

Future Freight Energy Hubs



QTLC Comments

A word from FFEH's founding organisation

With fast rising diesel costs, QTLC's Future Freight Energy Hub program has in this newsletter pulled together practical fuel-saving actions that operators can control – this week, this month and this year.

QTLC continues to represent the freight sector at the Premier's Fuel Supply and Availability Roundtable where Queensland business's work through how the National Fuel Security Plan will be enacted. While details on level 3 and 4 are yet to be finalised, the Premier has welcomed advice and input from all parts of the supply chain given the emerging impacts. Please [contact me](#) to discuss how to feed into these forums.

Like many of you, business and government are keen to learn from the current events by putting in place long term policy measures – including opportunities improvements in getting freight on rail, backloading and critical refuelling points for various commodities. No one knows your supply chain like you, so it's vital we know impacts and anything that can alleviate the current situation.

Lauren

FEATURE:

TAKING BACK CONTROL AT THE PUMP

Taking Back Control at the Pump

The current fuel crisis can make small business fuel powerless. But it's important to remember there are practical fuel-saving actions operators can control: this week, this month and this year.

Diesel prices have spiked fast

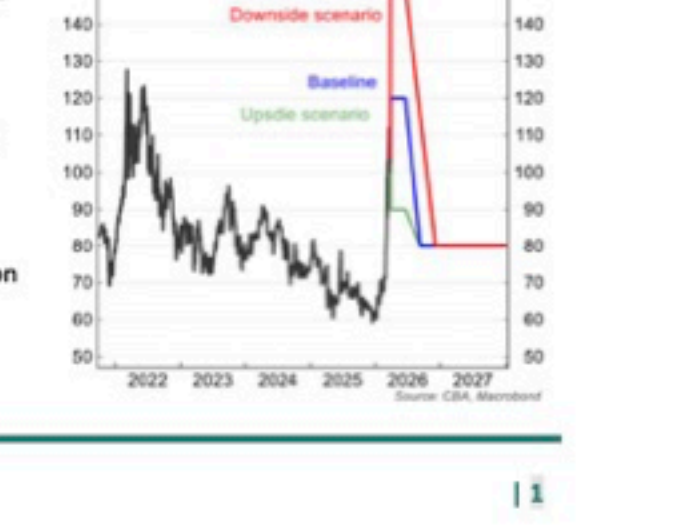
The sharp rise in diesel prices through March 2026 delivered a significant shock to QTLC members. With terminal gate prices in Brisbane jumping abruptly, diesel pump prices are exceeding \$3.00 per litre in metro areas and even higher in regional areas. This represents a real-world shock after nearly two years of relative price stability, during which diesel prices generally remained below \$2.00 per litre. Under current global market conditions, a return to earlier price levels in 2026 appears increasingly unlikely.



Oil price uncertainty will remain

Geopolitical events affecting oil supply are unpredictable and could be complicated further with supply issues. Analysis released by the Commonwealth Bank suggests under all scenarios oil prices will remain elevated through the end of this year and fluctuate over the next weeks and months, as illustrated below:

- Upside scenario (weeks):** A rapid resolution of the Gulf conflict could allow oil prices to fall quickly and trend lower over subsequent months.
- Baseline scenario (months – most likely):** A prolonged conflict keeps oil prices elevated, with gradual easing from around June 2026.
- Downside scenario (within the year):** Further escalation or supply disruptions push oil prices higher still, with elevated prices persisting through late 2026 and increasing the risk of broader supply chain impacts.



[Click Here to read the full article](#)

FEATURE:

FAST FIVE ACTIONS ("this week")

Fast five actions ("this week")

...to immediately save fuel through operational changes

Fuel use is part of every decision: who, what, how and where.

There are simple changes you may be able to make now to reduce your immediate fuel usage. Some of the fuel saving actions outlined below could save fuel with minimal impact to your business, while also making your business more appealing to customers due to lower carbon emissions. There may also be safety and maintenance benefits. The operational changes may not even require a capital investment – just time to communicate and track implementation. The opportunities won't last everyone and may also require changes to driver shifts (who), loading (what), schedules (how) and routes (where).

