

APRIL 2024

THE AUSTRALIAN VEHICLE DEALER'S NEWS SOURCE



## MACKAY HARLEY DAVIDSON WINS DEALER OF THE YEAR

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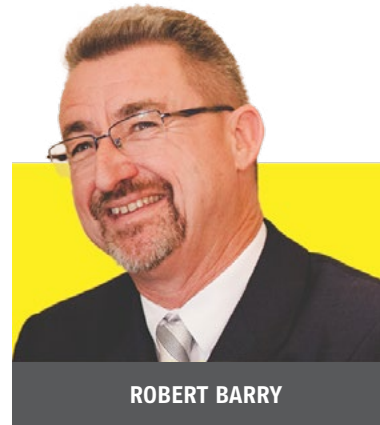


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# ALWAYS A STORY TO TELL



ROBERT BARRY

**Hello there,**

The automotive industry never ceases to fascinate me, even after two decades of being a journalist, there is always a story to tell.

**New cars, used cars, service and repairs, collision repairs, insurance, compliance, logistics, technology, regulation, manufacturing, advocacy, marketing, digitalisation, and the list goes on.**

But it is the people that I find most fascinating because this business lives or dies at the hands of the people running it.

Belated congratulations to **Shai Copelin** on winning the 2024 Barbara Cox Award, which recognises high-achieving women in the local automotive sector.

As the Automotive Product Manager for TAFE New South Wales, Copelin trains Australia's future product experts, giving her real influence in a fast-changing industry.

We're delighted for Shai and hope that she continues to encourage more women to follow in her footsteps and join the automotive industry.

**In this issue, we've covered the amended National Vehicle Efficiency Standard of which the changes to the draft legislation were largely due to lobbying from many different stakeholders in the automotive industry, including the MTAA, AADA, VACC, MTA-NSW, MTA-Queensland, VADA and EVC amongst others.**

While the amended NVES isn't perfect, at least some common sense was shown by the government in reclassifying ladder frame 4x4 SUV models as light commercials rather than passenger vehicles, which would then attract higher penalties under the legislation.

Records for Australian new vehicle sales continue to be broken, with the March 2024 result of 109,647 surpassing the previous March record of 106,988, achieved in 2018. It will be interesting to see how long this run of good fortune continues for the new vehicle industry, especially as used car values have begun to climb once again.

**March also saw the return of the Dealer of the Year awards season. In this issue, we have covered Harley-Davidson ANZ, Audi Australia, Volkswagen Australia, Mercedes-Benz Australia/Pacific, and Subaru Australia.**

Training is the lifeblood of any dealership and this month we have a special feature on page 12 from industry experts Ian and Melanie Parker who reckon it is more than possible to build sales volume without giving away any discount.

On page 20 our resident marketing expert Anthony Maclean has some interesting questions for dealer principals about their knowledge of CRM and how it is operating in their dealerships.

Porsche Cars Australia is celebrating the opening of its newly reconstructed national headquarters in central Melbourne as the brand prepares for an onslaught of new products this year.

In international news, Lotus has announced a bespoke service – Lotus Chapman Bespoke – responding to global customer demand and after two decades since the last update, Automobili Lamborghini has reinvented its corporate identity, breathing new life into the Raging Bull logo.

**There is a lot to digest in this April issue, enjoy your reading.**

Kindest regards,

*Robert Barry*  
EDITOR **AUTOTALK**





## TAFE NSW MANAGER RECEIVES THE 2024 BARBARA COX AWARD

**C**ox Automotive Australia (CAA) congratulates **Shai Copelin** on winning the 2024 Barbara Cox Award, which recognises high-achieving women in the local automotive sector.

**As Automotive Product Manager for TAFE New South Wales, Copelin trains Australia's future product experts, giving her real influence in a fast-changing industry.**

The CAA jury chose Copelin from three other finalists: **Chelsea Bowers** – Mechanic at John Edwards Automotive, **Blaire Race** – National Marketing Manager at IVECO Trucks; and **Odette Winnington** – National Head of People & Culture at Autopact.

This annual award is named for the late Barbara Cox, a business pioneer who owned and served on the board of directors of Cox Enterprises, Cox Automotive's parent company.

It recognises women who demonstrate business leadership, community advocacy, and a commitment to advancing industry. Nominations are open to any woman working within the automotive industry across Australia.

**For Cox Automotive, it's about helping foster an environment where all perspectives are respected and everyone feels a sense of belonging. This attitude drives innovation.**

In addition to gaining recognition, the winner receives \$5000 to spend on her personal development. Cox Automotive proudly sponsors the Award.

**Copelin rose to where she is today, starting as an apprentice before being promoted to workshop controller and service manager at a busy multi-franchise dealership.**

She has won several awards, including the Long Tan Leadership Award, NRMA Star, and Regional Apprentice of the Year.

As Product Manager of Automotive at TAFE NSW, she is at the forefront of training and shaping tomorrow's automotive repairers. Her key focuses include leading TAFE's electric vehicle service course and driving the creation of mentorship programs.

In her free time, she works on old Minis with her father and competes in go-kart racing with the Racechix team.

**"As I reflect on my journey, I remember my first year when there were no female restrooms at the learning facility," says Copelin.**

"I see young girls in race suits and women creating elite automotive businesses, and I'm proud to be a part of the positive shift in the industry's culture.

"I'm dedicated to igniting young girls' hearts, creating pathways, and sparking a lifelong connection with automotive."

Copelin follows in the footsteps of 2023 Barbara Cox Award winner Eleni Mitakos, founder of Galmatic, an organisation that runs car maintenance courses for women and teenagers.

"It's important to increase the recognition of the contributions of women in the automotive sector, which remains some way off when it comes to equal representation," says CAA Strategy and Marketing Director **Mathew McAuley**.

"It's a privilege to recognise and encourage contributions from women across the automotive industry, something we all benefit from. We have room for improvement but are on the right path," says CAA HR Director **Silvia Balovcikova**.

Cox Automotive Australia is a subsidiary of Cox Automotive US, an automotive services and technology provider. The local team of more than 500 people works with 26 automotive OEMs, dealers, insurers, financiers, and private and public fleet sectors.

The parent company has 29,000 employees on five continents and a family of global brands. Cox Automotive is a subsidiary of Cox Enterprises Inc., a privately owned, Atlanta-based company with US \$22 billion in annual revenue.

**Brands in Australia include Manheim Auctions (passenger, industrial and salvage), Kelley Blue Book, Sell My Car, and digital retailing solutions, including LeadDriver and Xtime, an aftersales customer-management platform used by Australia's top OEMs in their networks.**

# MTAA AND EVC WELCOME NVES CHANGES

**F**ollowing six weeks of negotiations, the Albanese Government has made adjustments and revised the National Vehicle Efficiency Standard (NVES) consultation option while ensuring what it believes is a sustainable and practical standard.

**The Motor Trades Association of Australia (MTAA) and the Electric Vehicle Council (EVC) have welcomed the Federal Government's proposed amendments to the draft NVES legislation.**

The changes include:

- Recalibration of the targets for Utes, vans and some 4WDs from passenger vehicles into the light commercial vehicle category. Some heavy 4WDs have a ladder frame and towing capacity of more than 3 tonnes. The majority of SUVs would remain in the PV class.
- Adjusting the headline limit for trucks, vans and some 4WDs
- The timing of implementation. While the commencement of the scheme will still commence on 1 January 2025, penalties will not begin until 1 July 2025
- Adjust the upper breakpoints by 200kg for LCVs to 2400 Kg and Passenger Vehicles (PVs) to 2200 Kg.

The SUV models moving to the light commercial vehicle category include the Toyota **Landcruiser**, Nissan **Patrol**, Isuzu **Mu-X**, Mitsubishi **Pajero Sport**, Toyota **Prado**, Lexus **LX**, Mercedes-AMG **G 63**, Toyota **Fortuner**, and Ford **Everest**.

But, the Toyota **Kluger**, Toyota **RAV4**, Hyundai **Tucson**, Hyundai **Santa Fe**, Nissan **X-Trail**, Tesla **Model Y**, Subaru **Outback**, Mitsubishi **ASX**, and Honda **CR-V** would remain in the passenger vehicle category.

The Government will provide \$60 million to boost EV charging at Australian dealerships to help accelerate the transition.

## MTAA REACTION

The Motor Trades Association of Australia (MTAA) welcomes the draft New Vehicle Efficiency Standard (NVES) legislation.

MTAA's number one goal has always been to support the interests of its

predominately small to medium business members, many of which operate in regional Australia, as the transition to electric vehicles (EVs) accelerates.

It has consistently advocated for reasonable adjustments to the scheme – such as moving light commercial vehicle targets closer to the US standard. MTAA is pleased the Australian Government has noted its advice and applied the necessary adjustments to the final policy.

**The concessions demonstrate the Australian Government's awareness of the challenges experienced internationally in electrifying transport. Just last week, the US Government amended its EV targets and rate of CO2 reduction.**

In totality, the changes should benefit the Australian consumer—reducing the genuine risk of price rises and reduced access to the vehicles they want and need while placing the country on a CO2 trajectory similar to that of other comparable nations.

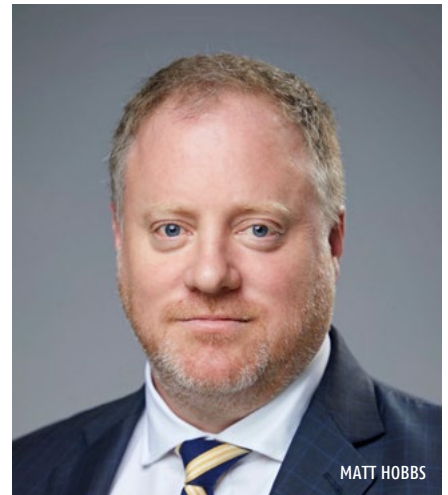
"MTAA commends the Australian Government for their approach and appreciates the seat at the table throughout these critical discussions," said MTAA chief executive **Matt Hobbs**.

**"Working side-by-side with the Government has given MTAA members a leading voice in this policy. The result is a program that better reflects the country's love of utes and SUVs while preparing for an EV future.**

"The next few years, however, are critical for the automotive industry, and we all intend to do our part in decarbonising the country's transport sector. However, consumers must come first; we believe the policy adjustments strike this delicate balance.

"The proposed standard is still very stringent in 2029, amongst the hardest in the world. It will still be very challenging for most car brands in the Australian market to meet these targets.

"In the last six weeks, the Australian Government has acknowledged the retail automotive industry's concerns, considered the additional evidence, and considered the weakening of the US Standard to develop a revised, and what we consider sensible plan."



