



# Frequently asked questions: Small Scale On-Road Trial evaluation

## **What is the National Heavy Vehicle Charging Pilot testing?**

The National Pilot is testing different ways to collect road use charges, based on distance travelled and the mass (weight) and location of the vehicle. These are known as mass–distance or location charges.

No decision has been made to move to mass, distance or location based charging. Any future decision will be informed by the results and evaluation of the National Pilot.

## **How do heavy vehicles pay to use roads now?**

Currently, heavy vehicles pay annual registration and fuel-based road use charges (PAYGO) to use roads.

## **What did the small scale trial set out to test?**

The small scale trial was a ‘proof of concept’ trial. It set out to test whether mock invoices could be produced using data gathered from distance recording (telematics) devices in participants’ vehicles.

## **What did the mock invoices show?**

The mock invoices compared a vehicle’s mass–distance charges to the amount of PAYGO charges the vehicle was estimated to have accrued during the same period. The mock charges were used for testing purposes only and did not represent an endorsement by Government to implement them.

## **Who was involved in the trial?**

Twelve heavy vehicle operators, contributing 259 buses, rigid and articulated trucks participated in the trial on a volunteer basis. Most participants were line haul (long distance) operators. A limited number of vehicles from each fleet was involved in the trial.

## **Why wasn’t a more representative sample included?**

The small scale trial was a proof of concept trial only, designed to test the distance recording technology with a small number of operators. A more representative sample of the heavy vehicle industry will be included in the large scale trial, scheduled to start this year.

## **Were participants’ mass–distance charges higher than their PAYGO charges?**

Some operators’ mass–distance charges were higher than their estimated PAYGO charges, some were lower and some were around the same as what they would normally pay.

Some line haul operators and operators of more fuel efficient bus fleets found they may pay more under the simple mock mass–distance charge trialled than under PAYGO. This will be further tested in the large scale trial.



### **Did you aggregate the results for all operators involved in the trial?**

The small sample of operators who participated in the trial was not representative of the heavy vehicle sector and as such, the trial did not set out to make findings in relation to recommended heavy vehicle charges. The mock charge rate schedule<sup>1</sup> used was basic and designed for a proof of concept trial only. Some trends were noted and they will inform development of the charge rate schedules to be used in the large scale trial.

### **How will the large scale trial differ to the small scale trial?**

The large scale trial will involve 100 heavy vehicle operators and 1,000 vehicles from a variety of industries in every state and territory across Australia. A wider range of data collection methods will be tested, including telematics, hubodometers and odometers.

If you are a heavy vehicle operator who wishes to participate in the trial and do not currently use telematics in your vehicles, you may be eligible to have them installed for the life of the trial.

### **How many charge rate schedules will be tested in the large scale trial?**

Three mock charge rate schedules will be tested:

- A single national charge rate varying by configuration (truck type and number of trailers)
- A charge rate for each state and territory, varying by configuration
- A single national charge rate, varying by actual mass (fluctuating cargo weight) and configuration.

The Department will trial different types of distance based charging models to manage mock charges for long distance operators. For example, an 'off peak' charge rate will be tested for operators who exceed a set number of kilometres travelled in a given period. Charging by road type and time of day will not be tested in this trial.

### **How will you ensure that heavy vehicle operators do not 'pay' more in the large scale trial?**

No charges will be collected for trial purposes. The trial aims to model and test a new way of raising the same amount of revenue as the current PAYGO model. The mock charge rate schedules have been informed by the results of the small scale trial and are being reviewed by the National Transport Commission.

### **Will you be testing compliance in the large scale trial?**

The Department will investigate testing compliance for the different data collection methods used in the trial.

### **Will there be other trials following the large scale trial?**

A further trial may be run after the large scale trial, however this will be a decision for Government.

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<sup>1</sup> A charge rate schedule shows the mock mass–distance charges that apply to each vehicle class.



**Heavy vehicle operators want to see value for the road charges they pay. What work is under way to improve roads in Australia?**

Australian governments are currently working on a package of reforms changing the way road services are provided. Consultation with industry will occur before decisions are made by government this year.

**I am a heavy vehicle operator. How do I find out more about participating in the large scale trial?**

More information is available at: [www.infrastructure.gov.au/nationalpilot](http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/nationalpilot).