are already in place on approach to both Macquarie and Davey Streets.

Inappropriate use of engine brakes in these two busy multi-lane streets that are relatively 'complex' to navigate safely would be a resource intensive and difficult matter for the NHVR to successfully detect and to prove in a court of law.

As signatory to this report, I certify that, pursuant to Section 55(1) of the Local Government Act 1993, I hold no interest, as referred to in Section 49 of the Local Government Act 1993, in matters contained in this report.



Neil Noye
DIRECTOR CITY PLANNING

Date: 24 July 2020
File Reference: F20/68821; 13-1-10