MATT HOBBS

The Australian Government's announcement has foreshadowed further action to support the whole automotive industry with the EV transition, including targeted industry-led skills support and assistance for charging in dealerships and repairer businesses.

**"This whole-of-industry approach is critical—consumers need more than just cars. They also need access to charging, properly trained repairers, and recyclers ready. We look forward to further details about these policies."**

Hobbs said it was important to note the role of the Australian new car dealership network in this outcome.

"The new car dealership network got on board with the MTAA's strategy and moved swiftly to provide the Australian Government with compelling arguments about why the change was required. This included reaching into their pockets to bring experts over from the US. We needed to make Australia's first-ever fuel efficiency standard workable.

"The retail automotive industry will need to continue to provide clear and compelling information over the coming years to ensure that future governments get the settings right for the industry and Australian consumers."

**MTAA will continue to work with the Australian Government on implementing and operating the NVES for the five-year term of the program, which concludes in 2029. This includes achieving alignment between automotive manufacturers and dealers and ensuring vehicles are counted towards the NVES at the point of registration rather than the point of import.**

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The review of the NVES in 2026 will also be critical. MTAA will continue to monitor consumer impacts and international trends and advocate for further adjustments to the NVES over time. Climate Change and Energy

## EVC REACTION

The Electric Vehicle Council (EVC) has endorsed the government's new vehicle efficiency standards as a big step forward for Australia.

"For many years now, we've campaigned for Australia to join the US and Europe by introducing vehicle efficiency standards so car makers are incentivised to offer their best and most affordable electric options to Australians," said Electric Vehicle Council chief executive **Behyad Jafari**.

**"The government's NVES model represents strong, ambitious standards that will signal the global automotive industry: Australia now demands the same options in electric cars, vans, and utes that you offer to the US and Europe."**

"We know most Australian drivers are now interested in electric options, so more market choices will naturally drive greater take-up of EVs. Ultimately, these standards will mean all Australian consumers are paying lower fuel bills, breathing cleaner air and enjoying a more excellent choice of the latest and greatest in new cars.

"Importantly, these standards are robust and transparent, giving us a solid foundation for future years.

"I'm proud of the influential and constructive role EVC members have played in delivering today's result.

"I congratulate the federal government for having the mettle to take this step forward after several of their predecessors promised but failed to introduce this important reform in the national interest," he said.

## NEW HEADING: DEALERS REMAIN ANXIOUS ABOUT THE NVES

The Australian Automotive Dealer



BEHYAD JAFARI



JAMES VOORTMAN

Association acknowledges the progress made by the government on the NVES but remains conscious of the challenges facing its members.

"This is not the vehicle emissions standard the industry has asked for, but we recognise that the Government has listened to the industry, made significant changes to its original policy, and is seeking to strike a balance between the needs of competing interests," said AADA chief executive **James Voortman**.

"We welcome the revision of the LCV headline targets, the re-categorisation of the body-on-frame SUVs into the LCV category, and the commitment to provide \$60 million to boost EV charging at Australian dealerships.

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"We are now committed to working with the Government on a range of crucial issues affecting dealers, including ensuring that this policy is compliant at the point of sale, not the point of importation; implementing meaningful automotive franchising reform; and addressing the enormous investment task facing dealers in this transition.

**"These are critically important issues for automotive retailers, and if left unaddressed, the NVES could have dire consequences for dealers—we welcome the Government's commitment to working with us on these matters.**

"Make no mistake, this is a significant regulatory intervention into the automotive industry. While we understand and accept the Government's objectives, we would also urge them to work with the industry to identify any unintended consequences arising from this policy.

"As this policy is implemented over the next five years, the government must be open to these standards, constantly review market developments, and make sensible changes if necessary.

"The first review will commence in 2026, and this will be an opportunity to assess the first two years of the NVES and determine whether the settings are appropriate for the incredibly challenging outer years of the policy.

"This is a contentious issue in our industry, and dealers are anxious. We urge the Government to consider the needs of these businesses, which employ more than 60,000 people, invest in cities and towns across the nation, and provide so much support and sponsorship to their communities," he said.

## TOYOTA AND HYUNDAI SUPPORT NVES, FCAI CONCERNED.

Toyota Motor Corporation Australia and Hyundai Motor Company Australia have reiterated their support for the revised NVES draft. Still, the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries wants to see all the legislation and modelling that form the basis for this policy.

Toyota Australia president **Matthew Callachor** says his company has long supported introducing an ambitious fuel-efficiency standard calibrated to the Australian market's unique requirements, leaving no one behind. "We welcome the Federal Government's willingness to consult on this important



MATTHEW CALLACHOR



JOHN KETT

public policy and to make changes that represent a positive step forward," Callachor says.

**"Even so, Toyota and the industry face enormous challenges that must be addressed before these significant reductions can be realised.**

"Our task now is to deliver diverse technologies enabling our customers to choose vehicles with lower or zero carbon emissions that best suit their circumstances.

### Hyundai:

"The NVES framework seems to strike the right balance between ambition and practicality," said Hyundai Australia Chief Operating Officer **John Kett**.

**"With this standard in place, Hyundai dealers will have great vehicles to sell, customers will have great vehicles to drive, and the automotive industry will be playing its part in reducing emissions in line with Australia's commitment to decarbonise," said Kett.**

The ambition of the Australian Government's NVES policy aligns with Hyundai's global vision for the rapid development of sustainable transport

technologies.

"Hyundai has been selling EVs in Australia for six years and investing in technology globally for decades. We intend to bring many more EVs to the Australian market while substantially reducing the emissions profile of our entire range.

"The New Vehicle Efficiency Standard will help us to do that, and now we can look forward to getting on and selling some cars," said Kett

### FCAI:

The Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI) welcomes the Albanese government's changes to the New Vehicle Efficiency Standards (NVES) and recognises them as a step in the right direction.

However, the FCAI is concerned about the industry and motorists' impending challenges.

The FCAI will review the draft legislation in detail to understand the impact on the industry and consumers.

**It calls on the government to release all legislation and modelling that forms the basis for this policy.**



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# MERCEDES-BENZ AUSTRALIA CELEBRATES HIGH-PERFORMING RETAILERS

**M**ercedes-Benz Australia and its retailers representing Mercedes-Benz Cars, Mercedes-Benz Vans and Mercedes-Benz Financial Services recently marked a year of achievements at a gala event in Adelaide.

**The Retailer of the Year awards were hosted to honour the accomplishments of 2023.**

Mercedes-Benz Cars reinstated the Circle of Excellence recognition this year, and ten agents were inducted into this program.

These top 10 Australian Retailers outperformed their peers across many levels to become members of the 2023 Circle of Excellence. Throughout 2023, they consistently achieved the best results across multiple KPIs and focussed on continuously improving their Sales and Customer Services performance.

Circle of Excellence members are invited to attend the exclusive 2024 Product Forum in Stuttgart, Germany, in April this year.

## CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE METRO:

- Mercedes-Benz Berwick
- Mercedes-Benz Sunshine Coast

- Mercedes-Benz Toowong
- Mercedes-Benz Adelaide
- Mercedes-Benz Brisbane
- 3 Point Motors
- Mercedes-Benz Perth
- Silver Star Motors

## CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE RURAL:

- Mercedes-Benz Bunbury
- Wagga Motors

In addition to the Circle of Excellence, Mercedes-Benz Australia also paid tribute to two Retailers who had excelled in individual categories, customer services and sales :

- Customer Services Retailer of the Year: **Mercedes-Benz Toorak (Vic)**
- Sales Agent of the Year: **Wagga Motors (NSW)**

## MERCEDES-BENZ VANS RETAILERS OF THE YEAR

- Mercedes-Benz Vans Rural Retailer of the Year: **Mercedes-Benz Bendigo**
- Mercedes-Benz Vans Metro Retailer of the Year: **Mercedes-Benz Melbourne**

## MERCEDES-BENZ FINANCIAL RETAILERS OF THE YEAR

- Mercedes-Benz Finance Vans Retailer of the Year: **Mercedes-Benz Brisbane**

- Mercedes-Benz Finance Cars Retailer of the Year: **Mercedes-Benz Brisbane**

## OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCES BY INDIVIDUALS

Moreover, Mercedes-Benz recognised exceptional individual achievements in 2023, with various awards distributed throughout its operations.

## MERCEDES-BENZ CARS:

- Mercedes-Benz Cars Rural Parts Manager of the Year: **Rod Bertram**, Mercedes-Benz Ballarat
- Mercedes-Benz Cars Metro Parts Manager of the Year: **Andrew Holford**, Mercedes-Benz Brighton
- Mercedes-Benz Cars Rural Service Manager of the Year: **Ben Collins**, Carlin & Gazzard
- Mercedes-Benz Cars Metro Service Manager of the Year: **Jack Xiong**, Mercedes-Benz Waverley
- Mercedes-Benz Cars Autobody Manager of the Year: **M1 Autobody**

## STAR GUILD

Star Guild awards honour remarkable accomplishments of individuals in Sales throughout the Mercedes-Benz Cars network.