- 1. Plan ahead**
What: More time spent in trip planning could save both fuel and driver hours.
How: Roads and traffic conditions change over time. If you haven't done it recently, now is the time to evaluate alternative route plans at different times of day. You may need to achieve a compromise by taking a longer route to avoid traffic or steep/hilly terrain. You may also be able to change the order of pick up or deliveries (e.g. drive uphill empty not full) or make more use of each truck trip by combining loads.
Why: The potential benefits vary by operation. Sitting in stop/start traffic also takes time and impacts driver patience more than anything else. For example, Blacktown Council identified an 8% fuel saving from optimising their urban compactor routes.
- 2. Drive better**
What: Ultimately, drivers are the biggest variable affecting fuel use, and their skills in driving efficiently can be improved over time.
How: Smooth acceleration and braking are important techniques to practice, as rapid starts and harsh stops increase fuel consumption. This also applies to maintaining steady speeds (using cruise control) and avoiding unnecessary fluctuations. Anticipating traffic or hilly terrain can also help ensure the truck is in the right gear, reducing braking and acceleration. When combined with driver coaching aids or telematics data, drivers can be given real-time or post-journey feedback to monitor and improve performance over time.
Why: Transport for NSW estimates eco-driving can save 6% to 22% of fuel.
- 3. Speed less**
What: Energy (fuel) is used to overcome aerodynamic drag as speed increases, but the relationship is not linear: doubling the speed multiplies the aerodynamic load by four.
How: Implement policy for drivers to keep speeds below 80 km/h possible within assigned driver hours with flexibility to drive delivery. Review telematics or route information to assess maximum speeds and implement training, incentives, or corrective action programs.
Why: 80 km/h speed limiting delivers 10 to 12 per cent fuel consumption savings, along with a reduction in accident risk.

[Click Here to read the full article](#)

FEATURE:

FURTHER FIXES ("this month")

Further fixes ("this month")

...that improve fuel efficiency via retrofit and trailer configuration.

Fuel efficiency is a way of doing business, not a single step

Beyond operational changes, capital investment in retrofit technologies or larger/longer trailer configurations will take more time and resources to implement but they can have the biggest total impact on your fuel bills. These opportunities won't suit every vehicle and will require further planning at arrange time to make the changes for each vehicle and rollout of technologies progressively across the fleet, but most could start within the next month.

- 1. Consolidate with customers**
What: As with the "Fast Five", planning routes saves fuel, but planning loads to consolidate can provide opportunities to use longer and heavier trucks and avoid trips undertaken by smaller vehicles.
How: Work with your customers to see if larger vehicles can be used less frequently instead of multiple deliveries per day or week. Larger vehicles or full utilisation of payload capacity can reduce fuel used per tonne transported. This may also be enhanced by cooperating with other fleets, combining loads to reduce total costs. Evenly distributing the load across the vehicle also important for safety and slightly reduces fuel usage.
Why: Landscape supplies company BC Sands incentivises customers to delay freight deliveries which allow them to consolidate more loads with a premium freight cost for urgent delivery. On average, BC Sands fuel use is now 18% lower per delivery.
- 2. Minimise auxiliary power**
What: Some trucks need continuous power even when not driving. Your baseline data, showing fuel used and time at idles, will be a clear indicator of the budget it may be worth assigning to these actions.
How: Consider switching to an electric refrigeration unit or electric Power Take Off (PTO) that can be plugged in a destination.
Why: A high-powered truck engine is running very inefficiently when powering small loads. One beverage fleet in Tasmania saved \$20,000 per year by drivers switching off when possible. And this was before the current diesel prices.
- 3. Try better tyres.**
What: Reducing the rolling resistance of your trucks tyres will save fuel. This can be done with correct pressures and specifically designed tyres. Unfortunately, Australia does not benefit from tyre ratings that are commonly seen overseas. Tyre manufacturers to a specific standard of rolling resistance. However, most reputable tyre suppliers will be able to guide you to fuel saving products.
How: Fuel saving tyres are generally more expensive to buy but can pay back their premium in fuel savings. Talk to your tyre dealer to find tyres that state the coefficient of rolling resistance (Cr) or are rated for overseas markets. The following are rough equivalents, and would be a good start:

[Click Here to read the full article](#)

FEATURE:

FUTURE FLEET DECISIONS ("this year")

Future fleet decisions ("this year")

...that allow longer term replacement and technology shifts.

