

Award-winning *performance*



The Australian Trucking Association crowned its best and fairest in a gala ceremony

Owen Driscoll, Liz Schmidt, Kathy Williams, Lloyd George, Border Express — all are winners in the Australian Trucking Association's (ATA) National Trucking Industry Awards.

The awards, held at the Australian Trucking Conference on the Gold Coast, attracted the biggest number of nominees ever.

Judges say the standard of entrants was also the highest ever, highlighting the increasing professionalism in the industry.

And the winners are:

Outstanding contribution to the trucking industry: Kathy Williams (General Manager of Bunker Freight Lines and former ATA chair).

"This industry is important to all Australians and the economic wellbeing of this country so it is worth working for.

So let's all continue striving for excellence," she told the 700 people at the awards dinner.

Transport woman of the year: Liz Schmidt (co-owner of Schmidt's Livestock Transport in Townsville, former secretary of Livestock Transport Association of Queensland, mother of five, grandmother of three and renowned stirrer).

"At my first association meeting, in the days before mobile phones, a phone rang, and all the men looked at me to answer it," she remembered.

"We've moved on since then and I thank all the men who helped me do my job in the business and the association. I know I can be difficult because I know what the industry wants and needs and get very determined to get that delivered."



Training Award: Border Express (A family-owned national carrier based in Albury).

"Three years ago we recognised the skills shortage and rolled out a national training plan and have so far trained more than 300 staff on accredited training. We also have 46 managers doing business management training," Craig Olsson, Training Co-ordinator said.

Driver of the Year: Lloyd George (owner-driver for G R George Transport).

"I grew up on a dairy farm, where every kid had a job and just had to get it finished," he said. "My first interstate job was with R&H and they treated drivers and subbies like family. We need to go back to the old adage of 'wait for a mate, help your mate'.

"Transport is a way of life — the freight always comes first, before family and everything. Through the highs and lows,



through times when you want to tell them to shove it, I've never regretted being a truck driver."

The Don Watson Award: Owen Driscoll, National Transport Insurance (an active participant in the ATA since its formation, developer of fatigue management and accreditation systems, and keeper of the most relevant accident statistics of the industry).

"I do what I do because it is a privilege being in the transport industry since I grew up around Rocklea (Brisbane's trucking district)," he said. "NTI insured trucks involved in the Pacific Highway accidents in 1989, so something had to be done to lift the industry's professionalism and safety." ■



Owen Driscoll



Liz Schmidt

'UNEMPLOYED' CHAIR LOOKS TO FUTURE

Trevor Martyn says he'll be the first unemployed person as Chairman of the Australian Trucking Association (ATA).

He jests.

Last November 14 he both sold his business, the bulk and chemicals carrier FBT Operations, and stepped down after four years as president of the Victorian Transport Association (VTA).

He is still Executive Chairman of the National Bulk Carriers Association, but aside from golf, cycling and sailing pursuits, these leave him plenty of time for ATA duties.

That's important because he is determined to work off what's been achieved so far at the ATA, and especially the efforts over the last two years by outgoing chairman Ross Fraser, who steadied the organisation and achieved some big wins on the depreciation and road pricing issues.

"I don't think transport operators appreciate how good we are," Martyn told the Australian Trucking Convention in his first speech as Chairman.

"I acknowledge the work of Ross Fraser who's taken us through some of the toughest times with the greatest results.

"As the first non-operational chair I can give my commitment in time and results — and want to see some real gains."

Internally he wants to sort out the lines of responsibilities between the ATA and member organisations.

"The ATA needs to be the 'door to the hill' (Federal Parliament House on the hill in Canberra), with the states concentrating on their state parliaments — and we shouldn't be stumbling over each other. This might lose me a few friends, but will give us a single voice in Federal Parliament.

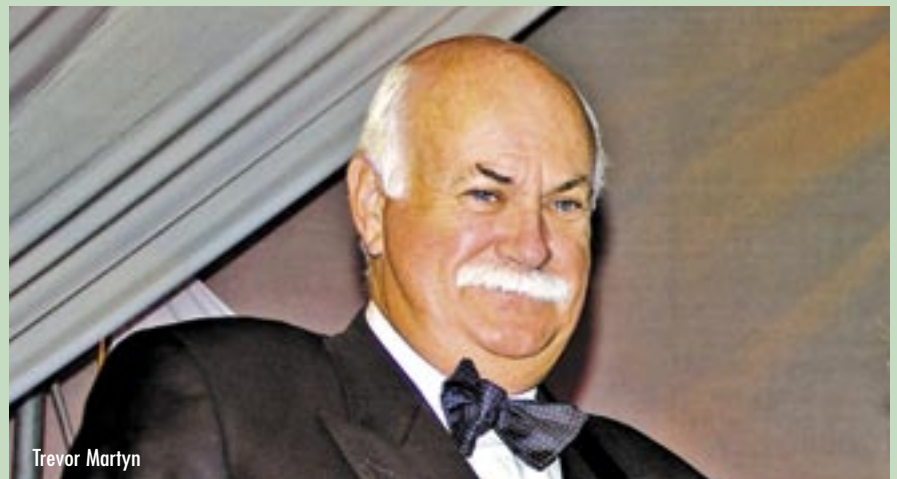
"Stuart St Clair as the new ATA CEO has a strong background in small business and government so will be a great help in getting our message up to the hill, and then out to our industry.

"Our key consideration is productivity — this industry is highly productive and could be more so if we could sort out some regulatory blocks.

"So we are confident the trucking case will stand up and we'll be putting our message strongly through the Productivity Commission Inquiry. That's an important inquiry for us to show trucks pay their way."

Martyn's key goals for the ATA are:

- Strengthen the ATA networks (including member organisations getting more members)
- Leadership in research and policy development to have the facts to fight issues and propose productivity enhancements — "to get on the front foot"
- Strengthen relationships with allied industries, such as major freight customers, to help campaign on issues that can improve productivity or against those which would increase costs
- To be the first point of contact for any federal authorities on transport issues
- Accelerate productivity reform through better, more uniform regulation to cope with the growth of freight as identified in the Twice the Task report. ■



Trevor Martyn