- Rural Pre-Owned Vehicle Sales Consultant of the Year: **Troy Neal**,  
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Mercedes-Benz Wollongong

- Metro Pre-Owned Vehicle Sales Consultant of the Year: **Deepak Kataria**, Mercedes-Benz Adelaide
- Rookie Salesperson of the Year: **Cedric Lee Kam Sang**, Mercedes-Benz Perth
- EQ Vehicle Consultant of the Year: **Shaun Hutton**, Mercedes-Benz Sydney
- AMG Brand Manager of the Year: **Daniel Bey**, Mercedes-Benz Berwick
- Rural New Vehicle Sales Consultant of the Year: **Thomas Buggy**, Wagga Motors
- Metro New Vehicle Sales Consultant of the Year: **Kelvin Yu**, Mercedes-Benz Brisbane
- Rural Pre-Owned Vehicle Sales Manager of the Year: **Richard Ford**, Mercedes-Benz Ballarat and **Ariane Hawily**, Mercedes-Benz Bunbury
- Metro Pre-Owned Vehicle Sales Manager of the Year: **Jake Buxton**, Mercedes-Benz Berwick
- Rural New Vehicle Sales Manager of the Year: **Peter Danvers**, Mercedes-Benz Gosford
- Metro New Vehicle Sales Manager of the Year: **Ali Ghazavi**, Mercedes-Benz Waverley

#### MERCEDES-BENZ FINANCIAL SERVICES:

- Mercedes-Benz Finance Guild for Vans (runner-up): **Mercedes-Benz Brisbane**
- Mercedes-Benz Financial Guild for Cars (second runner-up): **Mercedes-Benz Melbourne**
- Mercedes-Benz Financial Guild for Cars (third runner-up): **Mercedes-Benz Berwick and Mercedes-Benz Waverly**

#### MERCEDES-BENZ VANS:

- Mercedes-Benz Vans Service Advisor of the Year: **Matt Cole**, Mercedes-Benz Geelong
- Mercedes-Benz Vans Rural Service Manager of the Year: **Scott Taylor**, Mercedes-Benz Geelong
- Mercedes-Benz Vans Metro Service Manager of the Year: **Morris Dimaiuta**, Mercedes-Benz Melbourne
- Mercedes-Benz Vans Rural Parts Manager of the Year: **Andrew Holford**, Mercedes-Benz Sunshine Coast
- Mercedes-Benz Vans Metro Parts Manager of the Year: **Simon Jones**, Mercedes-Benz Unley
- Mercedes-Benz Service & Parts Retailer of the Year: **Mercedes-Benz North Shore**
- Mercedes-Benz Vans Rural Sales Executive of the Year: **Andrew Harrison**, Mercedes-Benz Geelong
- Mercedes-Benz Vans Metro Sales Executive of the Year: **Joanne Eisel**, Daimler Trucks Huntingwood
- Mercedes-Benz Vans Rural Sales Manager of the Year: **Mark Bain**, Mercedes-Benz Geelong
- Mercedes-Benz Vans Metro Sales Manager of the Year: **Peter Chen**, Mercedes-Benz Melbourne

#### EXCLUSIVE PREVIEW

Alongside showcasing new and forthcoming models like the Mercedes-Benz E 300 and CLE Coupe, retailers were given an exclusive preview of the anticipated C 63 S E Performance Formula 1 Edition, which is set to debut in Australia ahead of the Grand Prix in Melbourne.



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# USED CAR PRICES RISING AGAIN

**T**he average price of used vehicles in Australia's retail dealers increased in February 2024, ending a 12-month sequence of price reductions.

**The Cox Automotive Australia Used Price Index ended February at 137.1, up 2.3% for the month. This denotes an average 37.5% price increase across the used vehicle market since December 2019, when the Index began.**

The Index peaked at 148.1 in August 2022, meaning prices are still, on average, some 7.4% lower than when prices were running at their hottest amid new vehicle shortages.

## DEALER USED VEHICLE SALES

Used vehicle sales in February rose 2.9% over January and 9.3% higher than in February 2023. The sales result was also the highest monthly tally since November 2020.

**Of all these sales, 47.2% were SUVs, 32.7% were passenger cars (sedans, hatchbacks, wagons, coupes), and 19.8% were light commercial utes and vans.**

The top-selling models were the Ford **Ranger** (up 12.1%), Toyota **HiLux** (+10.5%), Toyota **Corolla** (+3.7%), Toyota **RAV4** (+7.7%) and Hyundai **i30** (+0.3%).

Traditional low-riding passenger vehicles were the easiest to sell for dealers, with an average selling time of 37 days. SUVs took 40 days on average to sell, and utes took 42 days.

While EVs are increasing on the new side of the market, this only got underway in earnest in 2022, meaning there isn't a great deal in the used market yet: Just 0.3% of the total sold volume for the month.

## DEALER USED VEHICLE SUPPLY

While retail dealer used vehicle sales were at a more-than-three-year high, inventory shrank for the third straight month, falling a further 2%.

**However, it's important to note that inventory as of the end of February is 32.4% higher than at the same time in 2023. Market Days' Supply has fallen to 62 days, down from 65 in January and 68 in December, suggesting undersupply despite concurrent new vehicle market sales records.**

Cox Automotive Australia's Market Days' Supply retail benchmark is 70 days,

measured over 45 days.

Of all used vehicles in dealer stock, 47.0% are SUVs, 31.0% are passenger cars, and 21.6% are light commercial utes and vans. Just 0.4% of used vehicles in dealers are an EV or PHEV.

The most-listed models are the Ford **Ranger** (up 0.1% for the month), Toyota **HiLux** (+0.8%), Toyota **Corolla** (+3.3%), Toyota **RAV4** (-2.2%, the only vehicle in negative territory) and Mitsubishi **Triton** (+2.8%).

## DEALER USED VEHICLE PRICES

As mentioned at the top, the Cox Automotive Australia Used Vehicle Price Index ticked upwards in February to 137.1, the highest since October 2023 and the first monthly increase in 12 months.

Average used vehicle prices on the Index are down 6.9% over last year, meaning greater affordability on the back of more excellent supply year-over-year.

The data also shows that 36.6% of used cars sold by dealers in February 2023 received a discount before selling by comparing the original listing price and the eventual delisting price. The average discount was 6.8%, compared to 7.0% the previous month.

**Significant discrepancies remain in price indexes across vehicle types. The Passenger segment is 147.1 on the Index, compared to 128.9 for SUVs, 136.7 for Utes, and 137.6 for Vans & Buses.**

This means that, on average, used passenger cars are 47.1% more expensive (volume-weighted and adjusted by MSRP) than pre-COVID, compared to 28.9% for SUVs and 36.7% for Utes.

Used EVs and PHEVs have a Price Index of 118.2, lower than the average for the whole market. However, the data set remains small, and as a result, changes month-over-month are comparatively volatile.

There is also a strong correlation between vehicle age and the Price Index, with older vehicles staying inflated by heightened demand for traditionally more affordable vehicles aged 8+ years, pushing up prices.

## MANHEIM WHOLESALE USED UPDATE

Manheim Australia auction sales volume hit the highest monthly total since August 2020, growing 11.5% over the previous month and 37.9% over



## TOP VEHICLES BY SUPPLY

1. Ford **Ranger**: Up 0.1%
2. Toyota **HiLux**: Up 0.8%
3. Toyota **Corolla**: Up 3.3%
4. Toyota **RAV4**: Down 2.2%
5. Mitsubishi **Triton**: Up 2.8%

## TOP-SELLING USED VEHICLES

1. Ford **Ranger**: 12.1%
2. Toyota **HiLux**: Up 10.5%
3. Toyota **Corolla**: Up 3.7%
4. Toyota **RAV4**: Up 7.7%
5. Hyundai **i30**: Up 0.3%

February 2023.

The top-selling auction vehicles were the Ford **Ranger** (+28.2%), Toyota **Camry** (+75.0%, many being de-fleeted ex-government cars), Mitsubishi **Triton** (+44.4%), Toyota **Corolla** (+23.1%), and Toyota **HiLux** (+80.0%).

As with the retail used market, wholesale prices across the market increased by 3.0% per month, per the Manheim Price Index, to 142.6. Given wholesale auctions are a vital procurement channel for retail dealers, there's a clear link between price movements across the sectors.

**For context, though, the Manheim Sold Price Index of 142.6 has been down 15% since the market peaked in May 2022, something vendors should consider.**

However, significant discrepancies remain in the Manheim Sold Price Indexes across vehicle types. The Passenger segment is 163.2 on the Index, compared to 130 for SUVs, 140.7 for Utes, and 145 for Vans & Buses. EVs and PHEVs have a healthy Index of 147.5; however, the same size is tiny (0.1% of total monthly volume).

Of all used vehicles sold at Manheim weekly auctions in February, 34.7 were SUVs, 33.4% were passenger cars, and 31.8% were light commercial utes and vans – quite a different make-up to the retail used market.



# PORSCHE CARS AUSTRALIA OPENS NEW NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

**L**andmarks abound in Melbourne. Many locals say the city's swarm of stadiums, Gold Rush-era architecture and vibrant Arts Centre make it Australia's home of sport, history and culture.

**But one long-standing marker matters to local sports car fans: the giant red PORSCHE wordmark that illuminates the busy Victoria Parade.**

"This important site has been home to Porsche Cars Australia since 1998," says Porsche Cars Australia managing director **Daniel Schmollinger**.

"Because Australia became one of the earliest official Porsche markets outside Europe, its story here is long. It's also fascinating; many of these chapters have been written here," Schmollinger says

**This chapter book has a new cover thanks to a 6-month reconstruction project.**

The Porsche Cars Australia headquarters has been wholly refurbished. New offices are designed in an open-plan layout supported by state-of-the-art facilities and various multi-purpose meeting rooms, each named after famous Australian racing circuits.

Team members now enjoy sit-stand desks with twin computer screens. The new digital working environment also enjoys abundant natural light, many indoor plants, and a living green wall.

Porsche commemorated the opening of its newly transformed Australian HQ with several activities, including an official ribbon-cutting ceremony. Several Porsche AG executives were joining the festivities, including **Matthias Becker**, Vice President of Region Overseas and Emerging Markets, and **Dr Thomas Friemuth**, Vice President of the Product Line Panamera.

**"Porsche has grown substantially in Australia, especially over the last few decades," said Matthias Becker. "Local sales grew almost 8% last year, and with a record number of new products scheduled for 2024, this special event shows we are setting up for the future."**

A growing family needs space.

Porsche was officially introduced to Australia in 1951 when Norman Hamilton became the brand's first local distributor. His son Allan took the reins in 1972, and 20 years later, Porsche Cars Australia officially commenced. The following years saw the product range, official dealer network and community of passionate owners all grow.

Today, the Porsche Cars Australia team



has doubled in size over the previous decade.

"Our team's expansion has not always been driven by sales growth," said Schmollinger. "It's also been driven by the notion of 'better': better support for our customers and our official Porsche Centres; better support for our team members; and better support for the growing number of Porsche sportscars driving on Australia's roads."

Amongst this special fleet are the first two Porsche sports cars Norman Hamilton imported into Australia in October 1951: a fish silver grey 356 cabriolet and a maroon 356 coupe. These two cars made Australia the first right-hand drive market for Porsche.

## A PERFORMANCE-DRIVEN PHILOSOPHY

"Our new headquarters reflects long-term commitment and success. It also signals the invisible forces that power Porsche in Australia: our company's performance-driven culture," said Schmollinger.

**"You will find the performance-driven mindset everywhere at Porsche. It's in every design studio, prototype workshop, and testing facility. You will also see it in every product planning office, marketing department and communications team. The high performance runs through the culture at Porsche."**

It was a point echoed by special guest Ant Middleton. The UK soldier, adventurer, TV host and best-selling author appeared at the new Porsche Cars Australia headquarters opening, leading a fascinating conversation and Q&A session.

"The Porsche success story glows in the range of sports cars it creates and the motorsport successes it has achieved," said Middleton, referring to models such as the new 911 S/T and the company's record-setting 19 wins at the annual 24 Hours of Le Mans.