Future fleet

After retrofit technologies and trailer configuration is considered, the final step to reduce fuel consumption will require replacement of existing vehicles. The impact of this change can be dramatic as it enables integration of all the latest diesel or alternative drivetrain technologies. New trucks are also likely to be adopted in applications that are highly utilised so the benefits across the fleet will be significant if options to replace are available this year and suitable alternatives are available.

New trucks

A simple tool to assess potential improvements through vehicle replacement has just been launched via the [FuelSaver](#) Truck website. Overall, newer vehicles use less fuel because of more efficient engine designs with better engine management. Smoother vehicles use less fuel because of more efficient engine designs with better engine management. Smoother vehicles use less fuel because of more efficient engine designs with better engine management. Smoother vehicles use less fuel because of more efficient engine designs with better engine management.

Hybrid electric trucks

Fuel savings from a hybrid truck are limited by their small battery capacity and opportunity to recover or regenerate braking energy. Overall, these systems can reduce fuel use by up to 20% in stop-start urban driving. But it's important to place a hybrid truck in the right urban application, as constant higher-speed driving could increase fuel consumption.

Operationally the small battery capacity should have minimal payload penalty compared to diesel equivalents, making hybrids easier to deploy. No plug-in hybrid models are currently available in Australia, so no charging is required. Similar to electric trucks, some route redesign could improve benefits, but this is usually not required. Driver training however is important to capture regenerative benefits consistently.

Electric trucks

The entry of new challenger brands of electric trucks and vans has increased model availability and reduced prices. When assessing vehicle replacement options, fleets should consider total cost of ownership (not just upfront price) as the avoided cost of diesel has increased with higher diesel prices.

Urban pickup and delivery is the most suitable application to go electric in inner city and suburban areas. While most trucks in these applications are not weight limited, fleets may need to redesign routes (shorter and consistent times at depot/home) and reduce payloads (5% to 20% less compared to a diesel truck, but possible lower with lightweight truck bodies).

Other factors to consider include optimal sizing of battery capacity required (to achieve range without excessive additional cost or payload loss) and optimal charging speeds (higher speeds have higher cost). Overall, smaller electric vehicles may be simpler to adopt as they can immediately access passenger vehicle charging locations. Larger vehicles have limited public charging options and if located at depots overnight are more likely to need faster DC charging that takes more time to plan and time to install.

[Click Here to read the full article](#)

Upcoming Events

- Get out your diary!
- Check out these fleet focused events scheduled early in 2026
- 4-7 May:** [ACT Expo](#) claims to be the largest technology fleet show with dozens of fleets that have deployed zero-emission trucks and new engine technologies to improve efficiency, boost performance, and reduce costs and emissions. (Las Vegas, USA)
 - 18-19 May:** [TruckShowX](#), presented by HVIA and themed 'Driving the Future', will present a two-day technical program from leading manufacturers and cutting-edge technology providers. (Hunter Valley, NSW)
 - 19-29 May:** [2026 Australasian Fleet Education & Leadership Summit](#) – covers all aspects of fleet management, including procurement, maintenance, and efforts towards emissions reduction with a focus on the government. (Sydney)
 - 11 June:** [Heavy Fleet Megawatt charging - EV Infrastructure Summit](#) (<https://evinfrastructuresummit.com/post-summit-masterclass/>)



Copyright © 2026 Queensland Transport & Logistics Council Ltd. All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails? You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.

