

**March 31, 2009**  
**Media release**

**DOWNTURN CAUSES LOSS  
OF TRAILER FACTORY JOBS**

The fallout from the global economic downturn has caused the loss of 54 jobs at the main MaxiTRANS manufacturing plant at Ballarat.

The overwhelming majority of the workforce at the plant has agreed to work part-time using a nine-day fortnight in order to prevent higher redundancies this week.

The Managing Director of MaxiTRANS, Mr Michael Brockhoff, said that like many capital goods manufacturers, the company was feeling the affects of the economic slump through significantly decreased orders for trailers.

“Customers want to buy our trailers and the Rudd Government’s stimulus package which includes a 30% investment allowance is positive, the problem is they are unable to get credit. This is the biggest issue facing our company and the whole industry,” Mr Brockhoff said.

MaxiTRANS is Australia’s largest manufacturer and supplier of trailing transport equipment, including the Freighter and Maxi-CUBE brands. The company employs over 850 people in Australia and New Zealand, with three other plants in the Dandenong-Hallam area, one in Brisbane and a number of retail and service outlets. There are 380 workers at the main Ballarat factory.

Mr Brockhoff said the company has introduced a number of savings to try to avoid staff redundancies. Administrative staff have been reduced and casual work & overtime have been reduced to near-zero.

In another cost-saving measure, the Ballarat plant will close for a total of 10 days on both sides of Easter, with employees taking annual leave, long-service or other arrangements. The MaxiTRANS directors and senior management group are taking a 10 per cent cut in fees/salaries from April 1.

Mr Brockhoff said: “We are pleased that our employees have accepted a nine-day fortnight. This has saved about 40 jobs.”

The 54 redundancies include 40 production staff and 14 in support areas. They finish this week and will receive full entitlements. Mr Brockhoff said the redundancies were decided solely on the skills, experience and flexibility of individual workers matched against the needs of the company.

Mr Brockhoff said the long-term outlook for the industry is healthy and with a strong balance sheet MaxiTRANS looked forward to expanding again when the economy improves.