"The focussed zero-excuses approach the company has taken over the last 75 years has made these successes possible.

"Porsche shows what a remarkable high-performance culture can achieve."

## THE POWER OF COMPETITION

Expanding on Middleton's observations, Schmollinger delved into the competitive spirit woven through the brand's performance-driven mindset. As a former athlete, he knows the topic intimately.

**"Competition isn't necessarily about winning trophies," said Schmollinger. "Competition is about change, explicitly changing who you are for the better. This is because every race, every battle and every encounter forges you into a more competitive shape."**

"Since the 1950s, Porsche has sought out the most demanding motorsport challenges to push its ongoing success. For example, the gruelling Paris-Dakar rally was chosen while developing our all-wheel-drive technology. The annual 24 Hours of Le Mans endurance race has spawned and validated many forward-looking road car technologies, such as our hybrid powertrains.

"Seeking the better way, which is not always easy, identifies the best competitors. And this summarises the Porsche Cars Australia approach."

Why change means opportunity

The change topic was central to the event's discussions about high performance. The extensive Porsche Cars Australia headquarters updates have created a new environment that inspires team members to produce their best work. These new surroundings are also a symbol of progress.

"This change is very similar to vehicle electrification," said Schmollinger.

"The advent of electrification is simply another opportunity for the world to experience the best of Porsche at work.

**"The widespread change to how vehicles are powered has sparked new investments in people, technologies, and products. 2024 will be the biggest year of product launches in the history of Porsche."**

# BUILDING SALES VOLUME WITHOUT DISCOUNTING

**I**an and Melanie Parker make up the team from Ian Parker Management Group IPMG; together, they have over 45 years of experience in the motor industry after owning and operating two successful, profitable, and highly awarded dealerships in Orange and Griffith, NSW.

**They both have developed a passion for implementing systems and strategies and seeing the magic of such simple things work. Likewise, with their people, it took a lot of work to attract experienced staff to such a remote location as Griffith. Hence, the Parkers hired on attitude and trained/coached their staff to become great salespeople and managers.**

"We knew we could teach them anything if they had a great attitude. Whilst also understanding the importance of motivation within individuals and the whole team," said the Parkers.

Ian began his sales career in the motor industry in 1983 at Central West Ford in Orange, NSW, selling new Ford and Used Cars. Through his newfound passion, his sales escalated quickly, and he soon sold 28 cars a month; a few years later, he became a used car manager and general manager.

In 1989, he established Ian Parker Motors in Orange, starting with only nine used cars on an 800sqm block and two staff. In the second month, he sold 30 cars. The business grew into a leading dealership in the Central West with a quirky little jingle, "Ian Parker Cares", which is still remembered today, according to the Parkers.

In 2009, the Ian Parker Management Group (IPMG) was founded based on the industry's need for more real-world sales training and mentoring programs. IPMG offers online sales coaching and training programs with daily and

weekly accountability for all businesses.

It offers private coaching or can set you up to coach your team, and IPMG coaches you.

The two options can be combined, as coaching can be tailored to suit you and your business.

IPMG concentrate on three core principles – relationship building (people buy from people they know, like and trust), Asking "one more question," and never giving up.

## HOW TO BUILD VALUE INSTEAD OF DISCOUNTING

IPMG will help your staff position themselves as a "friend in the business" and make your dealership stand out to potential clients, especially if you're tired of being "shopped" and feel like you must always discount to get the deal.

**There's one thing that no other dealership has: you and your staff.**

IPMG can also show you how to get your customers/clients to return repeatedly – pure gold for any dealership. And better still, it's cost-effective and straightforward to implement.

## SO, WHAT MAKES IAN PARKER MANAGEMENT GROUP DIFFERENT?

Ian and Melanie Parker were fully hands-on in both dealerships and still selling cars until changeover day, so they understand what it's like "on the floor". They know the frustrations of the day-to-day running of a dealership, dealing with staff, customers, manufacturers, and finance companies.

IPMG operate with simple systems and processes, breaking everything down into bite-size pieces so they are easy to work with and understand across all areas of your dealership.



IAN PARKER



MELANIE PARKER

"We are motivated, professional people wanting to help you put your healthy intentions into action. We've walked in your shoes, so we understand and are as motivated to give you the result as you are to see it," said the Parkers.

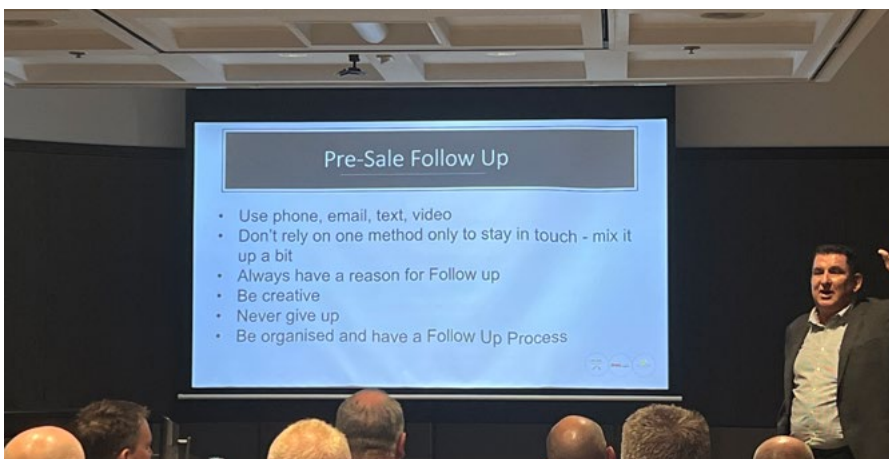
**IPMG has trained hundreds of salespeople from numerous dealerships through its custom-built interactive platform, The Master Performance Academy. IPMG offers a range of programs for your whole dealership, including sales, used cars, finance, service, and reception.**

Dealers can choose to have the training done by IPMG, or it can roll the whole platform out in your dealership, and managers can coach their teams. This model also comes with our sales coaching video library for managers to guide them along training/coaching their teams.

**"We've done all the hard work for you; all you need to do is follow our step-by-step system, and you'll be well on your way to having a thriving sales team in just 25 minutes a day," said the Parkers.**

The results speak for themselves....you can check them all out here: [https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLe5-7uTL\\_MfAkgjzbFxt7njeB9Slo5L2](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLe5-7uTL_MfAkgjzbFxt7njeB9Slo5L2)

For more information, visit [www.ipmg.net.au](http://www.ipmg.net.au) or reach out to Ian Parker for a no-obligation chat to preview the platform. Call 0418 635 120.





# SUZUKI AUSTRALIA PROMOTES BARBARA TO NATIONAL SALES MANAGER

Suzuki Australia promoted **Jonathan Barbara** to national sales manager, effective April 1, 2024.

**Starting his automotive career successfully operating retail outlets in 2010, Barbara joined Suzuki Australia in 2015 as NSW district sales manager, leading to more than 13 years of sales, business development, and account management experience before being promoted to sales operations manager in 2022.**

Barbara brings a proven leadership and sales expertise track record to the role. His dedication to customer satisfaction and innovative sales strategies perfectly position him to steer the national sales team through to the next level of growth for the brand.

Suzuki Australia general manager **Michael Pachota** is confident that Barbara will play a pivotal role in

further strengthening Suzuki's position in the market.

"Jonathan has developed excellent relationships with our network of NSW Dealers, laying some foundational groundwork across Australia in his sales operations role most recently. I'm very proud of Jonathan's personal and business growth. I look forward to seeing him develop nationally, providing an even greater level of support to our dealers and customers."

**"Barbara's move is part of an organisational restructuring that Suzuki Australia is undergoing to provide further efficiencies for our business operations and greater support for our dealer network and customers in Australia," said Pachota.**

David Fable, previously national sales manager, has also been promoted to a newly created position of national



JONATHAN BARBARA

operations manager, which, apart from sales, will take on further responsibilities across logistics and fixed operations, with Barbara as his direct report in sales.

## HALLMARK APPOINTED ASTON MARTIN CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Aston Martin has appointed **Adrian Hallmark** as its new chief executive officer from October 1, 2024.

**He replaces the incumbent Amedeo Felisa, who will remain in charge until Hallmark takes up the post.**

Hallmark, aged 61, will join Aston Martin from his position as chairman and chief executive of Bentley Motors, which he held since 2018. He brings more than 25 years of experience from the US, Europe, and Asia with companies such as Bentley, Porsche and Volkswagen.

**Felisa will continue to oversee the introduction of Aston Martin's new products, including launching its third next-generation sports car later this year, completing its new front-engine portfolio following the launches of DB12 and Vantage.**

"When Amedeo was appointed CEO, I spoke of him leading a new phase of growth and development," Aston Martin executive chairman **Lawrence Stroll** says.

Two years on, we have delivered on that promise as we near completion of our new product portfolio and move closer to our vision of becoming the world's most desirable British performance brand.

"I'd like to pay tribute to Amedeo, recognising not just what he has achieved at Aston Martin but throughout his long and distinguished career at the top of the luxury

automotive industry. I am pleased that Amedeo will remain in post until Adrian joins and will continue to oversee the launch of our upcoming products.

"In **Adrian Hallmark**, we are attracting one of the highest calibre leaders not just in our segment, but in the global automotive industry. Complementing our world-class leadership, Adrian will bring to Aston Martin unrivalled experience in both the ultra-luxury and British manufacturing sectors to progress our strategy and continue recent momentum," he says.

"Like many working within the ultra-luxury segment, I have admired the continued transformation of Aston



ADRIAN HALLMARK

Martin's brand and products from afar and feel honoured to have the opportunity to work with Lawrence, the Board and the Company's employees to lead its next chapter," says Hallmark.

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# MACKAY HARLEY-DAVIDSON WINS 2023 ANZ DEALER OF THE YEAR AWARD

**H**arley-Davidson has announced its 2023 Dealer of the Year award winners in the Australia/New Zealand (ANZ) market.

**It says the winners were selected using both quantitative and qualitative criteria for evaluation.**

The awards assess each dealership's performance through customer satisfaction, commitment to training, sales, service, parts, accessories, and Harley-Davidson apparel sales performance.

**Arthur Davidson**, one of the four founders of Harley-Davidson, recognised the importance of a good dealer network. As the brand celebrates its 121st year, its tradition of recognising dealers' work continues.

The Harley-Davidson Awards recognises, rewards and celebrates the achievements and success of its authorised dealerships.

The 2023 Dealer Awards were announced on March 5 to the Harley-Davidson dealer network and representatives from Harley-Davidson.

