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MEDIA RELEASE

Understanding Required as Congestion Set to Get Worse says ARTIO NSW

The NSW Government's decision to substantially limit patronage on the NSW public transport network is expected to lead to a rapid escalation in congestion on the road network within Sydney and surrounding regions, according to Australian Road Transport Industrial Organisation NSW Secretary/Treasurer, Hugh McMaster.

Mr McMaster said that ARTIO NSW estimates that constraints announced on the public transport network in response to the risk of spread of COVID-19 means public transport network capacity will fall by up to 80 per cent.

'According to Transport for NSW, almost 60 million trips took place on the NSW public transport network in April 2019, compared to just over 12 million in April 2020, a fall of almost 80 per cent.'

'Therefore, at last month's patronage levels, the NSW public transport network was almost full in a COVID-19 mass transit operating environment.'

'Nearly all public transport trips in NSW occur to, from and within Sydney at patronage levels which are much higher than in other Australian cities.'

'The NSW Government has also proposed a range of measures such as making parking available in green space near the Sydney CBD, providing more bike lanes while also encouraging continued working from home where it is practical to do so, and staggered work start and finish times.'

'It also acknowledges Sydney's off-peak period is now limited to between 10am and 2pm, an unprecedented narrowing of the non-peak hour period for a transport network in any Australian city.'

'Given Sydney also has the lowest amount of road space per capita and the largest road freight task of any Australian city, ARTIO NSW expects its road network to face unprecedented challenges.'

'As schools in NSW return to normal and more workers return to work, reliance on car travel can be expected to rise significantly.'

'Average truck travel times are likely to rise while average truck speeds are likely to fall across Sydney and on approach roads from surrounding regions.'

'If this occurs, industry productivity during normal working hours will fall because the truck fleet will complete fewer freight tasks per day at a higher cost per task.'

'ARTIO NSW has no doubt the industry will be agile in the manner in which it serves its customers and urges all supply chain participants to consider innovative solutions to ensure the industry can continue to meet customer expectations.'

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