**The biggest accolade – Dealer of the Year – was won by Mackay Harley-Davidson.**

This win marks a first for the dealership and demonstrates Mackay Harley-Davidson's determination to excel, resulting in outstanding performance across every criterion.

"We are honoured to receive this award and thank Harley-Davidson for recognising our team effort. 2023 was an exceptional year for us, and this award is a testament to the advocacy and loyalty of our customers and local H.O.G. (Harley Owners Group) Chapter," Mackay Harley-Davidson spokesperson **Scott Gralow** says.

The complete line-up of 2023 awards and winners were:

- Dealer of the Year – **Mackay Harley-Davidson**
- Dealer of the Year (Small/Compact) – **Mackay Harley-Davidson**
- Dealer of the Year (Small/Compact) – **Great Southern Motorcycles**
- Dealer of the Year (Medium) – **Sunshine Coast Harley-Davidson**
- Dealer of the Year (Large) – **Morgan & Wacker Harley-Davidson, Brisbane**

Five-star dealer awards were presented to Mackay Harley-Davidson, Harbour



City Harley-Davidson, Road & Sport Motorcycles, Empire Harley-Davidson and Bundaberg Harley-Davidson.

The brand also recognised the long-term commitment of the Harley-Davidson dealer network with the Harley-Davidson Tenure Awards:

- **20 Years** – **Sunshine Coast Harley-Davidson / Hidden Valley Harley-Davidson.**
- **30 Years** – **Gold Coast Harley-Davidson / Thomas Lee Harley-Davidson.**
- **40 Years** – **Harley-Heaven Melbourne / Harley-Heaven Dandenong / Harley-Heaven Ringwood.**

"Our dealers are instrumental to the success of Harley-Davidson," Harley-Davidson ANZ managing director **Nigel Keough** says.

"They are as much a part of the brand as our motorcycles and riders. To be titled 'Dealer of the Year' is an outstanding reflection of the staff providing the best service and customer experience that makes Harley-Davidson its premier brand today.

"We are incredibly proud of our ANZ dealer network because all our dealers are characterised by a high degree of authenticity, friendliness and competence," he says.



# AADA AND AUTOGRAB RELEASE AIR FOR FEBRUARY 2024

**T**he Australian Automotive Dealer Association (AADA) has released the Automotive Insights Report (AIR) for used car sales in February 2024 in conjunction with AutoGrab.

**The AIR shows that the number of used vehicles listed for sale has increased, but the number of used cars sold has declined.**

"Overall, the used car market seems to be presenting opportunities for consumers interested in buying a used car," says AADA chief executive **James Voortman**.

**"A solid start to 2024 new car deliveries is flowing into the used car market, with a slight rise of 1.3% in the number of vehicles listed for sale in the month. While listings increased, used car sales dropped 1.2% from the previous month.**

"Amid all the discussion on fuel efficiency standards, the number of EVs listed for sale is almost four times the number sold in February, indicating a mismatch between demand and supply of used EVs. Petrol and diesel cars accounted for 95% of used vehicles sold, with hybrid sales increasing by 4.6% this month.

"The list of top 10 selling makes and

models also closely reflects preferences from the new car market, with the Ford Ranger and Toyota Hilux being the top-selling vehicles for the month.

"Although February saw a drop in average retained values, for vehicles aged 2-4 years, some cars continue to secure good retained values for consumers with 18 of the top 20 models listed reclaiming their positions from January," he says.

**The Automotive Insights Report shows that in February:**

- Across Australia, 286,329 vehicles were listed for sale; in that period, 179,448 were sold.
- The data shows that 95% of used cars bought and sold have petrol or diesel engines.
- The time it takes to sell a used car has gradually come down to 44 days in February after peaking in November at 52 days.
- On average, retained values saw a month-on-month decrease.
- Some popular used car models aged 2-4 years old continue to report a strong return for consumers regarding their retained values, with 18 of the top 20 models listed making a repeat



SAXON ODGERS

appearance in January.

- The top 10 selling cars in the used market remained similar to the previous month, with 9 of the top 10 makes and models retaining their spot. It closely reflects preferences in the new car market, with the Ford Ranger taking the top spot ahead of the Toyota Hilux.

"This month's findings reflect the current strength in the automotive industry, showcasing yet another strong month for car sales across the board," AutoGrab's chief commercial officer **Saxon Odgers** says.

**"One notable statistic is the average days to sell, which has reached its lowest point since March last year. This shows a swift turnaround in the market, reflecting growing consumer demand and efficient inventory management strategies,"** he says.

# MAWSON LAKES RETAINS VOLKSWAGEN DEALER OF THE YEAR TITLES

**M**awson Lakes Volkswagen has retained the brand's National Dealer of the Year and its Metropolitan Dealer of the Year awards in an unprecedented double.

**The dealership is located in Salisbury, 12km from the Adelaide CBD. In its first full year of operation, 2022, Mawson Lakes won both titles.**

Volkswagen's brand directors **Ryan Davies** (Commercial Vehicles) and **Michal Szaniecki** (Passenger Vehicles) praised Mawson Lakes' leadership team for "capitalising on their initial success by continuing to excel".

"These awards are hard-won," says Davies. Winning both awards in the same year is a rare enough distinction; to win them in your debut year and retain them in your second is unprecedented."

Provincial Dealer of the Year was awarded to Wodonga Prestige Volkswagen of Victoria.

Rural Dealer of the Year was awarded to Barry Maney Volkswagen of South Australia.

**Volkswagen's annual Dealer of the Year event was held at Sydney's Hyatt Regency Hotel. Some 170 guests attended from the brand's 106-strong nationwide network.**

The DOTY's second physical gathering since COVID-19 coincided with Volkswagen's 70th year on sale in Australia—a year Szaniecki said will "represent a transformational shift in our business ... with six electric vehicles and one PHEV being launched".

"Most likely, in 2025, there will be targets for Co2 emissions for each



RYAN DAVIES

organisation," he said. "This is why the Volkswagen brands and Volkswagen Group Australia will gain a competitive edge.

**"What makes us even stronger and poised for success in the next 70 years is that we seem better prepared for the changing profile of demand and legislation in Australia."**

# EBLEN SUBARU GELNEIG WINS 2023 NATIONAL RETAILER OF THE YEAR AWARD

**E**blen Subaru Glenelg in South Australia has won the 2023 National Subaru Retailer of the Year award for the second consecutive year and the sixth time overall.

**Subaru Australia unveiled its annual awards program winners at its National Retailer of the Year celebration.**

The annual awards program recognises members of the Subaru dealer network who have demonstrated exceptional customer service, commitment to the Subaru brand, and outstanding performance across all business aspects.

**It says Eblen Subaru Glenelg has consistently demonstrated going above and beyond to exceed customer expectations and has set the benchmark for seamless automotive retail operations.**

"Wow, what an achievement—two years in a row. Thank you so much to everyone at Subaru Australia; we are so lucky to have a strong partnership with such a supportive team," says Eblen Subaru Glenelg dealer principal **Daniel Gonzalez**.

"Quite often, I get asked what makes Eblen so unique, and the truth is it's a combination of our long-standing experience, tremendous brand loyalty throughout the entire dealership, a hard-working winning culture, and a family-feel environment the moment you walk through the door—a legacy carried over many years.

"To my team, congratulations; I am so proud of you all. You work hard and remain focused throughout the year to be the best at what you do," he says.

In addition to announcing the 2023 National Subaru Retailer of the Year winner, Subaru Australia also recognised excellence nationwide with regional winners from all corners of Australia.

**The 2023 regional winners are as follows:**

- Northern – **Key Motors Townsville**
- Brisbane – **Llewellyn Subaru Ipswich**
- Sydney – **McGrath Subaru Liverpool**
- Eastern – **Taree Subaru**
- Melbourne – **Subaru Bundoora**
- Southern – **Leongatha Subaru**
- Tasmania – **Jackson Subaru Devonport**



- Central – **Eblen Subaru Glenelg**
- Western – **Bunbury Subaru**

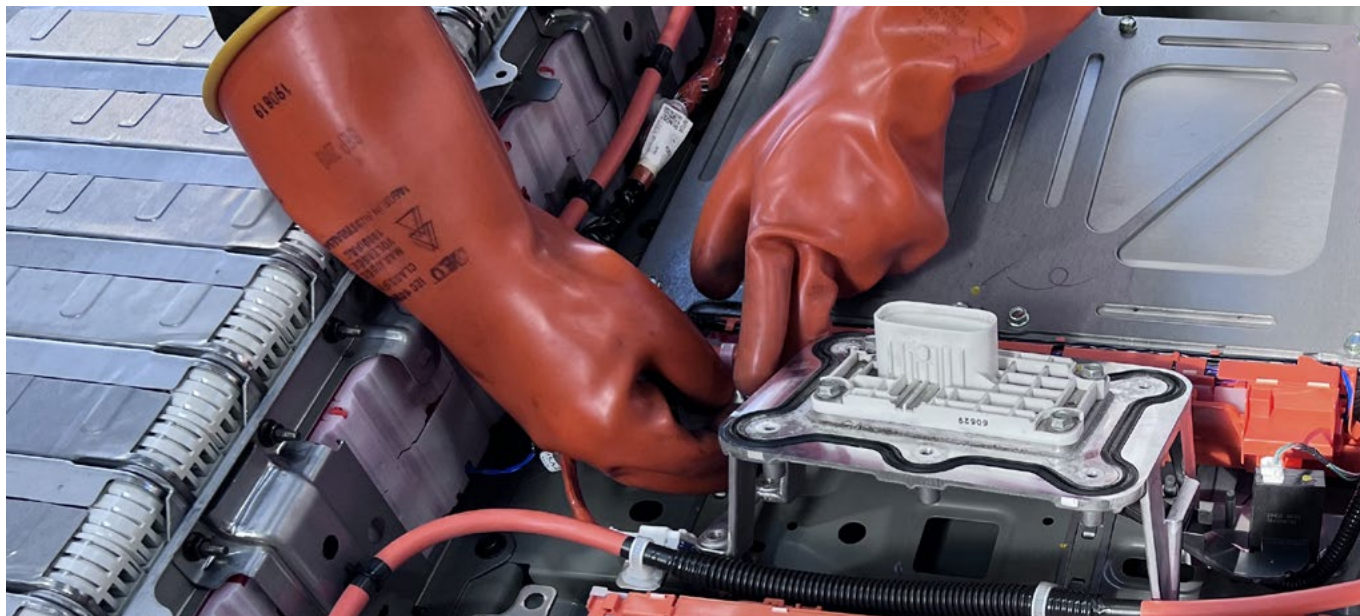
The awards were presented to the winning dealerships by **Jinya Shoji**, the senior vice president and chief General Manager of the Overseas Sales and Marketing Division of Subaru Corporation, **Masaki Fukushima**, and **Blair Read**, the Managing Director of Subaru Australia.

"We are delighted to recognise the

outstanding achievements of all our 2023 Retailer of the Year award winners," Read says.

**"Congratulations to Eblen Subaru for being back-to-back National Retailer of the Year and to all our regional winners. The strength of the Subaru brand is reflected in our network partners' hard work and dedication; for that, we thank them," he says.**





# ACCELERATING INDUSTRY EV LEARNING

**T**he Australian Auto Aftermarket Expo will be the most significant industry event to address the EV transition for workshops and workers, with training and demonstration opportunities led by local and international EV experts.

**Co-located with the Collision Repair Expo, the combined Expos will take place 11 – 13 April at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre.**

To meet the diverse needs of the industry as it gears up to service and repair EVs, the Expo will feature unprecedented training and education opportunities relating to EV & Hybrid vehicles.

"The Auto Aftermarket Expo will be the destination of choice for technicians, workshop owners and collision repairers across Australia, New Zealand and beyond, with the largest collection of EV & Hybrid experts ever assembled in Australia," says Australian Automotive Aftermarket Association spokesperson **Tiffany Conway**.

**"The Expo will cater to those beginning their EV training journey, through to advanced EV diagnosis and repair, plus workshop owners looking for best practices to prepare their workshop for EV service and repair."**

The new Expo Electrified Zone, to be located on the Expo trade show floor, will provide visitors with hands-on training and practical demonstrations, including live testing of EV motors and

generators, all delivered by the experts from The Automotive Technician's (TaT) EV & Hybrid Network.

Sessions are free to attend but must be booked in advance when registering for the event due to limited places.

EV training specialist **Dirk Fuchs** bolsters EV service and repair training. Based in the U.S., Dirk, CEO of Electric Mobility Consulting, will travel to Australia for the first time to host four incredible EV training sessions.

**His free-to-attend sessions will cover topics including preparing workshops for electrification, EV battery handling and service in collision repair, and EV system repair and component replacement.**

Fuchs will also host a half-day training program titled 'Electric/Hybrid Vehicle Awareness.' This course thoroughly overviews EV system principles, highlights high-voltage electric system hazards, and emphasises safe EV work practices. Given the anticipated high demand, ticket prices for this session offer excellent value.

The exclusive Technical Training Program is another prominent feature of the Expo. Two more international experts lead this program, Diagnose Dan and Sean Tipping.

Diagnose Dan will conduct a special session focusing on EV and Hybrid diagnostic challenges, a fascinating discovery relating to EV heat pump mechanics and network



troubleshooting.

The free Expo Business Education Training Program for workshop owners will also cover EV, with a dedicated session on how to best prepare your electrification workshop led by AAAA's Director of Advocacy, **Lesley Yates**, and **Dirk Fuchs** from Electric Mobility Consulting.

Complimenting the incredible training opportunities will be several EV specialist exhibitors showcasing the latest and greatest in EV service and repair technology.

**"The pace of technological advancement in the EV and Hybrid space is staggering, and with EV and Hybrid powered vehicles accounting for 7% of new car sales in 2023, the Expo is perfectly timed to provide these incredible training opportunities for our industry. If you want to prepare yourself or your workshop, it's a must-attend event,"** says Conway.

To register for Expo Electrified Sessions, Dirk Fuchs EV sessions, or Diagnose Dan's EV sessions, register at [www.autoaftermarketexpo.com.au](http://www.autoaftermarketexpo.com.au) to avoid disappointment as places are limited.



## AUDI AUSTRALIA CELEBRATES DEALER PARTNER ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2023

**A**udi Australia recently celebrated the achievements of its national network at the 2023 Dealer of the Year Awards.

The event, hosted by Audi Ambassador **Melissa Doyle** and Director of Audi Australia **Jeff Mannering**, took place at the Sydney Town Hall.

It featured a performance by musician **Reigan Derry** and a menu designed by Audi Ambassador **Guillaume Brahimi**.

**The evening was an occasion to recognise and honour the brand's remarkable successes from the past year.**

Amidst the challenges posed by the automotive industry in 2023, including supply chain disruptions and logistical hurdles, Audi Australia commended its dealer partners for their resilience and commitment to excellence.

The 2023 Audi Dealer of the Year Awards served as a platform to applaud the performances of the Australian dealer network, highlighting their dedication to delivering unparalleled service and customer experience.

**Mannering expressed his appreciation for the commitment demonstrated by the dealer network throughout the year.**



"Audi Dealer of the Year is a prestigious award presented to the best of the best who set the benchmark in sales and aftersales. The winners delivered a true premium experience to our customers in their journey with our brand," said Mannering.

"Despite last year's turbulent

circumstances, maintaining performance is always a collective responsibility, and indeed, we delivered. One defining reason behind our success is our dealer network's unwavering commitment to the Audi brand."

The evening was attended not only by

*to page 19...*



...from page 18

the dealer network but also by several distinguished guests. Among them were representatives from the international headquarters, AUDI AG, including **Christian Gussen**, Head of Overseas Markets Region (Asia), and **Patrick Leeb**, Sales Manager for Australia, alongside the newly appointed Managing Director of Volkswagen Group Australia, **Karsten Seifert**.

In addition to the distinguished guests, attendees were treated to a display featuring the Audi Q4 e-tron and a 1936 Auto Union C Type racer, showcasing just two examples of Audi's rich history. These special guests' presence underscores the occasion's significance.

The evening saw Audi Centre Parramatta claim the top spot in the Major Metropolitan category for Dealer of the Year, while Audi Centre Mosman emerged victorious in the Metropolitan category. Audi Alto Central Coast secured first place in the Provincial category, with Audi Centre Hobart taking home the honours in the Rural category.

The event also highlighted Audi dealerships' commitment to giving back locally through the Audi Foundation. The Audi Foundation Award, presented to four deserving category winners, acknowledged each dealer's charitable endeavours in supporting the Foundation's initiatives and making a positive impact on Australian communities.

"No matter what challenges we faced last year, I thank our partners for their



resilience and willingness to perform in a tough environment. I want to thank our dealers for their passion for the Audi brand," said Mannering.

As Audi Australia looks ahead to the future, the company remains committed to fostering a culture of excellence and innovation within its dealer network, ensuring that customers receive exceptional service at every touchpoint.

#### THE OVERALL WINNERS AND PLACE-GETTERS FOR THE 2023 AUDI DEALER OF THE YEAR AWARDS WERE:

1st Place – Major Metropolitan Audi Centre Parramatta

2nd Place – Major Metropolitan Audi Centre Sydney

3rd Place – Major Metropolitan Audi Solitaire and Audi Five Dock

1st Place – Metropolitan Audi Centre Mosman

2nd Place – Metropolitan Audi

#### Sutherland

3rd Place – Metropolitan Audi Alto Pennant Hills

1st Place – Provincial Audi Alto Central Coast

2nd Place – Provincial Audi Alto Macarthur

3rd Place – Provincial Audi Mornington

1st Place – Rural Audi Centre Hobart

2nd Place – Rural Audi Centre Bellbowrie

3rd Place – Rural Audi Centre Cairns

1st Place – Audi Foundation Award Major Metropolitan Audi Centre Perth

1st Place – Audi Foundation Award Metropolitan Audi Alto Pennant Hills

1st Place – Audi Foundation Award Provincial Audi Alto Macarthur

1st Place – Audi Foundation Award Rural Audi Centre Ballarat



# ARE YOU CERTAIN YOU DO CRM, RIGHT?

**A**t Boost Auto we are prepared to have a small wager that most Dealer Principals do not fully understand their CRM (Customer Relations Management).

**It is time for a quick quiz. These are all yes / no answers for speed and clarity.**

1. Is AutoPlay your CRM?
2. Do you know where your lost leads reside?
3. Do you know how you reach out to lost leads?
4. Is your CRM and email platform integrated (i.e. no manual data copy pastes etc required)?
5. Can you name your email platform?
6. Have you segmented your data in the last 12 months?
7. Do you know when you last cleansed your data?
8. Do you know how an existing customer's information might get into AutoPlay for future prospecting?
9. Do you have a written communications plan in your dealership?

How did you go? 5 or above, you are going ok, but have lots of opportunity. Less than 5? Its time to write some business rules, some process guidelines and set some expectations; you are letting customers down. 8 or 9. You know your stuff. For clarity, the answer to Question 1 is no.

Just as you wouldn't expect a DP to be able to service a car, you could reasonably expect them to understand the process that makes a workshop efficient and effective.

**For CRM, you wouldn't expect the DP to know how to send an email to their customer base, but you could expect them to understand the data flow between different systems.**

Given that customer acquisition and retention is often seen as a dealership expense (rather than an investment) it is not surprising that many Dealer Principals cannot demonstrate the same level of expertise around CRM. The heart of what is CRM done right, is two parts.

**The customer expectation is that you communicate with them to keep them informed with interesting information about their car and your dealership, but above all that you demonstrate that you value their relationship with you.**

The dealership expectation should be that you have a thoughtful and integrated communications plan to talk to your customers (past and present) in a personalised way that reflects their interests and also their stage in the ownership cycles. It should reflect the customer's value to your business; this latter part is about recognising your VIPs.

**The goal for both parties should be:**

- to cement your relationship with each other.
- to make it easier to do business.
- to integrate communications.

Think of your dealership's customer communications in the context of a friend, who only contacts you when he needs or wants something. If you are only emailing customers because you want them to come in for a service or a winter check or to tell them about a used car special, then perhaps you are that needy friend, who probably wouldn't be at the top of your Christmas card list.

**On the other hand, if you were the type of friend who is always willing to help out to lend a hand, or to share interesting information and to help you out then over time that relationship becomes more solid. Which kind of 'friend' do you want to be to your customers?**

The challenge is often that the three parts of your business where data lives don't always work that well with each other. For example, AutoPlay is excellent at lead management, however it is not a CRM in the traditional sense. Once a vehicle is sold, typically that information about the customer and the vehicle is pushed from AutoPlay into your DMS. Now your DMS is meant to be your CRM?

For most dealers the CRM component is at best an integrated part of the DMS like, say, dealer socket for Pentana, or worst case is a third party third



**ANTHONY MACLEAN**  
FOUNDER OF BOOSTAUTO

party piece of software like MailChimp without any integrations (where the marketing department has to do a data extract from the DMS, and paste it into MailChimp).

Consider in these instances how you are able to identify who are your most important customers, and whether that communication would be different to those customers. How might you update customer information from say the service department through to your CRM.

**As an exercise, take five random customers from your database and three lost customers from AutoPlay and now look at what communications have been sent to these customers from the start of their journey to the position they are in their customer journey now. Be sure to include anything sent out by the service department.**

It's probably also time to have a look at the communications you've sent to a top 10 trade customers. They are included on your CRM planner, aren't they? Now layout or print out these communications side by side to see if they look like they have been sent from the same company. Look to see if the tone and style is consistent across all communications and if it passes the lens that you have defined for your business, also take a moment to look at the formatting and presentation of the communications; are the footers and headers the same, are the fonts consistent?

Do you have a communication sign off process in place in your business, or do you let your staff communicate on mass to customers without a process or an approval process.

Here are the boost auto top 10 steps to implementing a better solution for your customers number one.



...from page 20

**1. In excel create an annual communications plan with dates across the top row and departments and as well as products on the first two columns.**

**2. Think about how many communications you want your customers to receive over the 12 months.** Make sure you include any service or annual reminders or birthday messages in the plan. There is no right or wrong answer here.

**3. Ask each department to populate the sales or service or parts communication plan and review these communications in the same plan.**

**4. As a DP also add in your VIP customer communications (it might pay to define what a VIP customer is, noting that perhaps 10–20% of your customers will be VIPs).** Time to look at top spenders with your dealership if you haven't done that for a while.

**5. Create a seed list.** A seed list is a list of all recipients internally that you want to advise about the communication, for example an e-mail about a low price service should go to all service receptionists, and also the CFO before being sent to customers.

**6. Create a content and approval guide for each communication (EDM or Electronic Direct Mail – a fancy title for email)** and include in the style guide, target audience selection, (don't send all emails to all customers), what the purpose of the communication is, whether there is selling message in the e-mail, and whether there is a loyalty offer to your best customers, who is the signatory on the email. Don't Always Be Selling in your emails.

**7. To sell or not to sell that is the question.** Be mindful that if every e-mail is your business trying to sell or encourage your customers to buy something from you (even if it's a special offer) they will soon know that you have become the needy friend rather than the trusted business who values the relationship.

**8. What's your give back?** If you assume it costs you \$100–200 to acquire a customer, how much do you budget for customer retention? If the answer is nothing, then perhaps you don't value your customers. Consider one or two customers give back emails per year, where you might offer something or invite your customers to something that demonstrates that you

value them (and no, an invitation to a car launch or a sales event is not a real invitation!).

**9. Agree your sign off procedure.** For example, Department manager to brief and review, marketing department to draught and create DP for final approval of finished item, and all staff on a seed list.

**10. Map your data flow.** It won't be one line from AutoPlay to your DMS to your CRM, because data should flow both ways. Pay attention to how customer email address or phone number changes are captured, as well as unsubscribe requests. Bear in mind you can't keep lost lead data forever either, but of you have a lost lead communications plan you can't own the opt ins (for further information about lost leads read our blog).

We hope this article has acted as a thought starter to review your CRM, which after all should be your single most important marketing activity. Why? It's because you already have a relationship with these customers and therefore your objective should be to solidify them. It's a lot better than the alternative.



PHOTO BY ROB LAUGHTER ON UNSPLASH

# LOTUS INTRODUCES BESPOKE SERVICE

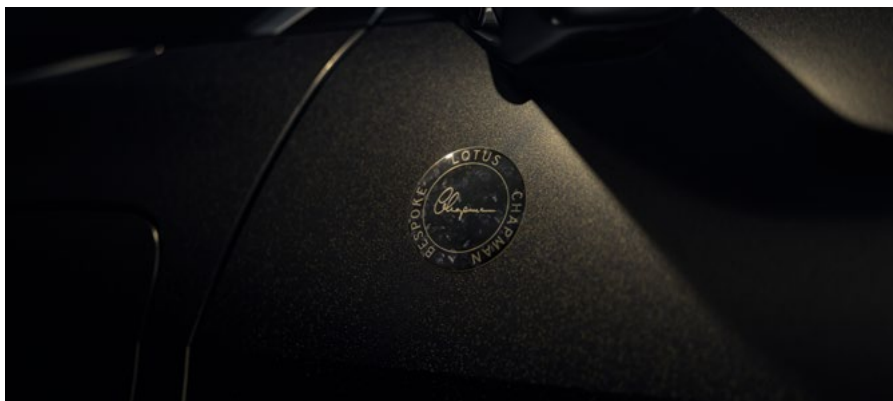
**L**otus has announced a bespoke service – Lotus Chapman Bespoke – responding to global customer demand.

**The service will allow customers to customise their Lotus products, from custom badges and trims to complete one-off personalisation of an entire vehicle.**

Initially launching in China on April 25 2024, the bespoke service will roll out worldwide over the coming months.

"Together, my parents shared an extraordinary adventure. Their personalities created innovative designs for the drivers to enjoy. Now, the drivers can enjoy creating innovations with Lotus Chapman Bespoke," says **Clive Chapman**, son of **Colin** and **Hazel Chapman**, who started the business in 1948 in London, UK. As a pioneering innovator, many of the designs, technologies, and innovations seen in motor racing today were first developed

The Lotus Chapman Bespoke name honours Lotus founders **Colin** and **Hazel Chapman**, who started the business in 1948 in London, UK. As a pioneering innovator, many of the designs, technologies, and innovations seen in motor racing today were first developed



by **Colin Chapman**.

**Lotus has always carried that rebellious Chapman spirit; a true originator, he ignored the status quo and was famous for carving his path in his style.**

With Bespoke, there are three levels of personalisation and customisation to choose from:

- **Tailor-made:** Choose your unique combination from within a broad palate of colours and designs, and finish with exclusive personal touches and details.

- **Collection:** Choose from limited-edition designs brought to life in partnership with partners, artists, and like-minded luxury brands.
- **One-off:** As the name suggests, build a car as unique as you are.

"Many of our customers are looking for a bespoke experience, be it in colour, texture, fabric, or detail – and we are excited to see their individuality stamped on our cars worldwide," Lotus Group VP of Design Ben Payne says.

# LAMBORGHINI LAUNCHES NEW CORPORATE IDENTITY

**A**fter two decades since the last update, Automobili Lamborghini has renewed its logo.

**The restyling is driven by a new strategy that involves adapting the brand's visual expression to reflect better the "brave", "unexpected", and "authentic" values of its mission, namely "Driving Humans Beyond", the intention to always go beyond the limits, standards and conventions.**

This evolution is part of Direzione Cor Tauri's transformation process, which embodies Lamborghini's new trajectory focused on sustainability and decarbonisation.

With this in mind, the brand is implementing changes that involve the cars and the corporate identity as a whole, thus impacting the company's culture and values, which will also see a new expression in terms of all the visual aspects.

The new logo, used on all the company's official channels, is



redefined by a broader Lamborghini typeface than its predecessor and by minimal yet bold colours. Therefore, black and white are reconfirmed as the primary hues, symbolising the precise identity of the brand, while yellow, along with the introduction of the gold colour, is used as the accent colour.

This revamped version of the logo becomes an integral part of the company's identity and will also be applied to future cars. In addition, the bull in the logo's centre has undergone a significant transformation. For the first time, it will exist individually on the company's digital touchpoints,

separated from the classic shield to lend it even greater prominence.

An official Automobili Lamborghini typeface has been created that echoes the unmistakable lines and angularity of the cars, in line with the style and design of the Sant'Agata Bolognese-based company, and it will be used for the company's communications.

**The redesign also includes a new set of icons, developed in collaboration with Lamborghini Centro Stile, that, for the first time, will be used and shared uniformly across all the digital touchpoints.**



# ASTON MARTIN UNVEILS HERITAGE-INSPIRED BESPOKE DBX707 MODELS

**A**ston Martin has unveiled two heritage-inspired DBX707 SUV models curated through the brand's personalisation service, Q by Aston Martin.

**Emulating two of the brand's icons, both unique performance SUVs showcase the epitome of customisation for an Aston Martin buyer.**

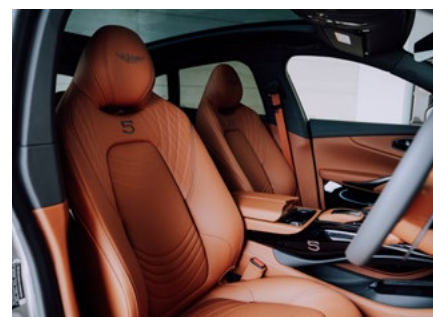
The first of these cars borrows design cues from the timeless DB5, cemented in popular culture by its 60-year-long relationship with James Bond. Cloaked in Silver Birch paint, the model is finished with a variety of Q by Aston Martin features that elevate the model beyond the standard suite of choices.

Complimenting the car's exterior, machined aluminium billet side strakes, engraved with Aston Martin's signature script, highlight a cue that was solidified in Aston Martin's ongoing design language during this era. Meanwhile, a stainless-steel foil DB5 '5' adorns the car's centre console inside, with the emblem also embroidered on the car's front headrests.

**The second DBX707 is inspired by one of the earliest surviving Aston Martin production cars globally. Built in 1923 and first raced locally in 1924, the car that has become known as 'The Australian Green Pea' was a sports model and one of only three cars imported to Australia under the stewardship of company founders Robert Bamford and Lionel Martin. It remains the oldest Aston Martin in Australia today and is well-known worldwide.**

Celebrating the centenary of the car's arrival in Australia, this unique DBX707 features bronze brake callipers, Jet Black roof rails and painted graphics featuring "7" on each side panel. Inside, an Eifel Green 12 O'clock steering wheel stripe and the original Aston Martin logo featured in each door trim – again cut in stainless-steel foil – complete the design features seen on 'The Australian Green Pea'.

In 2023, Aston Martin saw the highest-ever uptake in content from its Q by Aston Martin bespoke service, experiencing a remarkable 36% global growth year-on-year. Customers have



been known to invest upwards of 30% of the car's original retail value to add their mark and achieve a truly bespoke creation.

"Aston Martin has consistently pushed the boundaries of vehicle personalisation and bespoke commissions," says Aston Martin's global chief brand and commercial officer, **Marco Mattiacci**.

"Aligned with the heritage and tradition of British tailoring and bespoke craftsmanship, 'Q by Aston Martin' was established to provide our clientele with the opportunity to create their dream Aston Martin guided by the finesse and precision of our talented

team of world-renowned designers and engineers."

"Capitalising on the prevailing trend of personalisation within the realm of luxury goods, our growth has been further propelled by the introduction of exclusive limited-edition products and offerings, such as the V12 Vantage, the DBR22, the DBS770 Ultimate, and the Valkyrie and Valour, which stands as a homage to our remarkable 111-year history."

**Both DBX707 models will be touring the country for various engagements in the upcoming months.**

# RECORD-BREAKING NEW VEHICLE SALES IN MARCH

**R**ecords for Australian new vehicle sales continue to be broken, with the March result of 109,647 surpassing the previous March record of 106,988, achieved in 2018.

**The January to March result of 304,452 sales represents the best first quarter yet for new vehicle sales, an increase of 13.2% on the first quarter in 2023.**

FCAI chief executive **Tony Weber** said it was remarkable that nine of the past 12 months had seen the industry achieve record sales. Since April 2023, the industry has delivered 1,252,230 new vehicles.

"This is a terrific result for the sector; however, all car brands are well aware that these results cannot be taken for granted," Weber said. "We need to factor in the ongoing cost of living pressures and the challenges for industry and consumers that will emerge with introducing the New Vehicle Efficiency Standard (NVES) in less than nine months."

The SUV segment accounted for 58.9% of sales, while the Passenger segment was down to 16.1% compared with 2023 at 17.7%. The Light Commercial segment fell to 21% from 22.6%.

**Battery electric vehicles made up 9.5% of new vehicle sales, up from 6.8% in March 2023. Hybrid and Plug-in Hybrid sales increased compared with March 2023, recording a 14% share compared with 6% in 2023.**

Sales of electrified vehicles in March made up 23.5% of the total market, demonstrating the continuing evolution of technology and increasing consumer preference in response to the challenges of decarbonisation.

"A fuel efficiency standard is long overdue. However, we remain concerned about the speed and magnitude of the change for both manufacturers and, more importantly,



consumers," said Weber.

"The car makers will respond. However, it will take time to develop new products, especially in the large SUV and Light Commercial segments, that meet expectations in terms of price, performance and emissions, noting these vehicles make up more than one-third of new vehicle sales in Australia.

**"We look forward to working with the Government regarding the administration of the proposed NVES and the development of critical supporting activities such as the development of an effective national recharging network for electric vehicles," he says.**

**Toyota** was the market leader with sales of 18,961, followed by **Ford** (8776), **Mazda** (8246), **Mitsubishi** (7866) and **Kia** (7070).

The **Ford Ranger** was Australia's top-selling vehicle with sales of 5661, followed by the **Toyota RAV4** (5070), **Tesla Model Y** (4379), **Toyota Hilux** (3995) and **Mitsubishi Outlander** (2764).

Sales across every State and Territory increased compared with March 2023 except for Tasmania, which recorded a slight decrease of 0.6% (1610). Sales in the Australian Capital Territory were up by 0.5% (1584); New South Wales 11.7% (33,808); Queensland 5.9% (23,550); South Australia 6.9% (6992); Victoria 24.9% (30,099); Western Australia 9.3% (11,074) and Northern Territory 19.8% (930).

## KEY POINTS:

- The March 2024 market of 109,647 new vehicle sales is an increase of 12,396 or 12.7% against March 2023 (97,251). There were 24.5 selling days in March 2024 compared to 26.5 in March 2023, increasing 805.5 vehicle sales per day.
- The Passenger Vehicle Market is up by 429 vehicle sales (2.5%) over the same month last year; the Sports

Utility Market is up by 11,105 vehicle sales (20.7%); the Light Commercial Market is up by 1,049 vehicle sales (4.8%), and the Heavy Commercial Vehicle Market is down by 187 vehicle sales (-4.1%) versus March 2023.

- Toyota was the market leader in March. It led Ford with a margin of 10,185 vehicle sales and 9.3 market share points.

## TOP 10 BRANDS



1. TOYOTA 18,961



2. FORD 8776



3. MAZDA 8246



4. MITSUBISHI 7866



5. KIA 7070



## 4X4 UTES



1. Ford Ranger  
**5135**



2. Toyota HiLux  
**3555**



3. Isuzu Ute D-Max  
**1847**



4. Mitsubishi Triton  
**1675**



5. Mazda BT-50  
**1105**



6. Nissan Navara  
**993**



7. Toyota LandCruiser  
70 Series  
**940**



8. Volkswagen Amarok  
**842**



9. GWM Ute  
**744**



10. LDV T60  
**446**

## SUV SMALL &lt;\$40K



1. MG ZS  
**2046**



2. Hyundai Kona  
**1607**



3. GWM Haval Jolion  
**1203**



4. Mitsubishi Eclipse  
Cross  
**1131**



5. Mitsubishi ASX  
**1103**



6. Subaru Crosstrek  
**1049**



7. Mazda CX-30  
**947**



8. Kia Seltos  
**836**



9. Toyota Corolla  
Cross  
**779**



10. Volkswagen T-Roc  
**644**

# TOP 10 BRANDS



6. TESLA 6017



7. HYUNDAI 5985



8. NISSAN 4976



9. ISUZU UTE 4351



10. MG 3949

# PHEV DEMAND ROCKETS

**E**lectrified vehicle sales in March made up 23.5% of the total market, demonstrating the continuing evolution of technology and increasing consumer preference in response to the challenges of decarbonisation, says the Federal Chamber of Automotive Industries (FCAI).

**Battery electric vehicles (BEVs) comprised 9.5% of new vehicle sales in March 2024 – up from 6.8% in March last year.**

The Tesla Model Y was the third best selling new vehicle in March at 4378 units, behind the Ford Ranger (5661) and Toyota **RAV4** (5070) while ahead of the Toyota **HiLux** (3995).

Hybrid and plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV) sales also increased compared with March 2023, recording a 14% share compared with 6% in 2023.

While FCAI chief executive **Tony Weber** says a fuel efficiency standard is long overdue, he adds the FCAI is concerned at the speed and magnitude of the change for both manufacturers and consumers.

**"The car makers will respond, however it will take time to develop new products, especially in the large SUV and light commercial segments, that meet expectations in terms of price, performance and emissions, noting these vehicles make up more than one third of new vehicle sales in Australia," he says.**

"We look forward to working with the Government regarding the administration of the proposed NVES (New Vehicle Efficiency Standard) and the development of critical supporting activities such as the development of an effective national recharging network for electric vehicles."

The EV fringe benefit tax exemption, a desire to save on vehicle running costs and expanded model availability are driving PHEV demand, say the National Automotive Leasing and Salary Packaging Association (NALSPA).

It says the new FCAI figures show PHEV sales for passenger and SUVs have more than doubled (148% increase) between March 2023 and March 2024.

NALSPA analysis of VFACTS data shows over the past six months PHEV SUV sales have represented nearly one in four (23%) of all electrified sales of SUVs in Australia.

The data coincides with NALSPA's own figures showing that PHEVs represented 23% of combined new novated BEV

and PHEV leases in December 2023, up from just 6% in the middle of 2023.

"We are witnessing strong momentum of uptake in plug-in electric vehicles thanks to the EV FBT exemption, a desire to save on running costs, and additional PHEV models entering the Australian market that better meet the needs of consumers," says NALSPA chief executive **Rohan Martin**.

"Working Australians are finding PHEV models that suit their lifestyle and work needs and provide significant savings through novated leasing during a cost-of-living crisis.

"PHEVs help many consumers start the electric vehicle transition – often they're a stepping stone for motorists towards driving a full electric vehicle. They're particularly attractive to people who regularly drive longer distances, including in regional Australia and outer suburban areas," Martin says.

**"Range anxiety with pure electric vehicles is real for many drivers and fleet buyers, and with PHEVs this anxiety is removed, whilst they also benefit from lower running costs.**

"Larger family vehicle types, such as the plug-in hybrid seven-seat Mitsubishi Outlander, which aren't generally available in pure battery electric form, are proving hugely popular," he says.

"PHEVs are becoming significantly more affordable. The FBT exemption reduces the vehicles' larger capital costs, plus the use of electricity for the typical Australian commute can create substantial fuel cost savings."

With the NVES before Parliament, vehicle brands are seeing PHEVs as a viable way to significantly reduce emissions in larger vehicles, with more set to land in Australia over the coming



year, including the popular Ford Ranger and BYD Seal U SUV in PHEV form, says Martin.

**"With the help of the FBT exemption, we are seeing fleet buyers realising the potential of PHEVs to reduce their CO2 emissions and become a stepping stone in the EV transition.**

"The fact that nearly one in four SUV electrified sales are PHEV is significant given that SUV sales are nearly triple passenger vehicle sales in the Australian market.

"Interestingly in Europe in recent months PHEV demand has outpaced BEV sales growth," says Martin.

"That trend could well continue here in Australia with the support of the EV FBT exemption, increased availability of PHEVs in SUVs, and the ambitious requirements of the proposed NVES."

VFACTS shows sales of electrics in March 2024 were 10,464 – up 58.3% on March 2023's 6612.

Year-to-date (YTD) figures are 25,468 – up 46.4% on the 17,396 for the same time last year.

**Hybrids were 165.6% up in March comparisons (5247 to 13,935) and 118.6% YTD (16,101 to 35,203) while PHEVs went from 569 to 1412 (148.2%) in March comparisons and 1461 to 3426 (134.5%) in YTD comparisons.**

ELECTRIC, PHEV AND HYBRID SALES					MARCH 2024			
Total Market	Month		YTD		Variance +/- Vol. & %			
	2024	2023	2024	2023	MTH	YTD	MTH	YTD
ELECTRIC								
Passenger	3,117	2,187	11,248	8,477	930	2,771	42.5%	32.7%
SUV Private	7,322	4,412	14,156	8,894	2,910	5,262	66.0%	59.2%
Light Commercial Non-Private	25	13	64	25	12	39	92.3%	156.0%
Sub Total	10,464	6,612	25,468	17,396	3,852	8,072	58.3%	46.4%
HYBRID								
Passenger Private	3,247	1,466	10,149	4,097	1,781	6,052	121.5%	147.7%
SUV Private	10,441	3,781	24,732	12,004	6,660	12,728	176.1%	106.0%
Sub Total	13,688	5,247	34,881	16,101	8,441	18,780	160.9%	116.6%
PHEV								
Passenger Private	79	32	210	76	47	134	146.9%	176.3%
SUV Private	1,333	537	3,216	1,385	796	1,831	148.2%	132.2%
Sub Total	1,412	569	3,426	1,461	843	1,965	148.2%	134.5%
Total	25,564	12,428	63,775	33,497	13,136	30,278	105.7%	90.4%